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Self-Study Portfolio Evi Francey Kampouri Lagonik

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Evi Francey Kampouri Lagonik

Final M.Ed. Self-Study Portfolio

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Certificate of Graduate Study in ESL Education

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Rowan University: College of Education

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1. Introduction

I am a K-6 Elementary School teacher and a certified ESL teacher. Currently I teach 2nd & 3rd grade Multilingual Students (formally known as ELL students) at Pennsauken Public Schools.

I decided my journey into the Teacher Leadership M.Ed. when I realized that I could offer more to my colleagues, students, and families if I was equipped with the right educational tools. By pursuing this program, I also hoped to collaborate with all mentioned above in a way that is meaningful and productive for my students to have better academic outcomes and success. For my Inquiry project I had stated the following two questions: "*How can I as a teacher leader help ELL student to overcome their struggle to read and comprehend texts inside and outside of the ELL classroom? and, What strategies can we use to effectively increase reading fluency and comprehension?".* Through parent involvement and teacher collaboration, we are working on these questions, we are seeing improvements in the students' reading comprehension and a change in attitude towards reading.

As an ESL teacher I support Bilingual Education as an effective method of Second Language acquisition. Bilingual Education helps students become proficient at a steady pace and promotes the study and development of both native and second languages.Dual-language education helps children develop positive self-identities, both in terms of race and ethnicity and as learners (Hawkins, 2005; Reyes & Vallone, 2007; Gandara & Hopkins, 2010).

Moreover, promoting children to learn a second language is beneficial for their academic outcome, their cultural awareness and their future employment opportunities.

The Teacher Leadership M.Ed. has improved me as a teacher, a colleague, an employee and as a parent. I am looking forward to applying all I have learned into my educational career path

and that I continue to collaborate and advocate for those who need me inside and outside the school setting.

2. Portfolio Assignment 1 Reflection

Domain I: Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning

The teacher leader understands the principles of adult learning and knows how to develop a collaborative culture of collective responsibility in the school. The teacher leader uses this knowledge to promote an environment of collegiality, trust, and respect that focuses on continuous improvement in instruction and student learning (The Teacher Leader Model Standards, n.d.).

For this domain, teacher leaders understand how adults learn and know how to develop a collaborative environment that is built on trust, cultural awareness, and respect. Some of the functions that characterize a teacher leader in this domain include utilizing group processes to help colleagues work collaboratively to solve problems and make decisions; models good listening skills; develops facilitation skills such as collective wisdom and builds ownership that support student learning; culturally inclusive and aware; effectively interacts with colleagues using knowledge and understanding the different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures and languages spoken.

Following, I will attempt to analyze and reflect on the functions of Domain I, of the Teacher Leadership Model.

a) Utilizes group processes to help colleagues work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change.

As an ELL teacher and having worked in different countries, and in different employment settings, I have developed many of the skills mentioned above. In the past, I have taken the initiative to develop a PLC that focused on developing a third grade Math curriculum using Greek as a second language. During the PLC meetings, as the facilitator, I had to acknowledge my colleagues background, ethnicity, culture, strengths, and weaknesses. I also had to be receptive to different ideas, perspectives and solutions to problems that occurred and needed to be addressed. Our goal was to make the curriculum fun, engaging and relevant to the American culture of our students and by working together with set rules and respect for one another, we managed to produce a very successful "Greek as a Second Language Learning Math Curriculum" (Kampouri Lagonik_MA2_METL50513). Additionally, this year my district decided to implement PLCs in our school buildings using the PLC Rubric. During the summer, a colleague and I were trained on how to help our colleagues develop a PLC based on mutual understanding, respect, collaboration and problem solving. It was interesting to see the reactions of many of our colleagues when we began this process in the beginning of the school year and how much their mindsets have changed since then.

A teacher leader must be open to work collaboratively with their colleagues, administration, community leaders and parents to make meaningful change, solve problems and to make decisions that benefit the majority of students. By learning how to organize a Professional Learning Community and how to effectively manage and organize the common goals we needed to successfully implement our strategies, it helped me become more aware and

more cautious about utilizing group processes. As Henderson (2018) suggests, "The staff is not yet ready to work collectively until they are united in working together."

b) Models effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning.

As an educator, it is important to be able to be flexible, have good listening and communication skills and show respect to others. Teachers are asked to be miracle workers and solve any problem that comes up in their classroom, whether it's of academic nature, behavior or social emotional state (Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50511). During the course "Teacher Leadership and Learning Communities METL_50511, we had to work in groups and we created a plan for our PLC by following the 5 stages that each new PLC should go through. The level of culture within our PLC was established through creating our plan. As stated by the Putnam text, these stages and understanding the levels are crucial to the success of a PLC (Putnam et al.,2020, p. 20). Throughout this course and experience, all members were encouraged to contribute with their ideas, strategies, and experience in this PLC. These contributions were necessary for the best possible outcome (Group A, MA1_METL50511). Throughout this course, four people who were complete strangers had to work together and meet the expectations at a difficult time for all of us. We were patient with each other, we showed compassion and delegated our responsibilities to help each other bring to the table what they could. By listening to others opinions, communicating and clarifying we managed to work together as a team and produce a very interesting PLC that taught us how to become better leaders and professionals

Another example of how I demonstrate this function is in various situations in my current position. According to Dana & Yendol-Hoppey (2020), there are five important reasons to

collaborate with our colleagues, "… when conducting research, develop fluency in teacher talk that is important for student learning, there is safety and strength in numbers, and it builds teacher efficacy." As an ELL teacher I am involved in many different professional community roles and I work with many colleagues that are at different levels. I am always available to assist my colleagues and find solutions to the problems that arise involving our multilingual students. I listen to their concerns and share my input. I also help my colleagues modify their assignments and suggest strategies to help our students achieve their goals. As an equity leader, I share with my colleagues and administrators useful information and tools to better assist our students and to promote compassion and understanding. I am also a member of two grade level PLCs and I actively listen, share my opinion and knowledge, and work as a bridge between the two levels in order to collaborate and continue the goals from one grade to the next. I am receptive to others' suggestions and I am willing to learn from my colleagues and their experiences.

In addition to the above, I am a member of the Parent Involvement Committee. In this committee, my colleagues and I work together to find topics and resources to help the parents connect with their children and instruct them in how to help their children at home.

Communication is necessary and by organizing these events we are able to collaborate, share our ideas for our common goals, connect with each other and establish a positive relationship with the parents.

Being an effective teacher leader is a lifelong commitment that requires the teacher to be a life-long learner, an active listener, an effective communicator, and role model to others. With this said, I feel that during this academic adventure I am leading towards this path.

c) Employs facilitation skills to create trust among colleagues, develop collective wisdom, build ownership and action that supports student learning.

Building trust among your colleagues is extremely important in our profession. We are all working together for the common goals, to educate young children academically but also to help them become good communicators, active members of society that are creative, open-minded and confident. Leading by example is the best way to teach students, and seeing their teachers collaborating effectively to create a positive learning environment is necessary. Throughout my career, I have always been characterized by others as a trustworthy colleague. I am professional and help my peers with teaching our multilingual learners. I provide modifications, effective learning strategies and share my knowledge and resources with them, in order to find solutions to help our students achieve their academic and personal goals. As I mentioned before, I am involved in many committees at my school and district, and it would be unrealistic to believe that I could handle everything on my own. I feel blessed that I have the opportunity to work with many peers that love their career and want to see our students succeed. In the various committees that I am a part of, there is a sense of trust between the participants and that allows us to be honest with each other, develop plans that we can accomplish together and collectively share our wisdom and experiences, in order to support each other and our students. Richert et al. (2020) explain that, " Instead of just looking at things from a neutral stance, encourage your team to explore the experiences of the people involved, examining what is going on from their perspectives, getting into their heads, and understanding their thoughts , feelings, challenges and hopes". To achieve this, there must be trust and a sense of belonging between us.

d) Strives to create an inclusive culture where diverse perspectives are welcomed in addressing challenges.

As a teacher leader and as an ELL teacher, it is important to advocate for equity and inclusion in my building, but also in my district. Being a member of the Parent Involvement committee and the Equity committee is a commitment I made to advocate for my students and for their families. In the above committees, I work with my colleagues throughout the school year to develop effective ways to promote parental involvement, especially for the multilingual families that are having difficulties helping their children or being involved in school activities and events. I am also involved in the 2nd and 3rd grade PLCs as well as the School Safety Committee. In order for the above committees and PLCs to run smoothly, it is important to have clear expectations, establish norms and come to an agreement on how to effectively resolve conflicts, in order to refocus the group. Respecting others, establishing empathy and compassion as well as learning to listen to others and being a lifelong learner are important skills to develop as a teacher leader. Creating an inclusive culture with diverse perspectives can make our schools more effective and help us improve our students academically and socially.

e) Uses knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, and languages to promote effective interactions among colleagues.

This function is perhaps the most important one for me and I take pride in my achievements and dedication to promoting an understanding of different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures and languages.

I am an English Language Learner teacher; therefore, all my students are multicultural and multilingual students. Good & Lavigne (2018, p. 354) explain that teachers need to develop

accurate knowledge of the minority students they teach if they are to be successful. Many of my students are born in the US by first generation immigrants and primarily speak a language other than English when interacting with their family and relatives, but in the last year I have had an increased newcomer population that only speak their native languages. Therefore, I take my time to learn about my students, their families, their home countries, their customs, and their cultural backgrounds (Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50516).

With the rapidly changing student population and the increasing multilingual students coming to our country and school many of my monolingual colleagues feel overwhelmed and need support and guidance on how to work with this diverse population. Every year we see a spike in newcomer students that come from low socioeconomic families and have limited or no prior educational background in their native language. Because of our American culture and the "No Child Left Behind" Act, most of my colleagues are not aware that this is a very common situation for those who come to our country fleeing from dangerous situations, interrupting schooling or not having access to school at all. I often find myself explaining why our new students cannot catch up as fast as other multilingual students do and how trauma and anxiety can play a major role in our students' educational outcomes. In addition to the above, when I participate in professional developments, I share the knowledge I received with my administrators, and I suggest methods that could help with our diverse populations.

I am also interested in learning more about student behaviors, especially with the growing number of students with mental illnesses, learning disabilities and ADHD (Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50516). Many multilingual students are misdiagnosed with learning disabilities and on the other hand many are not even considered to qualify for special education because of their language barrier. During Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS) meetings, I

make sure to be present and prepared to advocate for my students and to explain to my colleagues which evidence provided is based on their language proficiency and what is not. There were many cases where my input helped students who were struggling qualify to be tested and those students benefited from that outcome.

Moreover, creating a bridge between parent and teacher communication and involvement is another area I have been working on for the last four years I have been in my position. Parents of multiple students trust me and reach out to me when they need help with their students' academic difficulties or if they need clarification about their children's homeroom activities. With my students' homeroom teachers, we work together and reach out to the parents, so they understand that we are all on the same team and we are all together to provide the best educational experience for their children. I also research my students' culture in order to understand how to communicate with them in the most effective way possible and share my knowledge with my colleagues.

In addition to the above, during the school year, my ELL colleagues and I organize cultural events such as Hispanic Heritage Day, Cultural and Diversity Day, Language Day, International Night and Multicultural Game Nights, to promote and create awareness about our diverse community and develop the sense of belonging for our students and our multicultural colleagues.

As a district our mission is to provide a safe, challenging, and enriching learning environment for all students that leads to academic success and the development of personal responsibility and self-directed lifelong learning needed to become contributing members of a diverse, global society (Kampouri Lagonik_MA1_METL50512). Therefore, being a teacher

leader that can contribute to this mission is my ultimate goal and I have taken many steps to fulfill this mission.

3. Portfolio Assignment 2 Reflection

Domain II: Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Learning.

The teacher leader understands how research creates new knowledge, informs policies and practices and improves teaching and learning. The teacher leader models and facilitates the use of systematic inquiry as a critical component of teachers' ongoing learning and development (The Teacher Leader Model Standards, n.d.).

As a teacher leader it is important to understand that educators are lifelong learners and that there are many fields in our occupation that most employees are not familiar with or not even aware of. Such a field could be the financial aid our districts/ schools receive, what obligations we have towards that funding and how research can help achieve those commitments and improve learning for our educators and students. Other forms of research focus on academic achievement, background knowledge, socioeconomic status and more. Research in the 21st century comes in many forms and there is an opportunity to learn at any time.

My professional connection with this domain is mostly based on the annual WIDA ACCESS/WIDA Screener, the NJSLA state testing and the iReady assessment tool used by my district. The WIDA ACCESS assessment helps me explain to my colleagues what my students' English Language Proficiency (ELP) is, and what their strengths and weaknesses are based on

data. This analysis of data helps me adjust my students' modifications, student growth goals and learning strategies. Since my students are mostly with their homeroom teachers, I always set up meetings with my colleagues to share my data and explain the students' language data, how it translates to academic language versus social language and other factors I will explain in the functions below. Similarly, we analyze NJSLA results looking into each standard.

Also, through the iReady assessment that the students take at three different points each year, my colleagues and I are able to collect data, analyze and develop learning plans for our students. Because we have new teachers that are not familiar with these tests and the data collected, I am often asked to explain the data and what the goal is for each student (Kampouri Lagonik_MA2_METL50513).

To have a better understanding of the above, I will analyze each function of Domain II.

a) **Assists colleagues in accessing and using research in order to select appropriate strategies to improve student learning.**

The school district I am employed in receives Title I and Title III funding which are important for our pupils to grow academically and to have equal opportunities and access to today's rigorous expectations. Many of the newly hired educators do not fully understand what this means, and I have found myself often explaining to them what that means. Title I is a more familiar term for most teachers as it is a more commonly used term by the state, districts, colleges etc. However, when students are not able to pay $10 for their field trip, many teachers are shocked that there are households who cannot afford this minimum fee. More often, without this being the rule, the students who are in this position are immigrant ML students or low-income ML students. During the field trip sign up timeline, I usually reach out to the families to

first understand the reasoning they cannot attend and if it is financial I then meet with my

building principal to discuss and find financial solutions to help with students attending these

trips. After explaining these steps to my colleagues using the research I have conducted, they do

realize that something so simple as a school field trip is indeed very complicated for many of our

families. On the other hand, Title III is less familiar to most teachers whether they are new to the

district or not. According to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), the priorities of

Title III are to:

- Increase the English language proficiency of English learners (ELs) by providing

  effective language instruction educational programs that meet the needs of ELs and

  increase English language proficiency and student academic achievement.

- Provide effective professional development designed to improve the instruction and

  assessment of ELs, to enhance the ability of teachers and school leaders to understand

  and implement curricula and assessment practices and measures, and to increase

  children's English language proficiency or substantially increase the subject matter

  knowledge, teaching knowledge, and teaching skills of teachers.

- Provide and implement other effective activities and strategies that enhance or

  supplement language instruction educational programs for ELs which shall include

  parent, family, and community engagement activities (NJDOE, 1996-2024).

By researching the different forms of funding my school/district receives and why, I gain

a round knowledge of how incredibly important it is to know and understand the demographics

of our student population. My ELL colleagues and I will often explain this to our colleagues and

help them understand the purpose of our data collection regarding the demographics of our

students, the academic outcomes, the state testing scores and more. The purpose of this is to use

appropriate strategies and modifications for our ML students and to reduce the academic gap. Educating my colleagues about our district fundings, the research that goes into it and what it means to us financially and academically is part of the teacher leadership qualities I have and share.

Working with ML students and having a personal experience on the topic has intrigued me to learn the connections of primary and secondary language. Much research has been done and a lot of literature has been published on this topic. Richert et al. (2020) state, "Take a step back, and look at the current situation within its broader cultural context: Consider the history, people, systems, and beliefs that may be in play. This leadership skill of suspending judgment and looking more broadly at a situation is called adopting the observer's stance" (pg. 71). Moreover, technology has provided access to a whole new world of instant information through the internet. Websites with scientific research and articles (as long as it is accredited and based on facts), as well as podcasts have been a valuable source of research. For example, during the course METL50512- Curriculum Development for Teacher Leaders and other School Professionals, one of the assignments was to reflect on a podcast, in which I chose the "*Cult of Pedagogy"*. The episode's guest was Pedro Noruera and the topic was "10 Ways Educators Can Take Action in Pursuit of Equity ". The episode interested me because I felt a connection to what Noruera was describing to what I saw in my school and district. Noruera (2018) explains that, by embracing students' cultures, giving them quality education and providing them with clear guidance on how to succeed, students can be empowered and work harder. This statement, along with the other nine ways in pursuing equity in our classrooms were so powerful, that I felt the need to share with my building administrators and colleagues.

Another research-based assignment I did during my educational path in learning how to

become an effective teacher leader was the "The implementation of STEM lessons in the ELL Program" for the course "Educational Change, METL_01624. STEM learning is core to many new technologies and jobs in the workplace, it is especially important that our schools learn how to connect students with this material earlier, and in a more meaningful way. The inclusion of hands-on activities benefits all students, as does collaborating with other stakeholders who can help bring STEM learning to life. However, STEM instruction for English learners also requires collaboration between administrators, ESL teachers, science teachers for older grades and homeroom teachers for the younger grades. Also, socio-emotional learning and emotional intelligence plays a role in making students feel more a part of the school community and learning experience overall. ELLs generally want to become more involved in school activities and adapt to the culture. Inclusion in experimentation activities and involvement in community collaboration encourages this. They also generally have a strong motivation to succeed academically so they can build a better life for themselves and their families. Strong STEM instruction provides better opportunities to do just that (KampouriLagonik_MA4_METL01624).

Fullan (2020) mentions that, "In given change situation, if you lead effectively (as in a culture of change), you gain momentum as you go because more and more people are on board, and they have great specificity and shared coherence" (p.135).

b) **Facilitates the analysis of student learning data, collaborative interpretation of results, and application of findings to improve teaching and learning.**

Every year our ML population is required to complete an English Language Proficiency test. New Jersey facilitates the WIDA Screener when students enter the NJ school system and WIDA ACCESS as their annual examination on the four domains of language (Listening,

Reading, Speaking and Writing). My ELL colleagues and I focus on the analysis of the data we are provided by these assessments; we collaborate and discuss our findings and use them to improve our teachings. We also use these scores to exit students who have met the requirements and make plans to monitor them. Then, we meet with the homeroom teachers and explain the scores and what they translate to. Based on the strengths and weaknesses of our ML students and their ELP, we make plans and modifications to help them achieve their academic goals and overcome their language barriers.

Another state assessment I help analyze and present to my colleagues is the state required standardized test NJSLA for ELA and Math. With the collaboration of the basic skills teachers and the building administrators, we break down the data and look at our strengths and weaknesses as a grade level. This is especially important because we have created schoolwide PLCs that help improve our weaknesses starting at the lowest level of Kindergarten and work our way up to 3rd grade.

Additionally, for the course "Agency in Teacher Leadership_METL50514", Assignment 3: Sharing Results from Classroom Inquiry, was based on research and collection of data. Reading comprehension and fluency is a problematic area for my current second and third grade ELL students. Many of my students are struggling to read on grade level and most need additional support when it comes to language arts and reading comprehension. Most of the second-grade students, during the pandemic, were learning remotely, meanwhile parents were unable to support them academically. Many of my third-grade students, on the other hand, were in-person students, but they have special educational needs or are newcomers (KampouriLagonik_MA3_METL50514). My goal was to collect data that would provide me with the root of the problem and how certain assessments and strategies I would use would help

my ELL students' progress in the Domain of Reading. B. Morettini (Teacher Leadership in

Practice, November 3rd, 2020) in Lecture 7-1 *"Next Steps in the Inquiry Process"* explains that,

using sources of Quantitative data and Qualitative data will make this inquiry successful.

Multiple data sources also help ensure that the information obtained is reliable and consistent

over time and across similar tasks and maximizes a student's opportunities to demonstrate

mastery (Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center, 2007; Rivera et al., 2008).

Finally, when I attend Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS) meetings, I use the data

and artifacts I collect to discuss and collaborate with my colleagues about our educational plan to

help our students.

c) **Supports colleagues in collaborating with the higher education institutions and other organizations engaged in researching critical educational issues.**

As a teacher leader in my building and a lifelong learner, I seek opportunities to educate

myself and share my knowledge with my colleagues and administrators. Through professional

developments, college courses, webinars and workshops, I often find interesting topics to share

and discuss with colleagues. Organizations such as WIDA, NJTESOL, NJEA Convention,

ImmSchools are just a few examples of my participation in improving myself as an educator and

as a teacher leader. Also, through my district, I was appointed to be trained as a building PLC

leader during this past summer. The workshop was led by Dr. Tracy Severns who is currently a

professional coach for Teach 4 Results. The workshop's goal was to train teacher leaders to

create high performing PLCs that improve student achievement. My gained experience and

knowledge from this workshop, in addition to what I have learned through my masters courses in

the METL program of Rowan University, played a significant role in implementing these skills

into our newly formed PLCs in my building.

WIDA has partnered with the NJDOE to access ML students. Every year I complete my required professional development courses to be able to assess and screen my students. Additionally, WIDA University offers workshops that are not required, but are very beneficial. One of the workshops I enrolled in was a 20-hour self-paced course named "Home Language in the Classroom". This workshop gave me many ideas on how to incorporate the home language in my classroom and create a comfortable environment for my students. I also provided many of the resources I found useful to my other ELL colleagues.

Through NJTESOL and NJEA Conventions I strive to find opportunities to find sessions that apply to my school's level of education and could be beneficial for my ML students, their families, and our community.

In addition to the above, I am always seeking opportunities to find conferences from higher education institutions, such as William Paterson University and their annual Bilingual/ESL conference and Rutgers University and the ImmSchool workshop I will be attending later this week. The goal of the workshop is to build and share strategies to further develop school community initiative for MLL and immigrant students and families; learn from legal coalition on how to advocate and build allyship to address unique needs for MLL and immigrant youth; access resources and explore on what a safe and inclusive school can look like for our school community; uplifting immigrant students and their families through their stories and experiences (ImmSchools, 2024). I am optimistic that this conference will be a great learning experience and I am planning to share what I learned with my administration and building colleagues.

d) **Teaches and supports colleagues to collect, analyze, and communicate data from their classrooms to improve teaching and learning.**

Teacher leaders advocate for their students and their colleagues to promote improvement in the performance of learning. To achieve this, it is important for teachers to be prepared and aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their students. By collecting and analyzing data, as well as significant artifacts, teachers can improve their lesson planning, strategies and academic outcomes. A teacher leader's ultimate purpose is to support their colleagues on how to become more effective using data and information. Throughout my career and my current position, I have helped many colleagues (especially new teachers and teachers that are less experienced with technology) to read and analyze their data and what it meant for each student. For example, WIDA ACCESS scores for ML students are not the typical percentage score and the rubric can be challenging for those who have not been trained to teach Multilingual students. Additionally, iReady and our newly used Lexia platform scores are individualized and use graphs to show the academic performance of the students. NJSLA uses the common core standards to determine the performance of each student and as a group. Understanding all the above can help our colleagues plan and make inquiries based on real evidence. An example of such an inquiry would be during the course METL 50514- Agency in Teacher Leadership, using quantitative and qualitative data, I was able to create an inquiry in order to improve my ML students' reading fluency. Multiple data sources also help ensure that the information obtained is reliable and consistent over time and across similar tasks and maximizes a student's opportunities to demonstrate mastery (Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center, 2007; Rivera et al., 2008). As sources of Quantitative data I used the following resources: a) Schoolwide assessment data such as, WIDA ACCESS Scores for Reading, iReady scores, Students' F&Ps, b) Attendance Data, c)

Demographic Data such as *How many students are Hispanic?; How many Vietnamese* etc.; *How many were born in the US or have an IEP?,* d) A basic reading assessment in the students' first language to determine their prior educational background knowledge. As Rivera et al. (2008) explain, "Where possible and appropriate, native language assessment can be useful. Comprehensive assessments in both languages provide information on a child's knowledge, skills, abilities, and instructional needs in each language as expressed through different modalities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)". As sources of Qualitative data, I used data from my experience as an ELL teacher, my colleagues' experiences and data they have collected from the students in study, students' stories and extant literature when appropriate (KampouriLagonik_MA3_METL50514).

In conclusion, a successful teacher leader must find opportunities to help their colleagues to access research; help them analyze and understand data collection and the importance it has for the academic success of their students; and share their experiences, and knowledge on skills they have learned and developed. Educators, such as myself, who represent an underrepresented group like the Multilingual Learners and their families, have a great responsibility to advocate for them and what better opportunities than to teach your colleagues how to be your partners in this difficult ride!

4. Portfolio Assignment 3 Reflection

Domain III: Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement.

The teacher leader understands the evolving nature of teaching and learning, established and emerging technologies, and the school community. The teacher leader uses this knowledge to promote, design, and facilitate job-embedded professional learning aligned with school improvement goals.

Professional learning is extremely important in our field. Education changes continuously and faster than ever before. The beginning of COVID-19 caught many educators and administrators off guard and thousands of teachers needed to become technology experts overnight. Remote learning, new learning platforms and numerous apps were used by my district to engage students while they were learning from home. Even though I wasn't a teacher leader during that time, as a matter of fact this was my first few months at this school, I found myself unofficially training some of my older colleagues on how to use these new technologies and I became their go to person when they needed to learn something new. Looking back, I feel that I contributed to my colleagues' professional learning and also developed a trust relationship with them (Kampouri Lagonik_MA2_METL50513). After being in my position for more than four years, I have come to realize the importance of that first year during COVID-19 and how it has influenced me to become a better teacher leader in the years to follow.

Following, I will further analyze each function of this domain and my contributions to accommodate my colleagues' and school's needs.

a) **Collaborates with colleagues and school administrators to plan professional learning that is team-based, job-embedded, sustained over time, aligned with content standards, and linked to school/district improvement goals.**

Collaboration amongst colleagues is a key factor in a school's and or district's success. In order to improve the goals of the school/district, one should have in mind the mission and vision and plan appropriately to cater to the needs of each colleague.

The Mission of the Pennsauken Public School District is to provide a safe, challenging, and enriching learning environment for all students that leads to academic success and the development of personal responsibility and self-directed lifelong learning needed to become contributing members of a diverse, global society (Kampouri Lagonik_MA1_METL50512). In order to improve the above, the district's employees must be able to have access to, appropriate professional development; student learning data that is provided or collected and analyzed; resources; and collaboration time through PLCs that are not restricted only to their grade level or subject. An example of this function would be when this past fall my building administrator asked me and my colleague, who attended the summer PLC leadership workshop, to organize a school based SMART Goal and grade level PLCs. The SMART Goal was determined by the 3rd grade NJSLA Math data we had, from the previous school year. We looked through all the data points and the common core standards to determine our students' strengths and weaknesses. In order to assure our goals were meaningful and valid, we compared the data we collected from the state test with those we had from iReady (the assessment platform our district uses) and found connections between the two assessments. Multiple data sources help ensure that the information obtained is reliable and consistent over time and across similar tasks and maximizes a student's opportunities to demonstrate mastery (Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center,

2007; Rivera et al., 2008). We determined that our strength was operation fluency, meanwhile our weakness was geometry. According to the NJSLA data, 80% of our 3rd graders scored below average in Geometry, and on iReady the same groups data showed that only 12% was on grade 3 level; 33% was in grade 2 level; 45% in grade 1; and 10% in K level. When the PLCs were created, we suggested each grade level focus on the improvement of our SMART Goal and to work collaboratively with the other grade levels, in order to continue from one grade to the next the improvement of the geometry skills. To gain further understanding on how to collaborate with each other within grade levels, we worked with each PLC to set the goals, determine the skills we would focus on and helped each other with examples. We also, discussed why we thought geometry data scores were so low compared to other skills and came to the conclusion that the possible reasons are a) we teach the topic after the NJSLA assessment and closer to summer break (all grades had the same timeline for this topic); b) the multilingual students struggled with the word problems and that they were too lengthy and could not have any accommodations to the vocabulary used; c) students who came from other countries the last couple of years, have no prior knowledge of geometry. To not only stick and stay in the classroom learning, the special area teachers and supporting staff are involved in the PLCs and all staff take initiatives to ask random students in the hallways, in the lunchroom, etc., about shapes, their properties and to give us examples.

Although we don't know how students will do this year on the Smart Goal we set, we do have evidence-based data from iReady, that our students are improving their Geometry skills. During the Winter assessment 19% of 3rd graders are on grade level; 51% are in 2nd grade level; 22% in 1st grade level; and 8% in K level.

b) **Uses information about adult learning to respond to the diverse learning needs of colleagues by identifying, promoting, and facilitating varied and differentiated professional learning.**

Fullan (2020) explains that "Understanding change means understanding people (p. 45), therefore in order to implement the change we must understand the needs of the people who the organizational change affects. One thing that is necessary to be prepared for is planning for professional development for the teachers specifically about teaching ELL students (KampouriLagonik_MA4_METL01624). Teachers are lifelong learners and understand the importance of keeping up with the new era of learning. As professionals, we are receptive to change, and we easily adjust to the new norms. However, when there are too many changes at the same time and things, we think work is considered outdated, it is natural to resist and want to keep things the same. Taking into consideration all the above, when promoting teacher learning, we must understand that the recipients are not all the same and they too, just like our students need to be taught using differentiated learning and culturally appropriate examples. For these reasons, when colleagues who need technology assistance or newly hired teachers need guidance, I offer to help and find solutions. And if I am not aware of the situation, then I guide them to someone who can be more helpful or is specialized in the area needed for assistance. For instance, in the beginning of each school year, I arrange meetings with the homeroom teachers my students will attend, to give them a list of accommodations and modifications they can use and explain to them each one and why it's beneficial for the multilingual students and which ones are better than others for certain proficiency levels. I also remind them that the multilingual students I work with might have strong social language skills, but their academic language might

be lower than they assume. Also, I show them the pace I use when talking to my students, the gestures I use for certain words, and how I rephrase using simpler vocabulary.

c) **Facilitates professional learning among colleagues.**

As mentioned in section b), I do have experience facilitating professional learning among my colleagues, especially when it comes to teaching strategies for multilingual learners and ways to plan to modify and accommodate for their needs. I also have presented what I have learned in workshops to help my colleagues learn new approaches in teaching. An example of this is when I attended the Virtual ESL conference from William Paterson University in 2021. During this conference, I learned of the website Book Creator and after I used it and saw my students' engagement, I presented it to my colleagues through our PLD session. Additionally, I have shown my colleagues during a different PLD how to create game-based activities on Lumio, which is the program our smart boards use. Finally, my colleague and I, who were trained in the summer as PLC coordinators, presented to our colleagues how we would develop our grade level PLCs and how we would create our goals, collect data and analyze the data to better understand the problems and find solutions.

d) **Identifies and uses appropriate technologies to promote collaborative and differentiated professional learning.**

Stephen Wilmarth in chapter 5 of Curriculum 21 -Essential Education for a Changing World by (Hayes-Jacobs, 2010), explains how technology influenced the social trends such as social production, social networks, semantic web, media grids, nonlinear learning, and the effects

it has regarding culture, society, learning and teaching in the 21st century. Technology is used worldwide and like Wilmarth points out, it is like technology "*never didn't exist*" (Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50512).

Even before COVID-19, most teachers started shifting towards technology in the classrooms and using it to promote professional and student learning. However, during COVID-19 most teachers learned in a very limited time how to do virtual learning through Google Classroom, use technology for staff meetings and create whole lessons virtually. It is with no say that we finally learned what meetings could just be an email and what needed to be more hands on. When I facilitate professional learning that involves technology, I present to my colleagues step by step how to navigate and create lessons through the learning platforms I use, such as Lumio, Pear Deck and Book Creator. I also share my assignments and assessments with my colleagues that I create on these platforms and on other platforms such as Kahoot, Google Classroom, and Jamboard.

During Parent Involvement Night (PIN), we always have a session about technology and how we can use it to help students and to be able as parents to navigate Genesis for parents. I am usually the one who creates this presentation and I help my colleagues who co-present, understand the platforms we use.

Finally, I help my ELL colleagues and supervisor navigate the WIDA AMS-DRC Insight, especially this year, since the website has changed.

e) Works with colleagues to collect, analyze, and disseminate data related to the quality of professional learning and its effect on teaching and student learning.

In the years I have been working as an ELL teacher, I have found it very important to be able to collaborate with your colleagues to gather significant data, compare it and analyze it. I work with many different colleagues throughout the academic year and compare data with them regarding my multilingual learners, but also for grade levels within my school.
Through the 2nd and 3rd grades PLCs, I collaborate with the grade level teachers, and we collect and analyze data regarding our students' progress in ELA and Math. I also collaborate with the Basic Skills teachers and analyze data regarding my students' ORF assessment score, iReady and Lexia scores. With my ELL colleagues we collect, analyze, and plan our instruction plans based on the WIDA Screener and WIDA ACCESS scores, which measures the English language proficiency of our students. All the data we collect, we compare it and express our ideas on how to make our instruction more achievable and meaningful for our students. As Fullan (2020) explains, "Have good ideas but process them, and get other ideas from those you work with, including - no, especially - those you want to change. We now know that the more complex the change, the more that people with the problem must be part of the solution".

f) Advocates for sufficient preparation, time, and support for colleagues to work in teams to engage in job-embedded professional learning.

It goes without saying that a teacher leader must be an advocate for their colleagues and students! When our administration asked us to create grade level PLCs but to also find a way to collaborate with other grade level PLCs, I made it clear that in order for our new PLCs to work

we must be provided the appropriate time to be able to collaborate with each other and to have sufficient resources and support to be able to analyze our data , suggest ideas and make future goals for our students. I suggested that, if needed for a colleague to be present or to collaborate with other colleagues from different grade levels at a time other than their prep period, to be accommodated with a substitute. I also had to step forward, when an administrator asked one of the PLC groups to meet virtually before our contractual hours and remind him that all PLCs are to be held during our contract hours. Another thing I make sure to do, is timekeeping during our meetings and keeping an Agenda of the topics that need to be addressed.

As a teacher leader, I advocate for sufficient support for my colleagues that have reached out to me in confidence and asked to be helped. Last year, I paired a third-grade teacher who was struggling with writing in her class with a second-grade teacher, who was happy to help her and mentored her in a very discreet and positive way. A few months ago, I found some resources for multilingual learners, to help our new Basic Skills Math teacher. Finally, one of my ELL colleagues and I advocated twice this year to get our new ELL colleague board approval to attend two workshops (ImmSchool Converse & NJTESOL Convention).

g) **Provides constructive feedback to colleagues to strengthen teaching practice and improve student learning.**

My colleagues trust me as a professional, they all are aware that I am studying to become a teacher leader and they also see how hard I work to be informed about educational topics, multilingual learners and that I attend multiple professional development workshops. This has given them the opportunity to ask me questions about my opinion on how they teach and what I think they could improve or do differently. It also helps that for most second and third grade

classes, I push in to assist my multilingual students and I can observe my colleagues teaching instruction firsthand. Most of my colleagues are receptive to my feedback and they will follow up with questions or ask me to participate as a co teacher during their class. Although giving constructive feedback to my colleagues happens very often, a couple of examples come first to mind.

A couple years ago a student came from Cuba in one of our second-grade classes. The homeroom teacher is bilingual and spoke Spanish to the student from day one. The student did not show any academic or language progress throughout the year, and we ended up retaining her. She repeated the second grade and had the same teacher, who only spoke to her in Spanish. Basically, the only time the student was forced to speak English was during my instruction and she refused to speak any English to me or her peers. Meanwhile her teacher was very concerned because she wasn't showing any progress. She asked me what I thought about this student, and I was honest told her that although it is good to provide information to her in her home language, she only was using Spanish to talk to her and that the student in return never found the need to respond in English because she felt more comfortable using her native language. Additionally, the student only had friends who spoke Spanish and did not feel the need to learn English. I suggested to the teacher and the other students to speak to the student in English and if needed to translate and to have the student respond in English with or without assistance.

Another example is when a teacher asked me how she can improve her classroom management. I suggested that she could change the formation of her desks and create small groups and pair students that can work together effectively. I also suggested providing incentives to students that followed the classroom rules and having a class incentive to promote teamwork and collaboration between the students, basically a democratic classroom. The democratic

classroom fosters critical thinking, authentic participation, and social and emotional learning. It's a humanizing space that empowers our students. Part of creating a democratic classroom is being aware of how to set up our classrooms, establish community, and make space for students' diverse voices, opinions, and perspectives (Marschall, July 27, 2021). For the classroom rules, I suggested the students make their rules and agree to follow them.

h) **Uses information about emerging education, economic, and social trends in planning and facilitating professional learning.**

Pennsauken Public Schools is located in Camden County, NJ. Historically, the town is a settling location for immigrant and lower income families. According to the U.S Census (2021), the population is 37,139; 25% White, 29% Black or African American, 35% Latino/Hispanic, 9% Asian and 2%other. The town's median income per household is $72,802, although 15.1% live in poverty. Another interesting fact is that 80.9% of the population has graduated high school, but only 20.1% have received higher education degrees (Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL01624). In addition to the above information, the student population is changing year to year, and more and more newcomer students settle in the area. When we plan professional learning, we consider the student population to have their weaknesses and strengths and their language proficiency. Also, when suggesting online platforms for the students to do at home, we make sure they are free of cost or that the district has purchased them and has given us access.

5. Portfolio Assignment 4 Reflection

Domain IV: Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student

Learning

The teacher leader demonstrates a deep understanding of the teaching and learning processes and uses this knowledge to advance the professional skills of colleagues by being a continuous learner and modeling reflective practice based on student results. The teacher leader works collaboratively with colleagues to ensure instructional practices are aligned to a shared vision, mission, and goals.

In Domain IV the teacher leader collaborates with other colleagues to promote shared goals for their students. They also model reflective practice based on students' outcomes. The teacher leader that facilitates improvement shares the following functions: facilitate the collection of data in order to improve the instructional and cultural environment of the school; engage with in reflective dialog with other colleagues to discuss their instruction based on observation and also, support them through different serving roles such as mentoring; serve as team leaders, uses technology to help students navigate social media; and promote equity and diversity through instructional strategies.

As an ELL teacher it is part of my job to help my colleagues understand what it means to be a second language learner. On various occasions I have become the bridge between my students, their families, and the homeroom teacher. Since I push in their instructional time, I observe how they teach their students including the Multilingual Learners. During our meetings, my colleagues and I discuss the lesson instructions and we reflect on the positives and negatives of them, as well as how to improve ourselves or make ourselves more effective. Also, at the

beginning of each year, I give a guide to my colleagues about how to modify their lessons and assessments and what their expectations are based on the students' ELP level (Kampouri Lagonik_MA2_METL50513).

Furthermore, I will discuss each function on how I facilitate improvements in instruction and teacher learning as a teacher leader and a dedicated advocate of my multilingual students.

a) **Facilitates the collection, analysis, and use of classroom- and school-based data to identify opportunities to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment, school organization, and school culture.**

In the previous domains the focus was on the collection and analysis of data and how the teacher leader promotes professional development and learning. Within this function, the teacher leader is called to facilitate and apply all the best strategies to improve teacher effectiveness and teacher practices that work. When working with others, whether they are your colleagues, administrators, students, parents or stakeholders, the key to a successful change and collaboration is dialogue and high standards of listening skills. Being able to observe my colleagues' instruction has helped me see teaching instruction from a different perspective and has also enabled me to make my own teaching instruction more effective and beneficial for my multilingual students. By observing my colleagues or when they observe my instructional practices, it allows us to give feedback to each other and share our strategies, improve the existing ones and modify them for the future. This occurs of course when feedback and recommendations are wanted.

Another way I put this function into practice is when during our monthly PLC meetings and after analyzing the collected data, we work together bringing on the table the best ways to

improve our teaching and learning strategies and help each other to improve their class climate and instructional outcomes. This year has been a tough one so far because of the new curriculum that we have purchased and are expected to implement in our classrooms. I will talk more about this below.

My district changed their ELA curriculum for K-5 this year and we have moved forward into promoting the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy. Although I was not a part of the curriculum selection process, I have learned a lot about our newly purchased curriculum, the benefits it has but also the weaknesses it has. During our initial professional developments on the curriculum (I do not teach this specific curriculum, but my students use it during their ELA time), I quickly realized that although the intentions were good, the committee that picked the curriculum did not take under consideration the multilingual students that are still English language learners and the special education students. It is a scripted curriculum that moves at a fast pace. Genishi & Dyson (2009) discuss this type of curriculum as a one size fits all approach with the use of scripted curricula, the pressures that are placed by accountability and moving at a fast pace, and they explain a disconnect between the diversity of young children learners and the curriculum created for them (Kindle, loc 415). More specifically, I asked if there is room for the lessons to be modified; visual vocabulary cards/slides; enough diversity so students can relate to the characters/ stories, and the answers were not what I expected. As ESL teachers we must make it clear to our districts that a script curriculum that wants a one size fits all education, just won't work for our ELLs and frankly it won't work for non-ELLs either. Therefore, we included ELL students, their experiences and culture by teaching our students the curriculum according to their language levels and skills, and with the right strategies, assignments, and assessments. When teaching we think of ways to include our students' background. For example, when

teaching about the US Independence Day we can explain it to our ELL students by giving an example of their own country's Independence Day if applicable or discuss what actions have there been to restore freedom to their country. Another way to include ELL's experience is to take advantage of our students' prior knowledge. If they know how to read and write in their first language, then it will be easier to comprehend it in the second language.

As caring and well-informed educators, my colleagues and I create activities based on the curriculum that are on our students' English levels. We differentiate our lessons and explain to our students in various ways the scripted curriculum and give our ELLs the time they need to process the new knowledge. With the right strategies and appropriate activities and assessments we help our multilingual and special education students achieve their linguistic goals (Group A_MA1_BLED40520).

In addition to the above curriculum, during a K-5 ELL teachers meeting, we discovered that our students did not have a consistent transition from grades k-3 to 4-5 regarding their curriculum for English Language Learners. By collaborating with my content colleagues and after researching new language learning curriculums, we contacted our Curriculum Director and purchased a new, consistent curriculum for our multilingual students. As our society's priorities change, so will the curriculum we teach our students. In the last decades curriculums have changed numerous times but the base theory of them involves past theories and principles. Curriculum change is inevitable in any society. These changes occur because there is not a perfect curriculum, and there is most often a need to adjust to the economic, technological, social, political, and ideological needs in society (Button, 2021).

At this point it is important to mention the curriculum approach we used to make the above curriculum apply to our students their academic, social and emotional needs. According to

Ornstein (2017), An approach expresses a viewpoint about curriculum's development and design; the role of the learner, teacher, and curriculum specialist in planning curriculum; the curriculum's goals; and the important issues that must be examined. The two approaches that really apply in our case are the Humanistic approach and the Systems approach.

The Humanistic approach allows us to focus on our students and their needs. As an ELL teacher, many of my students are immigrants or first-generation children of immigrants. These students have many gaps and needs not only academically, but also socially, cognitively, and emotionally.

The Systems approach is a way to keep track of students' development and achievement and to recenter the focus on them. More specifically, by collecting data and analyzing it, self-monitoring, collaborating with others and sharing information as well as responsibility, educators can effectively work toward the students' needs (Kampouri Lagonik_Journal1_METL50512).

b) **Engages in reflective dialogue with colleagues based on observation of instruction, student work, and assessment data and helps make connections to research-based effective practices.**

As I mentioned earlier, I have the privilege to unofficially observe many of my colleagues due to the High Intensity English Language program my district implements. As a result, a lot of collaboration and feedback occurs during the day between me and my colleagues. During our PLCs my colleagues and I share our findings based on our students' quantitative and qualitative data sources such as assessments, formative and summative; their behavior changes and reasons that might have affected their socio-emotional changes; their attendance; their socioeconomic status; demographics; language and cultural differences; and learning difficulties/disabilities. When looking into all the above data, we look deeper into the issues and

try to find solutions that are research based and can be measurable for our future goals. One example is the implementation of the Science of Reading and Structured Literature methodology. We have been using it since last school year and we have seen an improvement in our students' reading skills and relationship towards reading. For my Classroom Inquiry project (Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50514), I implemented the reading and fluency strategies in my class, after a dialogue I had with my schools Reading Specialist/ Basic Skills teacher and based on the research I conducted I found the effectiveness of this method of learning and the instructional strategies used.

c) Supports colleagues' individual and collective reflection and professional growth by serving in roles such as mentor, coach, and content facilitator.

Teacher leaders are supportive and recognize others' contributions, expertise and skills. As much as I would like to, I am not an expert in all educational practices and departments. I am a learner before anything else and I do need my colleagues to teach me new things, show me their strategies and findings and I do have an amazing mentor that shares her expertise and knowledge with me.

Being humble and supportive and learning to be a good listener and problem solver, I can understand that my colleagues need to feel valued, supported, appreciated and successful in what they do. I am not an official mentor to any of my colleagues, but I would like to pursue this role in the future and help new teachers understand the profession and all the opportunities they will have as educators of young students. However, I do act as a content facilitator by being one of the building PLC Coordinators and also as a multi-grade Level ELL teacher. Therefore, I support my colleagues emotionally by listening to their concerns, asking questions and providing solutions. Goleman explains that the leader's mood and behaviors drive the moods and behaviors

of everyone else (Richert et al. 2020, p.97; Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2001). During our

PLCs I made sure to explain the importance of giving each other the opportunity to share, grow

and contribute to the common goal. Therefore, we celebrate the accomplishments of the PLC

members both individually and collectively. Members are encouraged to express their positive

thoughts on other members' contributions. Positive comments are uplifting and will help all

members be more optimistic. Also, we support one another in our professional development. We

make it a priority to celebrate one another's success as well as offer support and advice when it is

needed or asked for (Group A_MA1-50511). As life-long learning educators we must understand

the importance of uplifting others and encouraging our colleagues to be open minded and not

fear to share their knowledge, experiences, and skills. I am fortunate to have many colleagues

that do not feel the need to be competitive and that share many of their resources with others and

I don't miss the opportunity to give them a shout out during our PLCs, PLDs and mention their

achievements to others.

d) **Serves as a team leader to harness the skills, expertise, and knowledge of colleagues to address curricular expectations and student learning needs.**

I have similar examples for this function as of functions a) and b). During our PLC

meetings that we facilitate in our building, we also include other specialists to join us and give us

feedback from their professional perspective and expertise. For example, in the last PLC we had

the Math Specialist/ Basic Skills teacher join us, and she explained the data we collected from

the iReady assessment, and we compared it to that of the beginning of the year. She

recommended to the homeroom teachers where to center their focus from the upcoming NJSLA

assessment and what practices our students needed to follow to see an increase in their

academics. The PLC we facilitated in February was focussed on the new ELA curriculum and

the assessments in Lexia, ORF and Fundations. For this meeting the Reading Specialist/ Basic

Skills teacher helped us analyze and data collected and suggested certain strategies we could use

during shared reading. Last year, when I was organizing and putting together my Inquiry Project

(Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50514), another Reading Specialist/Basic Skills teacher helped

me understand the strategies and research around the Science of Reading and Structured

Literature, as this was her area of focus, and she was being trained to facilitate these strategies

into our building. As a teacher leader and facilitator of the second and third grade PLCs, I

encourage my colleagues to contribute to the success of our curriculum expectations through

their knowledge, skills, and expertise.

e)   **Uses knowledge of existing and emerging technologies to guide colleagues in helping
students skillfully and appropriately navigate the universe of knowledge available
on the Internet, use social media to promote collaborative learning, and connect
with people and resources around the globe.**

When speaking about changes in the curriculum to match the 21st century, the first thing

that comes to mind is the technology explosion and the need to educate our students by using

technological tools such as computers, smartboards, tablets, websites and anything tech related.

Technology has been an essential part of this era's education, however just teaching the tools is

not enough. Stephen Wilmarth in chapter 5 of Curriculum 21 -Essential Education for a

Changing World by (Hayes-Jacobs, 2010), explains how technology influenced the social trends

such as social production, social networks, semantic web, media grids, nonlinear learning, and

the effects it has regarding culture, society, learning and teaching in the 21st century.

Technology is used worldwide and like Wilmarth points out, it is like technology *"never didn't*

exist". With technology being a huge part of today's norm, students can connect to the outside

world more easily and learn and understand more about the world and global issues.

Globalization is happening and the current students will be the ones that will be most affected by

it (Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50512). Educators must be prepared to give the correct

guidance to their students and teach them through all kinds of different platforms and technology

tools that will benefit their skill building in technology.

I have mentioned in other Domains of this Self- Reflection, my contribution in guiding

my colleagues in this department. Being an educator in the 21st century requires you to expand

your knowledge in different fields and be up to date with new trends, learning skills, and

professional developments. In my years of teaching, I have helped and guided many of my

colleagues in how to help our students through different educational platforms and usage of

technological tools such as Chromebook, smartboards, projectors and more. Some of the

platforms I have used for my students, and I have promoted to my colleagues include: Lumio

(Smart Suits), Google Classroom, Book Creator, Kahoot, Grapeseed, Jam board, Go Guardian,

Class Dojo, Kahoot, Google Search Engine, Quizlet, Formative, Pear Deck, Prodigy, YouTube,

Reading A-Z and Google Slides.

In addition to the above, I relate to the International Schools Network and the TESOL

International Association and when I find interesting topics and studies, I promote them to my

colleagues.

One of my future goals as a teacher leader is to connect our school with a school abroad

and form a partnership and friendship through new technologies, and exchange experiences,

skills as well as to create an environment of global learning for our students.

f) Promotes instructional strategies that address issues of diversity and equity in the classroom and ensures that individual student learning needs remain the central focus of instruction.

One of the leadership Committees I am a part of is the Diversity & Equity Committee and I have been an advocate for my students and their families, but also for those who fall in this category. As a teacher leader at my school and as an ELL teacher, I communicate often with my colleagues and administrators about how to modify lessons, homework and give proper accommodation to those who need it. My advocacy does not end with the multilingual community, rather it extends to the students that have IEPs, 504 Plans, and parents that aren't able to help with homework because of their language barriers; lack of educational experience; working schedules, etc. I also communicate with them about cultural and background differences, how others perceive education and how to properly communicate with the parents to get them to work with them. An example of this is when my ELL colleague and I expressed our concerns about the lack of homework completion by our current and former multilingual students. After researching why our students did not complete their homework, we discovered a few issues with the assignments like being very wordy math problems, literature was above their reading level etc. There were also other reasons such as parents not at home to help, the students had to take care of their siblings or parents were not able to help because of lack of education or language barriers. We then looked into other students who also did not do their homework and discovered that most of the lower socioeconomic students were not completing their homework and the reasons were similar to our multilingual students. We then proceeded to address this issue with our building administrator and suggest a homework club after school to help our multilingual students and other students who needed help. This suggestion was presented to our

Elementary director who used Title I funding and created a homework club in all K-5 schools in our district.

Another way to promote equity and address diversity issues is by embracing our students' backgrounds, culture, differences, and mistakes. Noruera explains that by embracing students' cultures, giving them quality education, and providing them with clear guidance on how to succeed, students can be empowered and work harder. More specifically he states, "Kids that think they are going somewhere act differently than those who go nowhere" (Noguera, December 2,2018). Through my instruction and when I collaborate with my colleagues, I make sure to promote the importance of making our students feel that they belong and that they are important to us, our classroom, and our school. Moreover, starting in the beginning of the year, I will collaborate with my colleagues and give them a list of accommodations and modifications they could use and offer my assistance in making these accommodations happen.

Also, through the Parent Involvement Nights my colleagues have understood the importance of promoting diversity and inclusion and equity. In previous years, it would only be the ELL teachers asking administrators to translate flyers, announcements and have translators for parent/teacher conferences and events. Nowadays, my homeroom colleagues also make those requests, and they value the ELL teachers and their contributions to our profession and school.

In conclusion, working closely with your colleagues to facilitate improvements in instruction and student learning is a step forward in becoming a successful teacher leader. By welcoming my colleagues' contributions, giving and receiving feedback as well as learning from each other, we create an environment that is less intimidating, more accepting and a place where working together is the key to success.

6. Portfolio Assignment 5 Reflection

Domain V: Promoting the Use of Assessments and Data for School and

District Improvement

The teacher leader is knowledgeable about current research on classroom- and school-based

data and the design and selection of appropriate formative and summative assessment methods.

The teacher leader shares this knowledge and collaborates with colleagues to use assessment

and other data to make informed decisions that improve learning for all students and to inform

school and district improvement strategies.

       Fullan (2020) and Richert et al. (2020) both support the idea of "go slow to go fast".

Basically, to have a change that is successful, you must have the time to understand the problem

and prepare for the change (KampouriLagonik_MA2_METL01624). In my professional journey,

I have learned the value of collecting data and using it to make my lessons more effective and

creating a learning environment that is based on trust, academic improvement and student

learning centered. Looking into the strengths and weaknesses of my lessons but also the

outcomes of my students', I have learned that there is always room for improvement and that

there isn't a perfect lesson that can be repeated year after year. Understanding the above and

using it in my role as a teacher leader gives me the opportunity to look at student and classroom

data as factors that are beneficial to our professional development and our learning planning.

Multiple data sources also help ensure that the information obtained is reliable and consistent

over time and across similar tasks and maximizes a student's opportunities to demonstrate

mastery (Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center, 2007; Rivera et al., 2008).

Therefore, when collecting data, it is important to include both qualitative and quantitative data in order to have a spherical understanding of our students and their learning.

Following, I will explain how as a teacher leader I implement the functions of Domain V of Teacher Leadership and/or how I intend to do so in the near future.

a) **Increases the capacity of colleagues to identify and use multiple assessment tools aligned to state and local standards.**

In the PLCs where I am the coordinator and facilitator, I encourage teachers with different teaching and educational backgrounds to step up and explain to the rest of us their findings or have them explain to us the data we have collected and what is the best way to use it in our lesson plans and classroom implementation. In my building we have many educators with master's degrees in specialized educational areas and we also have a couple PhD holders; we also have many colleagues that hold degrees other than education, such as law and engineering. But even the ones that did not pursue an additional degree, they too are valuable members of our learning community and have years of experience and often have taught multiple classes over the years and are crucial mentors for the new teachers. The last group, on the other hand, have great skills in data collection as their generation is higher tech knowledgeable and are more familiar with the new trends in education. By utilizing my colleagues' capabilities, we are able to work as a united group and share the workload based on what each group of people can bring to the table and are more experienced doing. For example, when it comes to English Language Learners and the assessments that measure English Language proficiency, the ELL team will lead that data analysis and will suggest ways to improve that group of students. Moreover, the reading specialist will measure student data and share it with the administration, homeroom teachers and

other specialists in the school. By doing so, we all work together to make learning goals that are aligned with the grade level of our students and the NJ standards.

b) **Collaborates with colleagues in the design, implementation, scoring, and interpretation of student data to improve educational practice and student learning.**

To improve our student learning, we need to be able to look at all aspects with different lenses, brainstorm ideas; make plans that include multiple strategies and are based on multiple sources of qualitative and quantitative data. To do this, we need to collaborate with our colleagues and get as much information as possible to make an action plan that will benefit our students. One way I collaborate with my colleagues, in the above way, is through our PLCs where we collect, analyze, and use data to inform and assess the effectiveness of our curriculum; the effectiveness of our assessments and the effectiveness of the instruction we use.

A second example is by participating in IEP meetings that involve my students. The IEP committee meets every month and discusses specific student's progress and creates educational and behavioral goals. We then meet for the specific student two or three months later, to discuss the student's progress and analyze what strategies work, what didn't and why they did or didn't.

Next, is the ELL common planning time, where my ELL colleagues and I collaborate to schedule our assessments, discuss students, plan team activities based on thematics and student ELP and grade level, and reflect on our curriculum and ways to improve it if needed.

I also collaborate with the basic skills teachers frequently as many of my newcomer multilingual students came from countries where they experience interrupting schooling or have no educational experiences because of COVID shutdown and limited technological resources. For my inquiry, I received valuable feedback, resources, and assistance from my Basic Skills/

Reading Specialist colleague. My colleague helped me collect the information I needed from multiple sources and she also helped me implement the Structured Literature strategies into my students' academic learning.

Finally, I collaborated with the second and third grade teachers through our PLCs but also in common planning periods and we analyzed all of our students' assessments such as Formative, IReady Math, Lexia, WIDA ACCESS domain assessments, the ORF scores and the NJSLA practice assessments.

c) **Creates a climate of trust and critical reflection in order to engage colleagues in challenging conversations about student learning data that lead to solutions to identified issues.**

Collaboration with colleagues and collaborative culture need time to develop and become a norm in a school setting. In the four years I have been in this position, it took some time for people to be able to trust me and to feel comfortable sharing their ideas, their worries and their professional challenges. Teachers discuss their concerns with colleagues who they think they can trust instead of finding solutions in a PLC environment (Kampouri Lagonik_DQ3_METL50511). Based on the above, when I decided to pursue my Masters in Teacher Leadership, I thought about what I wanted to do with my new degree and how I would be a valuable source for my colleagues, my students, and their families. I thought about what the current issues are at my school and what I could do to be helpful. I also reflected on myself and realized that I am a people person and that many of my colleagues confine themselves to me and trust me with many of their classroom difficulties. So, when the opportunity arose to sign up to be one of the PLC Coordinators in my building, I took the initiative and opportunity to manage it

and create norms, such as trust and respect that are crucial to the success of the PLC (Group A

PLC Project_MA1_METL50511).

Besides the PLC groups and the formalities of establishing norms and being trusted for

confidentiality and support in an enclosed environment, one must be able to develop emotional

intelligence and be able to support their colleagues when they need it in a professional and

personal level. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand your own emotions and those

of other people. By demonstrating emotional intelligence, a leader is able to use this intelligence

to guide their employees' thinking and behavior.

Emotional intelligence is an important component in building relationships. Richert et al

(2020) state, "To fully know others, their motivations, and their fears and to interact effectively

with them, you have to possess and demonstrate emotional intelligence". Basically, if you

understand yourself; your weaknesses and strengths and can manage your emotions in a positive

way; and if you observe and understand the emotions of others, then you can lead into building

relationships that will be the foundations of your organization. Emotional intelligence can help

build relationships by inspiring and influencing others, developing empathy and awareness as

well as finding solutions to conflicts and weaknesses. It is also important for developing trust

among each other and the culture you want to promote (Kampouri Lagonik_DQ5_METL50511).

d) **Works with colleagues to use assessment and data findings to promote changes in
instructional practices or organizational structures to improve student learning.**

As stated in previous functions, it is important to collaborate with your colleagues (grade

level, content area, special education, special area teachers, etc.) in order to make educational

changes that are beneficial to your students. When gathering all the different data we measure

our students with and we hold meetings to analyze and understand our students' strengths, weaknesses, level of understanding and compare them to different classes or even previous years assessments, then we are all accountable to work together to figure out solutions or in many cases celebrate our goal achievements and record our actions that lead our students to do well. In previous years and this current school year, we have many challenges with students showing up on our doorsteps with minimum educational backgrounds; we have a very high percentage of students with IEPs or 504 plans (28.9 %); 63.5% of students come from economically disadvantaged families; and 25.2% of students are English language learners. Considering the qualitative data, we mentioned in addition to academic performances, it is necessary to work as a team with common goals and be able to adjust them with flexibility in order to cater to our student population. Based on such collaboration with our colleagues and administrators, my ELL colleagues and I suggested to form a Homework after school club, in addition to the Saturday school our district offers, so that students that need help with homework completion and cannot attend other learning programs, can have the opportunity to get extra help and therefore perform better academically.

7. Portfolio Assignment 6 Reflection

Domain VI: Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community

The teacher leader understands that families, cultures, and communities have a significant impact on educational processes and student learning. The teacher leader works with colleagues to promote ongoing systematic collaboration with families, community members, business and community leaders, and other stakeholders to improve the educational system and expand opportunities for student learning.

Family collaboration and community partnerships are crucial for the development and academic success of their students. Since I first started working as an educator, it has always been my goal to involve my students' families and the community in my instruction and educational events. Although this goal has always been achieved, there are years that it seems easy and parents are very involved and other years, such as this one, when parents find many excuses to avoid collaborating with us and they are very hard to reach. Through Parent Involvement Nights (PIN), parent teacher conferences, class Dojo, school events and community events, my colleagues and I try to find ways to unite with them and work together to support their children academically and emotionally. We also have advocated for our ELL families to be able to provide them with a translator during our events and meetings, so language is not the barrier of lack of involvement (Kampouri Lagonik_MA2_METL50513).

To extend the above, I will describe the actions I take and describe how important this domain is to me through the following functions:

a) Uses knowledge and understanding of the different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, and languages in the school community to promote effective interactions among colleagues, families, and the larger community.

I am an English Language Learner teacher; therefore, all my students are multicultural and multilingual students. Good & Lavigne (2018, p. 354) explain that teachers need to develop accurate knowledge of the minority students they teach if they are to be successful. Many of my students are born in the US by first generation immigrants and primarily speak a language other than English when interacting with their family and relatives (KampouriLagonik_MA3_METL50516). They have rich cultures, languages, backgrounds, ethnic identities and traditions. As a first generation Canadian born into an immigrant family, I learned from a very young age the importance of preserving your ethnic identity, your culture, your faith and most importantly your language. These experiences followed me when I immigrated to the US and I try to pass them on to my children. Having this knowledge and in depth understanding has helped me empathize with my students and their families, I understand the importance of being culturally appropriate with all my students and I have learned that there are many things to consider when teaching diverse students. Some ways I use my knowledge on this topic to promote effective interaction among colleagues, families and the community is by handing out a "Get to Know you" survey in the beginning of the year for the parents to fill out about their child, but also to see how the parents prefer to communicate, in what language and when their availability is. Another thing me and my ELL colleagues have promoted is the translation of all flyers in Spanish and Vietnamese and the reassurance that we will have translators during our events and conferences. This has helped parents feel more comfortable participating at events that normally they wouldn't attend. More importantly, I promote my

knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures to my colleagues by explaining to them the importance of understanding cultural differences, being patient, understanding that our students are raised differently and talk about different customs, cultural gestures, celebrations and educational views. For example, some of my Asian students, especially those who came fresh off the boat, will not make eye contact with me because in Vietnamese culture it is disrespectful to look them in the eyes. In American culture, not looking into someone's eyes while talking could be interpreted as disrespectful. Another example is that my Arabic students during Ramadan don't eat or drink anything from sunrise to sunset and they can appear more tired and cranky during the month they fast. Teachers must be aware of that and be sensitive about their religious tradition. I take my time to learn about my students, their families, their home countries, their customs, and their cultural backgrounds and I do this to be able to share, educate and motivate others to do the same. During our spring Parent Involvement Night, the president of the Board of Education joined the event, and I had the opportunity to have a conversation with her about the purpose of the event and how most of the participants were actually parents of multilingual students. I explained to her the importance of having this group of parents at these events and the obstacles that they have to overcome to be there that night. The president of the BOE was so impressed with what the PIN committee had prepared for the night and how well we knew our families and background, she sent our administrator the next day an email thanking us and telling him that she learned so much in an hour about the needs of our multicultural/ multilingual families than she did in all the years she has been in the board. Next week we are hosting an International Night at our School and we invited her to attend and she accepted the invitation with enthusiasm. For the International Night, we have prepared a program that includes a parade of flags, cultural activities such as dance performances from the Hellenic group, Drum playing

from Taiwan, Vietnamese lanterns, Latin dances, food from different countries such as Mexico,

Italy, Greece, Japan and Turkey. We also asked parents to dress their children with their

country's traditional costumes and be part of the celebration. Finally, during the last couple of

months of school we will be learning outdoor games from around the world and have the

students play all games during the end of the year "Games around the World Night". Genishi

and Dyson state "diversity is the new norm" (2009, p. 142). Classrooms should recognize and

encompass the various cultures that make up their community. Educators can accomplish this by

using students and their family's funds of knowledge. This can be accomplished by creating

opportunities for students and families to share their culture, talents or experiences. Creating

lessons based around students, creates meaningful learning opportunities and motivates all

students to learn. Celebrating and recognizing diversity and bilingualism in the classroom adds to

students' sociolinguistic flexibility (Genishi & Dyson, 2009, p. 139_Kampouri Lagonik_GROUP

A - BLED 40520).

This is a great opportunity for teachers and students to learn many new games and

compare them with the ones we learn in the US and I am looking forward to this event.

b) Models and teaches effective communication and collaboration skills with families and

other stakeholders focused on attaining equitable achievement for students of all

backgrounds and circumstances.

Encouraging our families to be involved and to be active in their child's academic

outcomes is a priority of mine and I actively try to keep them in the loop in many ways. Family

communication and participation is extremely important in a student's education. I have been in

contact with most parents and try to keep them informed about their child's education, but also

about other events that are related to the school community, such as Parent Involvement Nights,

special dress up days, half days and picture day. The main forms of communication I use are ClassDojo, email, Google Meets, phone calls, and meeting in person for conferences or events. An example of how I communicate with parents is when I send parents messages on Dojo to inform them about their child's progress or areas they need to improve. I also reach out to parents about upcoming events such as Picture Day, fun activities, apps or websites, schedule changes and to send them pictures of their children that show their work in class. When I communicate with the parents or guardians of my students, I think what I want to say and take consideration their cultural differences; their language barriers, especially their lack of academic English vocabulary; and the miscommunication in translation Google translator or any other app might create, if I am not simple and clear with what I want to say.

Parents usually use ClassDojo to communicate with me, and rarely send emails. Some of the information provided by the parents is about attendance, family pictures, and questions about schoolwork. Since ClassDojo has a record keeping system, I do not usually record my communication with parents in my google spreadsheet. However, I do record phone calls, text messages and outcomes of each communication. Another way to communicate with ELL students' parents is through official school letters. Furthermore, I update my monthly newsletter on my school webpage. In the newsletter, I include something fun for the students and their families, such as local free activities, websites with fun activities and language apps. I also include important reminders, the unit we are working on, and the school monthly calendar. All the above mentioned documents are translated or can be translated with a click in the spoken languages that my class has. As Eberly et al. concluded, "Open, honest, and reciprocal cultural exchanges can take place when educators assume their professional responsibility to reach out to parents in thoughtful and respectful ways" (2007).

It is important to mention that I also send home in English and language spoken at home the Unit letters from my curriculum as it is important for the parents to know and understand what their children are learning in class. Family involvement is crucial for positive academic improvement (Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50513), and it is the responsibility of a teacher leader to be able to encourage and include multilingual parents as much as possible.

Furthermore, last year I created a program that promotes parent and student interaction. The program is called "Read to Me" and the activity encourages parents to read to their child in their native language and the child reads to them in English. The students have to answer simple comprehension questions, rate the books and write down their questions. To communicate with a parent about an individual student, I usually keep a telephone contact log with the name, date, time, topic of discussion, method of communication and outcome. So far communicating with my students' families has been successful and meaningful.

c) Facilitates colleagues' self-examination of their own understandings of community culture and diversity and how they can develop culturally responsive strategies to enrich the educational experiences of students and achieve high levels of learning for all students.

While I provide professional development to my colleagues about MLs and their unique backgrounds, cultures and languages, I continue to educate myself and extend my professional development around this group of students. Being inclusive means spreading effective awareness about diversity, cultural differences, accepting others for who they are instead of how they look, or what language they speak and if where they are from. My job as a teacher leader is to promote these characteristics, find ways to help my ML students adjust and develop academically, and socially in their new environment, without losing their cultural and linguistic identity. One way I

incorporate this is by including my students' home language in my classroom. Developing lessons embracing the students' culture and helping connect the material may positively contribute to reading development (Mendoza, 2017). This strategy is very effective as students learn best when they can connect the first language with the second and if a visual is possible the knowledge is more effective and meaningful. Braunworth & Franco (2017) explain that, by building on a student's culture, the student can use their background to support the new academic learning and can connect it to prior experiences. Other strategies I use and encourage my colleagues to do the same are, using lessons that the students can relate to and can develop dialogue that is meaningful and familiar to them, learn about other cultures, celebrate different holidays. During the winter I teach my students about the different holidays that involve lights, family, food and presents. The celebrations were Diwali, Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, New Years, Lunar New Years and Three Kings Day. We learned how to wish others in different languages, and we learned using Venn Diagrams the differences and similarities each celebration.

All the above strategies enrich the students' educational experience and make them and me culturally aware while achieving our academic goals.

d) Develops a shared understanding among colleagues of the diverse educational needs of families and the community.

The Teacher Leader must have a mindset that every challenge is an opportunity to learn from, grow professionally from, and provide information about. Cooperation between other colleagues (such as homeroom teachers) and ELL teachers can improve the academics of the ML students and create an empathetic environment. This will lead to a smooth adjustment and better

understanding of ML students' needs. To achieve this, a teacher leader can do the following actions: Have a meeting with colleagues and administrators who work with my ML students; Ask about what expectations and goals they have for the ML students; Explain to them the expectations we have according to their current skills; Suggest a cooperative partnership with colleagues, to accomplish our goals together; Suggest activities to help our students and keep in touch with frequent meetings including ML parents (Kampouri Lagonik_A4_BLED40515). Moreover, as an ELL teacher in a predominantly diverse district, most of my students come from very low socioeconomic backgrounds with parents that are partially educated in their home language or not educated at all. This factor itself brings many barriers and injustice to my students especially when it comes to gradings, assessments for school and for the state. M. MacDonald (p.260) describes academic tracking as "a common and pervasive practice across high schools where students are sorted into either an honors track and general track based on previous standardized test scores, grades and teacher recommendations"(Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2020). This statement, unfortunately, is very relevant in lower elementary grades and students have a sense of failure during each award assembly where their names never seem to be announced. Our jobs as leaders are to spread awareness, advocate for change, educate our colleagues and administration about the differences our ELL students have compared to English Only students and make our students focus on learning and succeeding academically instead of grade hunting (Kampouri Lagonik_DQ6_METL50513).

When I was conducting my research for the course METL50512- *Curriculum Development for Teacher Leaders and other School Professionals,* my target population was the second and third grade ML students. The following was indicated "In the district that I chose there are currently 44 second grade ELL students and 31 third grade ELL students. The English Levels of

Proficiency for these two groups vary from 1.0-6.0 within the four domains of language

acquisition, such as Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing. The ELP's are in accordance

with the WIDA rubric used by the state of NJ. The majority of the ELL population of these two

grades are Hispanic/ Latino and Vietnamese is the second highest population. It is very important

to mention that most of the students in study are in the ELL program for 2 or more years and

most of the students are born in the US. This is very significant because these students have

never learned their home language in an academic setting and do not have the home support to

advance academically in their current homeroom classes. Another fact of this population is that

they come from low-income families and a low educational background with very limited

resources outside of the school setting".

Having worked with these two grades over the last four years, I have noticed a pattern of

their academic performance which is to do better with their oral language and reading in second

grade and then in third grade they do much better with writing than the previous years. Most

ELL students that have been in the program since Kindergarten tend to exit by the end of third

grade and those who don't usually there is another factor preventing them from succeeding in

their academic goals (Kampouri Lagonik_MA1_METL50512). Based on the above findings, I

was able to develop lessons that include diverse characters and topics relevant to the students

who know of fairy tales, but also as ELL students and mostly children of immigrants, they

understand challenges, inequality and lack of equity. Furthermore, it is better because it involves

more hands-on/ interactive activities and technology use for research, that the students need to

practice; Idealization value for this project can be considered that the students will learn the

difference between fact and opinion, hey will be able to critically analyze and think, they will be

able to solve problems and understand the concepts of equity, inequality (Kampouri

Lagonik_MA2_METL50512).

Finally, for my inquiry project, my goal was to find effective ways to help my ELL

students with reading fluency and comprehension. Reading comprehension and fluency is a weak

spot for my current second and third grade ELL students. The majority of my students are

struggling to read at grade level and most need additional support when it comes to language arts

and reading comprehension. Most of the second-grade students, during the pandemic, were

learning remotely meanwhile parents were unable to support them academically. Many of my

third-grade students, on the other hand, were in-person students, but they have special

educational needs or are newcomers. It is significant to mention that, although most English

Language Learners (ELLs) are born and raised in the US, because of their first language spoken

at home, they are classified as ELLs. There are many other reasons why these students struggle

such as low background knowledge, low socioeconomic status, absence of academic language

use in their first language, not enough phonemic instruction and limited academic vocabulary

usage and comprehension. In addition to the above problem, many ELL students are

misrepresented or overrepresented in special education because of lack of assessment in their

first language. It is also important to mention that ELL students can be overlooked by the

homeroom teachers, who are trying to catch up with the curriculum being taught, so they can

meet their deadlines, instead of taking the time to teach in depth and modify their instruction for

the needs of their ELL students (Kampouri Lagonik_A1P2_METL50514). The above

information has been shared with my colleagues to inform them of the academic, diverse,

cultural and socioemotional needs of our ML population.

e) Collaborates with families, communities, and colleagues to develop comprehensive strategies to address the diverse educational needs of families and the community.

As mentioned in earlier sections of this paper. Collaboration with colleagues, parents and the community is very important. It takes a village to raise a child and, in this process, we are all in the same team. We all want what is best for our students and we all want them to develop academically and socially. Parents usually use ClassDojo to communicate with me and my colleagues, and rarely send emails or calls. Class Dojo makes it easy for the parents, since the app includes instant translation on both ends and it is text based. Some of the information provided by the parents is about attendance, family pictures, and questions about schoolwork. In the same app, teachers can become "co-teachers" and collaborate with the parents and other teachers at the same time.

Also, the second and third grade teachers and I have regular informal and formal meetings to talk about our students' needs and what strategies we can use to improve their educational outcomes. We also discuss behavior, social emotional learning, family concerns and positive news the students share. As an advocate for my students I advice the teachers I work with about strategies they can use that I find helpful; I have shared with them a modification list that is appropriate for Multilingual students of all ELP levels; I have explained to them what the WIDA rubric stands for and what the ELP level of our students means; I actively modify activities and tests for my students or read instructions for them when taking tests. I also share materials I find or made as well suggest ideas of activities and centers they can use to engage their Multilingual and Monolingual students. When I push in their classrooms, I am always welcomed to share my input and share different ways and strategies for learning. I also

participate in IR&S meeting where I share my input about my students and inform those involved of the progress of my Multilingual students or the concerns I have. I also work closely with the basic skills teachers since most of my Multilingual students need additional support; with the other two ELL teachers. This year I am involved in the following committees that are related with this function: School safety/climate committee; Equity committee; Parent Involvement Night committee and ELL PIN committee (district). The PIN committee organized two successful events for Reading and Math relatively. Moreover, in September I started a campaign for a Donors Choose project (STEM Activities for Effective English Language Learners Development) worth $500. Currently we are preparing for the International Night with the other ELL staff and Mrs. Crawford, and we will also do an outdoor "Games around the World Night" in June.

Through all the above activities I spread awareness about diversity and inclusion. As an ELL teacher and a teacher leader, I always promote and encourage diversity awareness and equity as well as embracing others' differences.

8. Portfolio Assignment 7 Reflection

Domain VII: Advocating for Student Learning and the Profession

The teacher leader understands how educational policy is made at the local, state, and national level as well as the roles of school leaders, boards of education, legislators, and other stakeholders in formulating those policies. The teacher leader uses this knowledge to advocate for student needs and for practices that support effective teaching and increase student learning and serves as an individual of influence and respect within the school, community, and profession.

Every day is a new challenge when teaching ELL students. There are so many things I have learned in the last five years including the challenges of getting the proper services for your students, because they receive ELL services. My position requires me to advocate for my students and their families, and I do so with my colleagues each and every day. To better assist and advocate for them, I keep myself updated with new information, legislation and state guidelines. I recently advocated for my students by suggesting to create a homework club for struggling students that do not have family support or whose families are unable to help because of their language barrier (Kampouri Lagonik_MA2_METL50513).

a) **Shares information with colleagues within and/or beyond the district regarding how local, state, and national trends and policies can impact classroom practices and expectations for student learning.**

Believing in the importance of communication and collaboration are a couple of reasons why someone would want to be a teacher leader. Other reasons would be to help make impactful decisions and change. Being a teacher leader and an ELL teacher has taught me that it isn't enough to just show up at your job and teach. Instead, you must continue educating yourself each and every day, keep up with all the changes happening around you and all the new local, and federal policies. You must also be aware of events that occur outside of the country that potentially could affect our students or our schools in the future. For example, the episodes in Palestine have had a huge impact on our Palestinian students and the students wanted to talk about the events and how they feel about what is going on at home and in the community. When the students expressed that to me, after my lesson I spoke to my colleagues and the school counselors to find ways to inform in a safe/ kid friendly way the events that are happening in the Middle East. Similarly, I had a conversation with my principal about some colleagues on the reasons we have so many students coming to us from Haiti, Nicaragua, and Guatemala with limited or no educational background because of the danger of armed gangs and high poverty.

Another way I fulfill this function is by sharing information with my colleagues about the Title III policy, the requirements and funding it provides to our schools; The English language programs and the entering and exiting requirements and what is considered a language barrier compared to other learning difficulties or disabilities. It is crucial that our school provides equal treatment to all our students. Also, as ESL teachers we need to make sure that our students participate in all programs they are entitled to. For example, our ELLs have the right to

participate in programs such as special education, sports, gifted and talented programs regardless of their language proficiency. As Menken & Garcia (2010) note, "Students who need support to learn EAL are entitled to the same and equal opportunities as all children in the mainstream but are also recognized as needing different and specific provisions to raise levels of achievement" (Kampouri Lagonik_DQ7_BLED40510).

b) **Works with colleagues to identify and use research to advocate for teaching and learning processes that meet the needs of all students.**

This past year my colleagues and I have made great strides in collecting data through various sources in order to use it to advocate for my student. We use our data in our PLCs to be able to see the growth of our students and implement research-based strategies to improve our instruction and motivate our students to learn. We use data during IEP meetings, I&RS and CST meetings. We also use research-based methods to improve our school climate and build our students' character and therefore their educational culture. By collaborating with my colleagues about how to ensure the proper educational plan for our students based on their needs we help each other be more successful and promote student learning at the same time. Henderson (2018) explains the importance of collaboration that requires a positive culture, collective purpose, open-minded staff, time, and appropriate professional development (PD) with administrative support.

c) **Collaborates with colleagues to select appropriate opportunities to advocate for the rights and/or needs of students, to secure additional resources within the building or district that support student learning, and to communicate effectively with targeted audiences such as parents and community members.**

Henderson(2018) suggests that collaboration is vital for a school's success and that teachers don't have all the resources and skills they need as individuals. Therefore, collaboration is necessary. This is evident in my everyday interactions with my colleagues regarding our students. These interactions happen during my push-in sessions; in our everyday discussions during our preps and lunches; in the PLC meetings and grade level meetings; in our School Climate committee and in our Diversity & Equity committee. With my colleagues, grade level and ELL, we communicate about our students' needs in groups but also individually. We know our students' personalities; abilities and we understand the socioemotional changes when those happen. We also know when our students are going through a rough patch at home and how their behaviors and commitments change because of that. Throughout the year we look at our students' data regarding their academic progress, but we also look at them as children who need our help and look up to us as mentors. My school is a Title I & III school with 63.5% economically disadvantaged students, 25.2% English Language Learners and 28.9% students with disabilities. It is fair to say our students and their families have a lot on their plates and need our support and voice. During my time at this district, and with the help of my colleagues, we have created the Homework Club for students who need extra support; we have created the mentor program for students that fall into the cracks; we do ELL Parent Involvement Nights in addition to the Parent Involvement Nights we have; we created an annual talent show, so the students can express their talents and skills; we organized an International night to embrace our

students' cultures and ethnicities.

In addition to the above, my colleagues and I collaborate to advocate for our students receiving the appropriate services. It is interesting to see how many professionals are not aware that if a student qualifies for one service, they are entitled to receive other services based on their needs. This was more evident when I first started working for my district, and I had students that were in general education classrooms even though they qualified for special education, because they were "ELL students" and their problem was "language", meanwhile the students were born in the US by bilingual parents and had older and younger siblings that never qualified for language services and the students had no number sense or were mirroring their writing, etc. Moreover, we had issues with even having students get tested with CST.

Recently, a couple of colleagues and I had to advocate for a family in our school who moved to a different house in our town and because they could not provide the lease of the new house and transportation refused to sign the students a bus route to come to school. When my colleagues told me what was going on, I contacted my supervisor and told them about the situation, and we are currently working on solving this issue.

d) **Advocates for access to professional resources, including financial support and human and other material resources, that allow colleagues to spend significant time learning about effective practices and developing a professional learning community focused on school improvement goals.**

As an advocate for my colleagues, students and their families, I will continue to support professional development and seek additional resources and ways to improve our students' educational experience. I have already mentioned in previous sections the importance of creating

the Homeroom Club for our students that need additional support and other ways I have worked

on to make an impactful change. At the end of last year, I had to advocate for my students to

change the ELL curriculum because the one we used before was outdated and the students could

not relate to the characters or the topics it had. For our new ELA curriculum, I spoke up about

the lack of vocabulary cards with images and the non-flexibility to modify lessons. I also

expressed the importance of sending home flyers in both languages and to have trained

translators during IEP meetings and parent teacher conferences.

e) **Represents and advocates for the profession in contexts outside of the classroom.**

As a teacher leader, it goes without saying that my responsibilities go beyond the

classroom. By pursuing my secondary master's degree in Teacher Leadership, I have influenced

other teachers to look into continuing their education. Last year, my daughter's preschool teacher

asked my advice on how to pursue a degree in elementary education because she had an

associate degree and she wanted to extend her education and skills. I helped her find all the

information she needed, and she is currently enrolled in college to become an Elementary

teacher. I have also helped colleagues find professional development opportunities and I have

suggested to a few of my colleagues to create professional development presentations, because of

how impactful their lessons are or their classroom management is.

My current and future goals are as follows: I will continue to keep myself up to date in

educational policies, state laws and legislatives, and I will share this information with others.

Also, I will become a leader learner to accomplish change: I will participate as a learner during

the process, not as a leader. I will listen, learn and lead, like Fullan (2020) states and I will focus

on the "how" and "what" of the change (Kampouri Lagonik_MA_METL01624).

As a teacher leader I know I will have to be the voice of my students, their families, and my colleagues. I will have to be prepared to fight many battles each day and through each and every year. I would rather fight the good fight, than sit apathetically and be a viewer. I feel confident that the Rowan masters' program in Teacher Leadership has prepared me to be a knowledgeable teacher leader who knows how to be effective in their role.

9. Portfolio Assignment 8 Reflection

Reflection on Impact Project (Inquiry Project)

1. **The Rationale/Basis of Inquiry Project**

When it was time to choose a topic for my inquiry, I knew I wanted to do a project that is meaningful and that it would provide me with measurable results to analyze, compare and reflect upon. The inquiry questions I wanted to answer were, "*How can I as a teacher leader help ELL student to overcome their struggle to read and comprehend texts inside and outside of the ELL classroom? and, what strategies can we use to effectively increase reading fluency and comprehension?*". The rationale behind these questions was that a very large percentage of the students at my school were falling behind in reading, and my Multilingual Learners were among these students in reading below grade level. ML students tend to struggle with reading fluency, comprehension and writing even if they are in English speaking schools for many years or all their school life. To add to the above problem, ELL students have been misrepresented or in many cases overrepresented in special education, because of their weak academic outcomes for many years. As Chey (2016) states in her thesis, "Overrepresentation occurs when the percentage of minority students in special education programs is greater than in the school population as a whole." Additionally, language proficiency is mistaken with the ability to relate to written text; homeroom teachers move the lesson pace too fast in order to comply with the district's timelines; students lack background knowledge that would help them comprehend what they are being taught; and students most often come from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50513). All the above problems are connected to *Domain II- Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Learning.* My students were struggling

with reading fluency and comprehension, so for my inquiry, I chose to implement a phonetic approach for reading instruction such as the Science of Reading, instead of the F&P guided reading strategies my district used. The purpose of this approach was to improve my ML students' reading fluency and comprehension. My intervention was to implement these strategies for a week with my 2nd and 3rd grade ELL class.

That year my basic skills colleague was being trained as a Literacy coach for our building using the Science of Reading method and the Structure of Literacy strategies, and she helped me understand how to effectively implement the IMSE Reading Strategies for the group I did this research for. This collaboration is connected to *Domain IV- Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning and Domain I - Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning.* Additionally, this inquiry was connected to *Domain VI- Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community,* since to have a wider and deeper understanding of the issues, I conducted surveys for the parents regarding their educational background and their relationship with reading. I also shared the results with the parents that wanted to participate.

The inquiry took place during my pull-out 2nd and 3rd grade classes. Since the inquiry required parent consent, I presented the results of 8 of my students, whose parents wanted to participate. This number might not seem significant but it is 25% of all 2nd & 3rd grade MLs and it proves that parent participation is crucial for student success. The inquiry's timeline was right after the annual spring WIDA ACCESS testing for ML students and right before NJSLA testing for the 3rd grade students. We were able to fit a week's worth of implementing the IMSE strategies in our reading sessions but the students who were in Basic Skills were already familiar

with the strategies, so this made it easier for them to be comfortable with the change in reading

strategies.

2. **Results: An *extensive* summary of finding(s).**

Before the implementation of the inquiry, I wanted to learn more about the reading habits

the students had at home and what was the educational background of the parents and how

important it was for them to read with their children. Out of the 32 ML students I taught that

year, only 8 parents wanted to be part of the inquiry, which is 25% of students. Half of the

parents were Vietnamese and the other half Hispanic, while the English Language Proficiency

(ELP) varied from Beginners to Advanced. The surveys also showed that 62.5% of the students

were read to in their native language and the rest didn't, however only 50% of the students could

read and write in their native language. During the inquiry I conducted three different

assessments (Pre, mid, post assessments) and all three assessments measured the number of

errors, and three comprehension questions. I also took notes of the students' fluency when

reading, as well as the usage of punctuation. If students self-corrected I wrote that in my field

notes too (Kampouri Lagonik_A1P3_METL50514).

Do you read to your child in your native language? ¿Le lee a su hijo en su lengua materna? Bạn có
đọc cho con bạn nghe bằng ngôn ngữ mẹ đẻ của bạn không?
8 responses

Yes/ Sí/ Đúng	5 (62.5%)
No/ không	3 (37.5%)
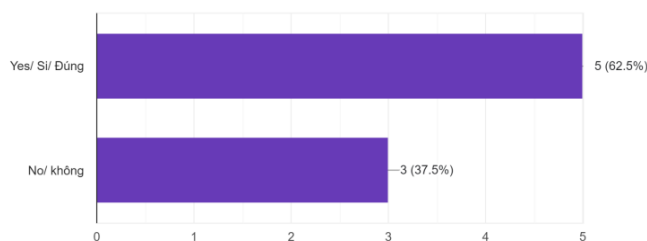
(Kampouri Lagonik_A1P3_METL50514)

For the pre-assessment I had the students just read the passages without reminding them of the IMSE strategies, but throughout the week we worked on our reading using the structured literacy strategies and the students were able to read new passages with a few reminders. By the end of the week, when the post-assessment took place. All students had shown improvement, and they were using strategies with little to no reminders. The following bar diagrams show each students' progress from pre-assessment to post assessment. The first bar diagram shows the students' progress in fluency (accurate words and usage of punctuation), the second their comprehension questions' progress (where there is no pre- assessment score, the students had graded 0%), and the third shows the overall percentage progress for both fluency and comprehension.

Overall, the students showed great improvement when using the phonemic reading strategies and I was happy with the results the students accomplished. However, I think this type of inquiry needed a longer period of time to be conducted and most of the students I am concerned about were not part of the inquiry. The Newcomers who still showed trouble with the comprehension questions are progressing in reading and although they do try their best in class, they were still shy to speak in English when asked questions directly.

(Kampouri Lagonik_A1P3_METL50514)

Fluency Grades

Comprehension Grades

Reading Assessment Using Phonological Awareness

Pre-assessment   Middle assessment   Post assessment

Name of Student
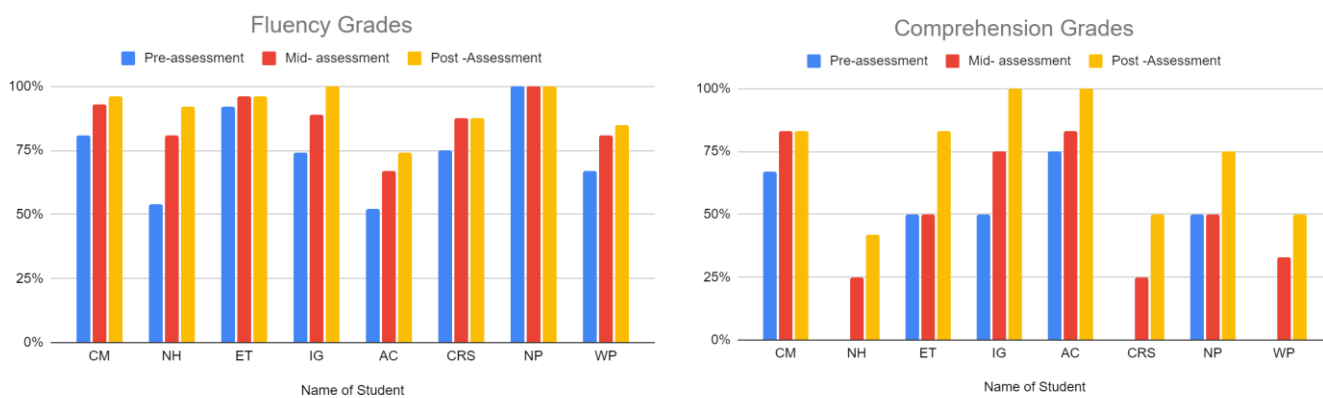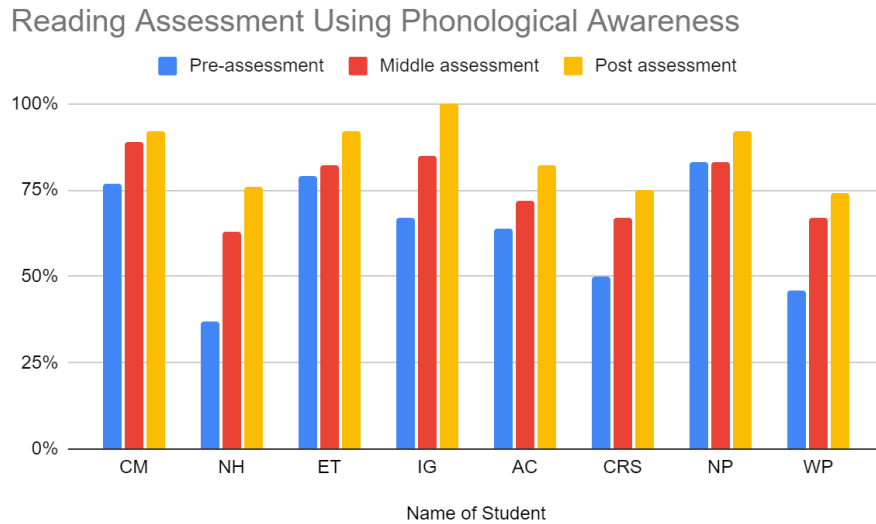
3. Application

The Structured Literacy strategies using IMSE were very effective during the inquiry, so I decided to continue these strategies until the end of the school year with all my ML students. Although I do not have accurate data of how the students progressed by the summer, I and my colleagues noticed that the students' reading fluency, phonological awareness and comprehension progressed. Students that thought reading was too hard were choosing to read appropriate for their level books and were excited to read. In general, the students' attitude

towards learning was very positive and many of the students chose books as their summer gifts over summer toys, which made me feel that I did something right!

In the beginning of this school year, my intention was to use the Structured Literacy strategies for my SGO (Student Growth Objectives), but after discussing my plan with my administrator, we decided it was best to use an SGO based on my students' greatest need at the time. My current third grade students, because of the progress they had last year in reading, would not have been good candidates for this year's reading SGO and both second and third grade students needed to strengthen their writing skills more than their reading skills. Even though I am not officially implementing a project like this inquiry, I am still using the strategies from the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy to help my students improve their reading skills and therefore their writing skills, which so far are improving.

4. **Commentary:** *Prompts and points to ponder going forward.*

This inquiry was very promising and in very little time it provided us with positive results. The students who struggled the most in the beginning of the inquiry were motivated to try this and as it was mentioned in the inquiry, the students who were also in Basic Skills for ELA, were familiar with the strategies. Overall, the reading strategies were effective and the students responded to them in a positive way. After the project was completed, I continued to use these strategies and it was very promising to see that most students when they did their reading assessment at the end of year on iReady and their F&Ps were approaching grade level reading or they progressed within the level they were at. Although the students' reading skills increased in a positive way, I was not surprised that the students would pick up the reading strategies and that using phonological awareness would have fast results. In most languages when learning to first

read, teachers introduce the letter sounds and have passages that only have the sounds students have learned. In fact, students reading books are designed to accommodate the phonics, grammar and writing skills they want to teach the student and they are all in the same book. The reading process is based on the sounds each letter makes and most languages do not have the complexity in sounds, spellings, and pronunciations the English language has. By learning to read with the Structured Literature strategies, the ML students were learning to read like they did with their native language and even the students who weren't in that category had a positive outcome. It is interesting to mention that when I was learning English in Canada as a PreK student and in Greece from K-10 grades, the English language teachers were using the structured literacy strategies, so it was surprising for me to see when I became a teacher in NJ, that a great number of students, who lived all their lives in the US and where in school since Kindergarten, struggled with reading and seeing the reading strategies they used made me understand why.

I believe that by using the above strategies, I have become a more effective teacher, and my students are less confused (especially my newcomers) and less anxious when it comes to reading and writing.

10. Portfolio Assignment 9 Reflection of COGS (ESL)

1. Introduction

My COGS was in English as a Second Language (ESL). I decided to enroll in this program after I substituted for an ESL class, and I realized how much the students I taught and I had in common, based on our academic experience. Both my husband and I come from immigrant families, and I moved a lot during my childhood so I can empathize with the multilingual students and their families. When I researched the program and the impact it had on the students and their families, I wanted to advocate and be part of the multilingual students' academic success and social development. I enrolled in the program from 2016-2018. Through this program I gained deep knowledge of intercultural communication; characteristics of language and how they impact the acquisition of both first and second languages; foundational theories and research-based theories and more.

Additionally, this program helped me see the deeper roots and circumstances of immigration, the education needs the multilingual population has as well as the socioemotional needs. It also widened my knowledge of cultural diversity and the importance of family connection and communication. I have become a better educator and a more open-minded person because of this program and I am grateful for all the opportunities and professors I had in this learning experience.

2. List of COGS Courses

- BLED 40512 - Linguistics And Second Language Acquisition For Teaching Languages
- BLED 40510 - Issues Of Language And Cultural Diversity In Esl/Bilingual Programs

- BLED 40515 - Language, Culture And Communication

- BLED 40520 - Planning, Teaching, And Assessment In ESL Classrooms

- BLED 40522 - Integrating Language And Content In The ESL/Bilingual Education

  Classroom

- BLED 40523 - Practicum In Teaching English As A Second Language

a) BLED 40512 - Linguistics And Second Language Acquisition For Teaching Languages

This course addressed the basic concepts of linguistic theory and second language acquisition research. The discussions focused on components of the language system in the context of second language teaching and all students had to compare and contrast second language acquisition paradigms and investigate our application to the classroom. This course had one Major assignment "Language Analysis", which I will describe below.

Artifact 1: Language Analysis

The purpose of this major assignment was to apply our understanding of linguistics concepts and second language acquisition theory to the learner language. This artifact consists of two parts: an interaction analysis of an English Learner speaker (Part I) and an analysis of English Language Learner's writing (Part II). For the Interview I chose a relative named Joyce who immigrated to Canada from Greece when she got married at the age of 22. She is very social, and she is not shy to interact with others who are monolingual English speakers. During this activity I learned the following:

- To identify patterns in oral and written language.

- To understand the difficulties of a second language learner regarding pronunciation, grammar, and syntax.

- How a lower level second language learner thinks to communicate.

- That linguistic repertoire and funds of knowledge have a significant role in language learning.

- Getting to know my interviewee had a lot to do with the fact that she opened up to me and that I made her feel comfortable during the interview.

- Because her native language was Greek, she had similar grammar and syntax that allowed her to express her thoughts in a more proper English language (Kampouri Lagonik_MA_BLED 40512).

Knowing Joyce's native language helped me communicate with her when she was having difficulty understanding a question and made her feel more comfortable expressing herself. As Fairbairn & Jones-Vo (2010) suggest,
 "Learning a few key words and phrases and using them to instruct students will add value to our students' first language and will have a positive impact in their learning".

As the interview went on, there were times I had to repeat at a slower pace, rephrase or even translate a question or sentence. This is something I already have been using in my classroom as a clarification method and will continue to use as it is important for ELLs to have the opportunity to understand what they are being told to do. Equally important is to teach ELLs and focus on pronunciation along with orthography. Additionally, teaching ELLs grammar and syntax is important but in a less structural metalinguistic setting such as a "communicative instructional setting" or "natural setting" as mentioned by Lightbown & Spada (2010).

(Kampouri Lagonik_MA_BLED 40512).

The above artifact aligns with the Teacher Leadership Domains I, II and VI.

As a teacher leader and multilingual learner, I use my knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, and languages to promote effective interactions among my colleagues, I facilitate the analysis of student learning data, collaborative interpretation of results, and application of findings to improve teaching and learning, just like I did when analyzing Joyce's writing; and I model and teach effective communication and collaboration skills with families and other stakeholders focused on attaining equitable achievement for students of all backgrounds and circumstances.

b) **BLED 40510 - Issues Of Language And Cultural Diversity In Esl/Bilingual Programs**

The objectives of this course were to identify and analyze the forces affecting second language schooling in state, national, and international contexts; demonstrate the dispositions of informed advocates for students in ESL and bilingual education in school and community settings; develop a reflective philosophy for the education of students in ESL and bilingual education; and investigate the foundational theories and areas of research related to the field of TESOL and bilingual education.

Within this course I completed multiple assignments that aligned with the Teacher Leadership domains, and they are worth mentioning in this assignment.

Artifact 1: Group Assignment 4

This assignment was based on a reading assignment that Professor Sora Suh had assigned us. My group's topic was "What is wrong with ESL Programs in Schools?" by Deqi Zen. In this reading, Zen describes the transition, the progress, and the challenges ELL students face. Zen provides us with examples of three long term ESL students who want to do well in school yet are struggling to become proficient in the English language. Zen (2001) argues that "they can hardly justify the failure" and explains that even if the above variables affect cognitive and language development at the beginning, a 7–14-year-old student still has time to catch up and develop literacy in the second language and to study school subjects. As a group we concluded that to have an effective ESL program we need

- ➢ Clear standards

- ➢ Standard-based curriculum

- ➢ Effective assessment system

- ➢ High expectations for ESL learners

- ➢ Address ESL learners' needs adequately (Kampouri Lagonik & Rapuzzi_Group 4 Assignment_BLED 40510)

If the needs of ESL learners are well understood and timely, appropriate and high-quality assistance is provided, then 'Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency' can be acquired.

The above artifact aligns with the Teacher Leadership Domains I, II, IV and VII. For this group project the members demonstrated functions such as modeling effective skills in listening, presenting ideas, leading discussions, clarifying, mediating, and identifying the needs of self and others in order to advance shared goals and professional learning; we used knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, and languages to promote effective

interactions among colleagues; *we assisted each other in accessing and using research in order to select appropriate strategies to understand how to improve student learning; we Engaged in reflective dialog with based on observation of instruction, student work, and assessment data and helps make connections to research-based effective practices; and we developed a shared understanding among us of the diverse educational needs of families and the community.*

Artifact 2: Assignment 2- Persuasive Essay and Letter

This assignment had two parts: 1) A 5–6-page paper, and 2) a 1 page formal letter or e-mail based on the paper.

First, I had to write a 5–6-page persuasive essay regarding an ESL/BE issue. I had to take a position for or against a specific piece of New Jersey or United States legislation. Then, I had to summarize the issue that I had researched, write a letter and send it to a member of the US Senate or a member of the US Congress. For this assignment I chose to discuss my support for the Plyler v. Doe (1982) Supreme Court decision that prohibits denying education to undocumented students and argues my support for how Immigration Reform can help those students and benefit society. For the second part of this assignment, I wrote and sent a letter to US Senator Bob Menendez explaining to him that under the Plyler v. Doe decision and with immigration reform such as the Dream Act, it is possible to assist these students to create more positive education and societal outcomes. Having these students become productive tax paying residents as opposed to being at risk for turning to illegal activities, gangs, and crime, or undercutting wages is an important outcome and benefit (Kampouri Lagonik_A2_BLED 40510). This assignment is aligned with the Teacher Leadership Domain VII, as I advocated for access to professional resources, and I represented and advocated for the profession in contexts outside of

the classroom.

Artifact 3: Assignment 3 - Comprehensive Professional Philosophy

For this assignment, I had to rewrite my original reflective philosophy statement from Assignment 1 and incorporate more structured, specific areas, based on what I learned in class, including the TESOL/NCATE Indicators Assessed. In this self-reflection assignment, I indicate my philosophy as an ELL teacher, which is to support Bilingual Education as an effective method of Second Language acquisition. Bilingual Education helps students become proficient at a steady pace and promotes the study and development of both native and second languages (Kampouri Lagonik_A3_BLED40510).

Moreover, in this assignment I explain the professional development I had planned to participate in such as, the State of New Jersey Department of Education Biliteracy webinar "Building Bridges between Languages" in June 2017; view the webcast "English Language Learners with Learning Disabilities" in June 2017; Attending the WIDA 2017 Annual Conference; attending the TESOL International Association course called "Teaching and Assessing Young Learners" in Fall of 2017.

Finally, a Grande part of this assignment was to explain what our collaboration with others would look like including colleagues, administrators, students and their families. For example, parent communication, forming groups with ELL parents to help new parents navigate and transition, parent involvement and learning support. It is very important that our ELLs have access to all programs offered by the district, whether it is special education, tutoring, sports, and gifted and talented programs therefore collaboration is important to achieve these goals.

This assignment aligns with the Teacher Leadership Domains I,III, IV, VI, VII, because I

strive to create an inclusive culture where diverse perspectives are welcomed in addressing

challenges; I use knowledge and understanding of different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures,

and languages to promote effective interactions among colleagues; I use information about

emerging education, economic, and social trends in planning and facilitating professional

learning, I serve as a team leader to harness the skills, expertise, and knowledge of colleagues to

address curricular expectations and student learning needs; I promotes instructional strategies

that address issues of diversity and equity in the classroom and ensures that individual student

learning needs remain the central focus of instruction, I develop a shared understanding among

colleagues of the diverse educational needs of families and the community; I collaborate with

families, communities, and colleagues to develop comprehensive strategies to address the diverse

educational needs of families and the community; and I model and teach effective

communication and collaboration skills with families and other stakeholders focused on attaining

equitable achievement for students of all backgrounds and circumstances; I collaborate with

colleagues to select appropriate opportunities to advocate for the rights and/or needs of students,

to secure additional resources within the building or district that support student learning, and to

communicate effectively with targeted audiences such as parents and community member; and I

share information with colleagues within and/or beyond the district regarding how local, state,

and national trends and policies can impact classroom practices and expectations for student

learning.

c) **BLED 40515 - Language, Culture And Communication**

Artifact 1: Case Study of an English Language Learner

This assignment's purpose was to describe and analyze an English Language Learner's experience immigrating to the US. After interviewing the individual, I had to analyze her experiences and connect it to the readings of this course. For this assignment I interviewed a family friend Irene, who had immigrated to the US in the late 60's from Greece. The analysis of this assignment is useful for a language educator because I was able to recognize and apply many of the concepts of what we have learned in the duration of this course. ELL educators could use this data to help their students by encouraging them to have a positive attitude toward education and major changes in their lives and develop a plan in which they can help their students with their academic and linguistic skills. Also, through this interview an educator can understand the reasons an immigrant left their country of origin, and the importance of preserving the parental traditions, as well as learning to adapt in the new culture. Also, throughout this analysis the general information on the interviewee's cultural identity is presented, such as socioeconomic status, race, religion, gender, class, national origin, languages, and cultural conflicts. Finally, Irene's experiences regarding racism and discrimination are also part of this paper (Kampouri Lagonik_MA_BLED 40515).

The Teacher Leadership Domains this assignment aligns to are Domains IV, VI and VII. This assignment reveals the need for ELL teachers to advocate for their students and educate their colleagues about the different educational and social experiences immigrant students carry. Therefore, to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment, school organization, and school culture is a necessity. As an immigrant myself, I can relate to Irene and I can use my knowledge and understanding of the different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultures, and languages in the school community to promote effective interactions among colleagues, families, and the larger community. As a teacher leader, I share information with colleagues within and/or beyond the

district regarding how local, state, and national trends and policies can impact classroom

practices and expectations for student learning, many of which were mentioned in the

assignment. Finally, I collaborate with colleagues to select appropriate opportunities to advocate

for the rights and/or needs of students such as Irene.

d) BLED 40520 - Planning, Teaching, And Assessment In ESL Classrooms

This course concentrates on how teachers plan, teach, and assess in ESL classes. For this

course we created unit plans that incorporate both language and content area objectives and learn

a variety of research-based instructional methods to support language acquisition and student

learning.

Artifact 1: Major Assignment 1: Professional Literature Circle Book Report

Children Language & Literacy: Diverse Learners in Diverse Times

by Celia Genishi & Anne Haas Dyson

This assignment is a summary of the reading my peers in Group A and I had to write

based on Celia Genishi & Anne Haas Dyson research "*Children, Language, and Literacy:*

Diverse Learners in Diverse Times". In our assignment we explained some ways ELL students

can acquire and practice the new language using research-based strategies and methodologies.

For example, diverse students need a diverse curriculum and time to learn and show what they

know. A "one size fits all" curriculum will not meet the needs of every child as each individual

comes from different families, backgrounds, and experiences; Classrooms seem to have a sense

of urgency with no time to waste so children are hurried and pushed, leaving little or no room for

play. Play is a powerful tool for language learning. While playing, children can practice their

language skills, vary their voices, rename objects ("let's pretend this pencil is a magic wand"), learn new words, and develop confidence as a language learner. Play provides the opportunity for speaking, reading, and writing in an unscripted environment; Writing — When children first begin to write, they tend to write about things related to their everyday worlds. Children need to have relevant reasons to write. Just like language, writing develops at different rates among children (Group A_MA1_BLED 40520). The above research results explains that children need to play, so instead of teaching a unit in a catatonic style where students have to repeat whatever the teacher says, we can create activities and include strategies that allow our students to interact with each other and use their creativity and imagination.

Another research-based strategy we explained was the importance of assessment of language and literacy and that it should be, "An ongoing, complex process in which we aim to discover and document what children are learning over time in many situations and across multiple symbol systems, so that we can help them learn more" (Genishi & Dyson, 2009, p. 116). Observation is key to assessing, seeing how each child develops as an individual. Take notes, videotape, use audio recorders, etc. to document what you notice over time. Collaborate with other teachers, professionals, parents, etc. to support each child's development. Be willing to observe, respond to, and grow with your children!

Given the diverse backgrounds and abilities of children, educators should keep in mind that each student has a unique learning style. The diversities of students should be addressed and assessed in a variety of ways, not with just the use of standardized tests. One form of assessment does not allow educators to see the true abilities of their students. The authors suggest the following assessments: notes and anecdotes, commercially published curriculum test, checklist,

portfolios, video/audio tapes (Genishi & Dyson, 2009). Assessment should be used to inform educators about the student's strengths and weaknesses (Group A_MA1_BLED 40520).

The above summary is connected to the Teacher Leadership Domains I, II, IV, V, VII. For this assignment we worked as a group to solve problems, make decisions, manage conflict, and promote meaningful change; The analysis of student learning data, collaborative interpretation of results, and application of findings to improve teaching and learning. The group facilitated the collection, analysis, and use of classroom- and school-based data to identify opportunities to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment, school organization, and school culture. Examples of research strategies such as playing while learning, having a diverse curriculum, and writing are mentioned in our summary. We included the importance of assessment and data findings to promote changes in instructional practices or organizational structures to improve student learning. As ELL teachers and as Teacher Leaders we use research to advocate for teaching and learning processes that meet the needs of all students as mentioned in the summary.

e) **BLED 40522 - Integrating Language And Content In The ESL/Bilingual Education Classroom**

This course examined current programs and available materials in bilingual education appropriate to a range of content areas and grade levels. Field observations and experiences constitute an important part of this course. Micro teaching and peer coaching was utilized to provide a basis for reflective teaching.

Artifact 1:Major Assignment 1: Language Analysis Presentation

The purpose of this assignment was to become familiar with the language and cultural assumptions in content area instruction that may cause confusion for English Language Learners. In my presentation I explained the student and curriculum Background Information such as student background information; ELA Curriculum; Proficiency Level (WIDA Standards); and CCSS (Common Core State Standards). I also discussed the difficulties that the ELLs have based on data and research and the following was connected to this topic:

     a. Vocabulary & Semantics

     b. Language Functions and Structures

     c. Activities & Language Skills

     d. Expected Behaviors

     e. Sociocultural Assumptions

Finally, I pointed out the implications for Planning and Managing Instruction and Assessment (Kampouri Lagonik_MA1_BLED 40522).

The Teacher Leadership Domains that are addressed in this artifact are Domain IV and V. I promote instructional strategies that address issues of diversity and equity in the classroom and ensure that individual student learning needs remain the central focus of instruction. Also, I work with colleagues to use assessment and data findings to promote changes in instructional practices or organizational structures to improve student learning.

Artifact 2: Major Assignment 2: Integrated Unit Plan

The summative assessment for the course was a thematic content-based unit plan, in which I had to apply the methods for planning, instruction and assessment that was introduced through the course. For my Unit Plan I used the topic "Story telling - The Three Little Pigs".

Through the use of storytelling, students will be exposed to rich illustrations and fictional text read-alouds by the teacher about the story of *The Three Little Pigs*. These read-alouds will stimulate students to engage in a range of speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities, giving them the opportunity to develop language and build conceptual knowledge about storytelling. In this way, ELLs will use academic and content vocabulary to meaningfully communicate ideas and information on this topic with their peers. Furthermore, these read-aloud texts will build knowledge while exposing students to varied syntax and word work as well as activating their prior knowledge about similar stories. The scaffolding within the unit will enable students to engage in discourse and use higher order thinking skills. This interdisciplinary unit uses literature, fiction text, and drama so that ELLs ask and answer questions and confirm their understanding of key ideas in shared oral and written language activities with peers. The focus will be on language, literacy and background knowledge (Kampouri Lagonik_MA2_BLED 40522). As part of each lesson I included the Common Core Standards, WIDA Standards in order to differentiate my lessons based on the needs of my students and an assessment to measure student progress and to evaluate the understanding of the lesson. I remember really enjoying creating this assignment and I still use part of this unit when I teach my multilingual students. I have also shared this unit plan with my colleagues.

The Teacher Leader Domains that are linked to this assignment are Domain IV and V, as I promote instructional strategies that address issues of diversity and equity in the classroom and ensure that individual student learning needs remain the central focus of instruction through this assignment. Moreover, I encourage my colleagues to identify and use multiple assessment tools aligned to state and local standards, such as the WIDA and Common Core standards.

f)   BLED 40523 - Practicum In Teaching English As A Second Language

For this course I had to include a field experience in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) and an accompanying class that focuses on reflective evaluation of that field experience. The two students I chose were different genders but the same age (8 y.o). This assignment took place at the elementary school of Kwajalein, Marshall Islands.

Artifact1: Practicum in ESL

My lessons were designed to include the four domains of language (speaking, listening, reading and writing) by offering activities and texts appropriate for their proficiency level. The lessons were student centered and involved standard based instructions that engaged the students. I also worked with Mrs. Young to receive feedback and advice from her to make sure that my lessons do not overlap or interfere with her future lessons and that the activities were appropriate for the level of the students and manageable timewise. The TESOL/CAEP (2010) for Planning Instruction suggests that, "Candidates assess students' knowledge using multiple measures (see Domain 4) and address their students' diverse backgrounds, developmental needs, and English proficiency as they plan their instruction. They plan toward specific standards-based ESL and content-based objectives but include multiple ways of presenting material. They collaborate with general education and content-area teachers to ensure that ELLs access the whole curriculum while learning English".

Regarding the assessments for this unit, we used prior knowledge, formative and summative assessments to help measure our students' progress and growth. Based on our students' portfolios from previous assessments, we were able to understand their strengths and

weaknesses, plan the original pre-assessment and develop the rest of the unit, including the formative and summative assessments.

These students understand that making mistakes and expressing openly their opinions is part of the learning process. The above are goals that I would like to implement in my future teaching experiences, as well as to have a classroom that embraces my students' culture and diversity. Allowing your students to share their experiences, language and culture, and showing them that it is not only acceptable to make mistakes, but that it is the way we learn, encourages them to engage in critical thinking and develops within each student the desire to learn (Kampouri Lagonik_ImpactProject_BLED40523).

This Artifact is aligned with the Teacher Leader Domains I, IV, and VII. Since at the time this practicum took place, I lived overseas and I didn't have my own classroom, I had to work with the then ESL teacher. Ms. Young served as a mentor for me and taught me many beneficials skills prior to leaving and having me replace her position. Therefore in this artifact there are evidence that facilitation skills are employed to create trust among colleagues, develop collective wisdom, build ownership and action that supports student learning; I facilitated the collection, analysis, and use of classroom- and school-based data to identify opportunities to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment, school organization, and school culture; I engaged in reflective dialog with Ms. Young, based on observation of instruction, student work, and assessment data, helps make connections to research-based effective practices; and I Worked with my colleagues to identify and use research to advocate for teaching and learning processes that meet the needs of all students.

11. Graphic Organizer

THE Do Re Mi OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP

I'm all about team growth and learning!

DOMAIN V
PROMOTING THE USE OF ASSESSMENTS AND DATA FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT.

Teachers and students need your voice!!

- Advocate for students to get proper services.
- Promote equity for all students by teaching good citizenship.
- Keep up with state requirements and guidelines, legislations and new information on student learning, such as changes in WIDA, NJSLA, Tittle I & Title III funds.
- Suggest and create learning programs such as Homework Club and PIN.
- Work towards improving school climate and be an active participate in the process.

DOMAIN I
FOSTERING A COLLABORATIVE CULTURE TO SUPPORT EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT AND STUDENT LEARNING.

- Through PLCs collaborate with colleagues to create SMART goals that are measurable.
- Differentiate professional development and assist colleagues based on their needs.
- Use and facilitate learning for platforms such as Lumio, Google Classroom, Pear Deck etc.
- Advocate for colleagues by requesting time for professional learning and PLC meetings.
- Assist colleagues improvement by sharing strategies and being honest.

Develop a collaborative culture with support and trust!

- Work with colleagues, admin, community leaders and parents to make change.
- Create an environment such as PLCs.
- Be an active listener and model for colleagues.
- Be respectful and inclusive.

Schools and districts will skyrocket with the power of actual data!

DOMAIN III
PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

- Utilize colleague expertise and use experiences to make change.
- Participate in IEP, CST meetings and be informed about student progress in other classes other than your own.
- Create an environment of trust, such as PLC or or grade level meetings, so colleagues can seek for help when needed.
- Use assessments such as WIDA, iREady to promote academic progress and change.

DOMAIN VII
ADVOCATING FOR STUDENT LEARNING AND THE PROFESSION.

Research to improve your students' academics...

- Assist colleague find strategies for student improvement based on research.
- Collaborate with colleagues to analyze qualitative and quantitative data.
- Find and teach colleagues how to analyze data such as WIDA ACCESS and NJSLA.

- Promote Parent Involvement Nights.
- Communicate often with parents.
- Advocate for students and families.
- Be culturally aware and respectful.
- Promote equity and acceptance of diversity.
- Include culture and different languages in classroom.
- Educate colleagues about cultural differences connect families with staff.

Let's spice up learn... it into an epic treasure h...

- Give feedback to each other and share our strategies, improve the existing ones and modify them for the future.
- Based on outcomes reflect with colleagues about strategies and goals and change them if needed.
- Support colleagues by being a mentor and suggesting professional developments.
- Encourage colleagues to share their expertise within a PLC and use new and existing technology platforms.
- Advocate for ML students and co...eate Homework Help program to ensure e...uity.

Family backup is crucial, so don't forget to rope them in...

DOMAIN II
ACCESSING AND USING RESEARCH TO IMPROVE PRACTICE AND STUDENT LEARNING.

DOMAIN VI:
IMPROVING OUTREACH AND COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

DOMAIN IV
FACILITATING IMPROVEMENTS IN INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT LEARNING.
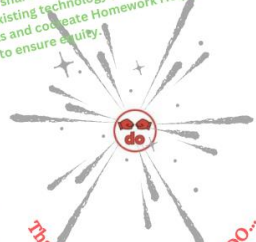
That will brings us back to DO...

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13. Appendix

1. Kampouri Lagonik_MA2_METL50513-Reflection on Teacher Leader Model Standards

2. Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50511- Teacher Leadership and Learning Communities

3. Group A PLC Project_MA1_METL50511- Teacher Leadership and Learning Communities

4. Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50516-Analysis of Classroom Teacher Behavior

5. KampouriLagonik_MA4_METL01624-Plan for School Improvement Change Project

6. Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_50514-Sharing Results from Classroom Inquiry

7. Kampouri Lagonik_MA1_METL50512-Curriculum Development for Teacher Leaders and other School Professionals

8. Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50512-Curriculum Development for Teacher Leaders and other School Professionals

9. KampouriLagonik_MA3_METL01624-Organizational Change Analysis

10. Book Creator https://bookcreator.com/

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12. Kampouri Lagonik_Journal1_METL50512- Chapter 1 of *Curriculum: Foundations, Principles, and Issues* (7th Ed.) by Ornstein, Allan C. and Hunkins, Francis P.

13. KampouriLagonik_MA2_METL01624-Personal/Professional Reflection

14. Kampouri Lagonik_DQ3_METL50511-Teacher Leadership and Learning Communities

15. Kampouri Lagonik_DQ5_METL50511-Teacher Leadership and Learning Communities

16. Kampouri Lagonik_MA3_METL50513- Reflection on Teacher Leader Model Standards

17. Kampouri Lagonik_A4:_BLED 40515-School, Classroom and Families Plan

18. Kampouri Lagonik_DQ6_METL50513-Teacher Leadership in Practice

19. Kampouri Lagonik_A1P2_METL50514-Classroom Inquiry Project - Plan for Data Collection.

20. Kampouri Lagonik_DQ7_BLED40510-Issues in Language & Cultural Diversity.

21. Kampouri Lagonik_A1P1_METL50514-Agency in Teacher Leadership (Classroom Inquiry Project - Problem of Practice Justification).

22. Kampouri Lagonik_A1P3_METL50514-Agency in Teacher Leadership (Classroom Inquiry Project - Classroom Evidence Results).

23. Kampouri Lagonik_Major Assignment_BLED 40512- Language Analysis

24. Kampouri Lagonik & Rapuzzi_Group 4 Assignment_BLED 40510- Presentation & Class Responses "What is wrong with ESL Programs in Schools?" by Deqi Zen

25. Kampouri Lagonik_Assignment2_BLED 40510- Persuasive Essay & Letter

26. Kampouri Lagonik_Assignment3_BLED 40510- Comprehensive Professional Philosophy.

27. Kampouri Lagonik_Major Assignment_BLED 40515- Language, Culture And Communication (Case Study of an English Language Learner).

28. Group A_MA1_BLED 40520- Professional Literature Circle Book Report "*Children Language & Literacy: Diverse Learners in Diverse Times*" by Celia Genishi & Anne Haas Dyson

29. Kampouri Lagonik_MA1_BLED 40522_Analysis of Language of Content

30. Kampouri Lagonik_MA2_BLED 40522_Integreted Unit Plan- Story Telling " The Three Little Pigs".

31. Kampouri Lagonik_Impact Project_BLED 40523_ Practicum in ESL

14. Inquiry Assignment

Although most English Language Learners (ELLs) are born and raised in the US, because of their first language spoken at home, they are classified as ELLs. These students struggle with reading comprehension, fluency and therefore the other domains of language such as writing, listening and speaking. There are many reasons why these students struggle such as low background knowledge, low socioeconomic status, absence of academic language use in their first language, not enough phonemic instruction and limited academic vocabulary usage and comprehension. In addition to the above problem, many ELL students are misrepresented or overrepresented in special education because of lack of assessment in their first language. It is also important to mention that ELL students can be overlooked by the homeroom teachers, who are trying to catch up with the curriculum being taught, so they can meet their deadlines, instead of taking the time to teach in depth and modify their instruction for the needs of their ELL students.

The above problems raise the inquiry questions "*How can I as a teacher leader help ELL student to overcome their struggle to read and comprehend texts inside and outside of the ELL classroom? and, What strategies can we use to effectively increase reading fluency and comprehension?"*

To effectively learn to decode, read according to grade level and comprehend is very crucial for ELL students. These students work very hard and want to learn; they just don't know how to do it. As a teacher leader and ELL teacher I want to find strategies that will help the ELL students succeed not only in my classroom but also in their homerooms. This inquiry research will not only help me to learn more about my students and the reasons they are so behind in acquiring reading skills and comprehension, but it will also help me make a plan to educate my colleagues as to how they can be helpful to educate them. Also, including the parents in this process and understanding their educational, socioeconomic status and background experiences will be a great source of information to promote involvement and therefore work together for academic success.

This inquiry is in alignment with most of the Teacher Model Standards and a couple of the Passions mentioned in the course literature *"Learning to Teach and Teaching to Learn Through Practitioner Inquiry"* (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2020). More specifically, it aligns with the following standards:

- *Domain I - Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning.*

- *Domain II- Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Learning.*

- *Domain IV- Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning.*

- *Domain V- Promoting the Use of Assessments and Data for School and District Improvement.*

- *Domain VI- Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community* (Teacher Leader Model Standards).

The inquiry previously presented aligns with passion 4 *"Desire to improve or Experiment with*

*teaching strategies and teaching techn*iques" and passion 8 "*Focus on understanding the*

teaching and learning context" as per Dana & Yendol-Hoppey (2020).

In order for this inquiry research to be meaningful I will be collecting data that will

provide me an understanding of the roots of the problems presented above and how certain

assessments and strategies I will use, will help my ELL students' progress in the Domain of

Reading. B. Morettini (Teacher Leadership in Practice, November 3rd, 2020) in Lecture 7-1

"Next Steps in the Inquiry Process" explains that, using sources of Quantitative data and

Qualitative data will make this inquiry successful. Multiple data sources also help ensure that the

information obtained is reliable and consistent over time and across similar tasks and maximizes

a student's opportunities to demonstrate mastery (Assessment and Accountability

Comprehensive Center, 2007; Rivera et al., 2008). As sources of Quantitative data I will use the

following resources: a) Schoolwide assessment data such as, WIDA ACCESS Scores for

Reading, iReady scores, Students' F&Ps, b) Attendance Data, c) Demographic Data such as *How*

many students are Hispanic?; How many Vietnamese etc.; *How many were born in the US or*

have an IEP?, d) A basic reading assessment in the students' first language to determine their

prior educational background knowledge. As Rivera et al. (2008) explain, "Where possible and

appropriate, native language assessment can be useful. Comprehensive assessments in both

languages provide information on a child's knowledge, skills, abilities, and instructional needs in

each language as expressed through different modalities (listening, speaking, reading, and

writing)". As sources of Qualitative data I will use data from my experience as an ELL teacher,

my colleagues' experiences and data they have collected from the students in study, students'

stories and extant literature when appropriate.

My inquiry project for this course is to find effective ways to help my ELL students with reading

fluency and comprehension. The questions I previously presented are "*How can I as a teacher leader help ELL students to overcome their struggle to read and comprehend texts inside and outside of the ELL classroom? and, what strategies can we use to effectively increase reading fluency and comprehension?*"

Reading comprehension and fluency is a weak spot for my current second and third grade ELL students. Many of my students are struggling to read at grade level and most need additional support when it comes to language arts and reading comprehension. Most of the second-grade students, during the pandemic, were learning remotely meanwhile parents were unable to support them academically. Many of my third-grade students, on the other hand, were in-person students, but they have special educational needs or are newcomers. It is significant to mention that, although most English Language Learners (ELLs) are born and raised in the US, because of their first language spoken at home, they are classified as ELLs. There are many other reasons why these students struggle such as low background knowledge, low socioeconomic status, absence of academic language use in their first language, not enough phonemic instruction and limited academic vocabulary usage and comprehension. In addition to the above problem, many ELL students are misrepresented or overrepresented in special education because of lack of assessment in their first language. It is also important to mention that ELL students can be overlooked by the homeroom teachers, who are trying to catch up with the curriculum being taught, so they can meet their deadlines, instead of taking the time to teach in depth and modify their instruction for the needs of their ELL students.

To effectively learn to decode, read according to grade level and comprehend is very crucial for ELL students. These students work very hard and want to learn; they just don't know how to do it. As a teacher leader and ELL teacher I want to find strategies that will help the ELL

students succeed not only in my classroom but also in their homerooms. This inquiry research will not only help me to learn more about my students and the reasons they are so behind in acquiring reading skills and comprehension, but it will also help me plan to educate my colleagues as to how they can be helpful to educate them. Also, by including the parents in this process and understanding their educational, socioeconomic status and background experiences it would be a great source of information to promote involvement and therefore work together for their children's academic success.

 In order for this inquiry research to be meaningful I am planning on collecting data that will provide me with an understanding of the roots of the problems presented above and how certain assessments and strategies I will use, will help my ELL students' progress in the Domain of Reading. B. Morettini (Teacher Leadership in Practice, November 3rd, 2020) in Lecture 7-1 *"Next Steps in the Inquiry Process"* explains that, using sources of Quantitative data and Qualitative data will make this inquiry successful. Multiple data sources also help ensure that the information obtained is reliable and consistent over time and across similar tasks and maximizes a student's opportunities to demonstrate mastery (Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center, 2007; Rivera et al., 2008). As sources of Quantitative data I will use the following resources: a) Schoolwide assessment data such as, WIDA ACCESS Scores for Reading, iReady scores, Students' F&Ps, b) Attendance Data, c) Demographic Data such as *How many students are Hispanic?; How many Vietnamese* etc.; *How many were born in the US or have an IEP?,* d) A basic reading assessment in the students' first language to determine their prior educational background knowledge. As Rivera et al. (2008) explain, "Where possible and appropriate, native language assessment can be useful. Comprehensive assessments in both languages provide information on a child's knowledge, skills, abilities, and instructional needs in

each language as expressed through different modalities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)". As sources of Qualitative data, I will use data from my experience as an ELL teacher, my colleagues' experiences and data they have collected from the students in study, students' stories and extant literature when appropriate. I will also observe my students while in my classroom and their homerooms and keep field notes. As Dana & Yendol-Hoppey (2019) suggest, field notes do not interpret but rather focus on capturing what is occurring without commenting as to why the action might be occurring or how one judges a particular act. According to Calfee & Masuda (n.a), the most fundamental source for direct assessment of student learning achievement is what the teacher gains from looking and listening. Therefore, I will also conduct mini surveys before and after the new strategies are implemented to understand how the students feel about reading before and after, what they like to read about, what their goal is when it comes to reading, how they can reach their goal, etc. Interviewing students in the classroom can be a rich source of data (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2019).

Students using the reading strategies and being able to read independently and answer comprehension questions will be evidence of their learning. Also, if students are implementing these strategies in their other classes and there is progress in their reading data that will also be evidence of the students acquiring the new techniques and strategies.

Steps Taken In the Inquiry Process

For my inquiry, I chose to implement a phonetic approach for reading instruction such as the Science of Reading, instead of the F&P guided reading strategies my district used. The purpose of this approach is to improve my ELL students' reading fluency and comprehension. My intervention was to implement these strategies for a week with my 2nd and 3rd grade ELL class.

Before conducting the pre-assessment and measuring the students' reading fluency and comprehension, I did a series of preparations that would help me with my instruction and inquiry.

First, I sent to all parents a survey with questions about their educational background, their involvement in their children's education regarding their home language and their permission to use the data I collected for the completion of this inquiry. The survey has all questions in English, Spanish and Vietnamese, which are the languages spoken in my classroom.

Next, I interviewed my students about how they feel about reading and if they considered that their reading homework is hard or easy and why? This interview was done with all students, whether or not they were part of the inquiry, because it can help me with future inquiries and lesson planning. As Dana & Yendol-Hoppey (2020) mention, interviewing can be informal and spontaneous or more thoughtfully planned. Because of the young age of the students, although I planned to do the interview, I did not use a formal setting. Following the interview, I then asked the students whose parents agreed to be part of the inquiry, if it was ok to use their data for my project. All the students agreed and I had many other students that wanted to be part of the inquiry.

After that, I collected all the qualitative data and quantitative data I had access to for inquiry except for the reading assessments I prepared for the students.

It is important to mention that most of the participating students needed to use different reading passages as the students were on different levels of reading. Therefore, this step was time consuming.

When I had all the information I needed, I had the students read their passages individually and in a one-on-one setting. I did not intervene while they were reading, and I asked them three comprehension questions about their readings. This was recorded as my pre-assessment, and it was done on Monday of the inquiry week.

On Tuesday, I showed all students (both participants and non-participants) the steps of IMSE Reading Strategies and we implemented these strategies in our reading groups (figure1).

The students were excited to use these strategies as the Basic Skills Reading teacher also used them in their class that same day (This was not a coincidence. The Basic Skills teacher and I discussed this approach and although she is being officially trained by the district to teach this method of reading, she helped me understand how to implement it in my classroom too). At the end of class, I gave each student a bookmark with the strategies to use when they are reading independently.

On Wednesday, the participant students were asked to read the same passage using the new strategies. When they made a mistake, I had them reread the word using the strategies and then asked them to read the whole sentence again. I then asked the students to answer the comprehension questions. This was recorded as my mid-assessment.

On Thursday, during class I had the students read a different passage to their peers. The students were divided into small groups with all different level readers, and they would read to each other using their new strategies and answering questions. While the students were reading, I was taking field notes and recording if they used the strategies they were taught.

Friday was the last day of the inquiry project. The students, without any help, read using the reading strategies introduced and then I asked them the same questions I had asked in the previous assessments. When they were finished, I asked them if their feelings about reading had changed, and if they thought using this strategy helped them with their reading.
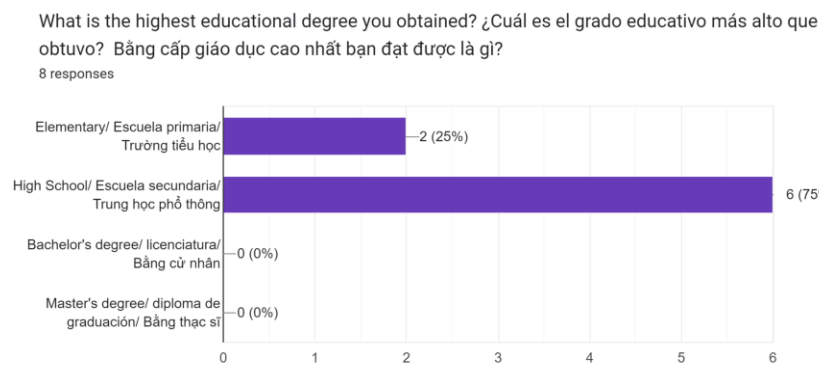
Setting and Sample

The setting is a 2nd & 3rd grade ELL classroom at an elementary school in South Jersey. My school has PreK-3 grades, has a little less than 300 students and 24% of them are ELL students. The students are classified as ELL after their Home Language Survey indicates they need to be Screened with the WIDA Screener used by the State of NJ. The students' English Language Level is determined by their ACCESS scores and WIDA standards, tests and standards designed specifically for ELLs. There are currently two ELL teachers including myself in my building and we service K-3rd grade students.

The participant students of this inquiry were chosen based on the parental and student permission acceptance. Out of the 32 students only 8 students' parents replied. This is only 25% of the students I serve. Five students are 2nd graders and three students are 3rd graders. The student's ages are from 7-9 years and three are female while five are male. Their ELP (English Language Proficiency) ranges from Beginners (Newcomers) to Intermediate according to the WIDA Screener and the WIDA ACCESS scores. 50% of the students have as their home language Vietnamese and 50% Spanish. Only two students were born outside of the US and most students have been in the ELL program for more than two years. Three students have IEPs- one for speech and the other two for reading and writing impairments. Only three of the students attended preschool and one student did not attend Kindergarten. Four of the students attended Kindergarten virtually and three in person; two of the in-person students were not in the US when they attended Kindergarten. Four students can read and write in their home language. Through the parents' survey it is shown that 62.5% of the students are read to in

their home language by their parents. The mid-year iReady standardized reading assessment indicates that only one student is on grade level and all other students are at least one grade level below and the F&P guided reading also shows the same.

The parent survey included three languages (English, Spanish, and Vietnamese). The parents were asked about their education, where they obtained their highest education, their familiarity with the English language, if they read to their child in their language and if their children are able to read in their home language. As seen below, 25% of the parents have elementary school experience, 75% finished high school but none have higher education experience.

What is the highest educational degree you obtained? ¿Cuál es el grado educativo más alto que obtuvo? Bằng cấp giáo dục cao nhất bạn đạt được là gì?

8 responses

Degree	Value
Elementary/ Escuela primaria/ Trường tiểu học	2 (25%)
High School/ Escuela secundaria/ Trung học phổ thông	6 (75%)
Bachelor's degree/ licenciatura/ Bằng cử nhân	0 (0%)
Master's degree/ diploma de graduación/ Bằng thạc sĩ	0 (0%)

Only one parent received their highest education degree from the US.

Did you obtain your highest educational degree in the United States? ¿Obtuviste tu título educativo más alto en los Estados Unidos? Bạn đã có được bằng cấp giáo dục cao nhất của bạn ở Hoa Kỳ?

8 responses

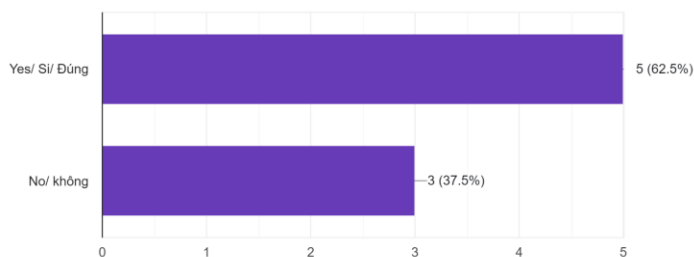| Response	Value
Yes/ Si/ Đúng	1 (12.5%)
No/ không	7 (87.5%)
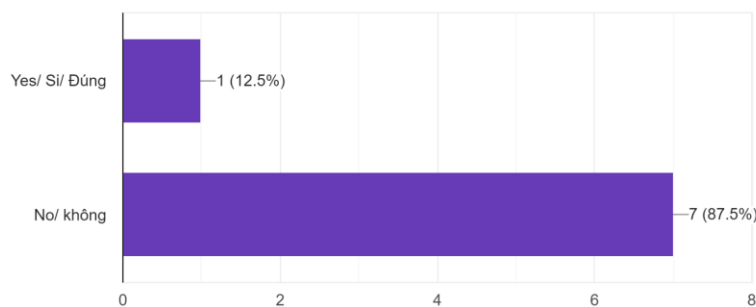
Three identify themselves as novice English speakers and five Intermediate.

How proficient is your English? ¿Qué tan competente es tu inglés? Tiếng Anh của bạn thành thạo đến mức nào?

8 responses
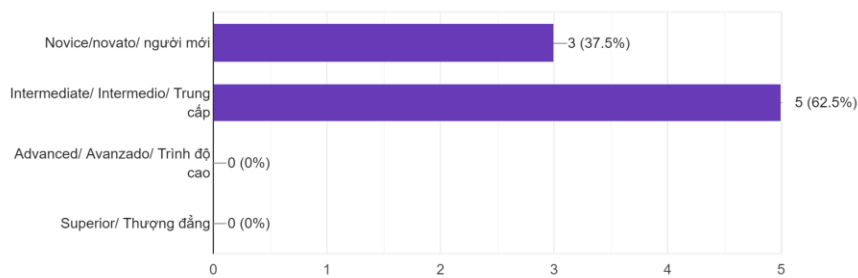
For the question, if they read to their child in their native language, 62.5% answered yes.

Do you read to your child in your native language? ¿Le lee a su hijo en su lengua materna? Bạn có đọc cho con bạn nghe bằng ngôn ngữ mẹ đẻ của bạn không?

8 responses

Demographic Information	Student							
Name of Student	CM	NH	ET	IG	AC	CRS	NP	WP
Grade	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2
Gender	F	F	F	M	M	M	M	M
Ethnicity	Vietnamese	Vietnamese	Vietnamese	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	Vietnamese	Hispanic
Born out of US	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
How ln US	8 years	5 months	9 years	9 years	9 years	6 months	7 years	7 years
In ELL	3 years	3 months	4 years	2 years	2 years	6 months	2 years	2 weeks
IEP	No	No	No	Yes (Speech)	Yes (Reading/Writing Difficulty)	Yes (ADHD & Reading/Writing Difficulty)	No	No

|								
Attended preschool	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Attended Kinder	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Virtual or In person	In person	In person	Virtual	Virtual	Virtual	In person	N/A - First grade in person	Virtual
Languages Spoken at Home	Vietnamese/ English	Vietnamese/ English	Vietnamese/ English	Spanish/English	Spanish/English	Spanish/English	Vietnamese/ English	Spanish/English
Reads in NL	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Writes NL	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
LP in native language	Beginner	Advanced	Intermediate	Beginner	Beginner	Intermediate/Advanced	Intermediate	Beginner
Educated in native language	No	Yes- In Vietnam	Yes- In US	No	No	Yes	Yes- In US	No
Home Language Proficiency	Intermediate	Beginner	Intermediate	Beginner	Intermediate	Beginner	Intermediate	Intermediate

Data Collection

The data collection for this inquiry was taken from three different sources: the pre-assessment, the mid-assessment and the post-assessment. All three assessments measured the number of errors, and three comprehension questions. I also took notes of the students' fluency when reading, as well as the usage of punctuation. If students' self-corrected I wrote that in my field notes too. As I mentioned earlier in this assignment, because the students had different levels of reading skills, I had to use multiple passages to accommodate their needs. However, the assessment style was the same. The passages I found were from Teachers Pay Teachers and for this reason I cannot share them due to copyright laws. The passages had an average of 26 words. Before the pre-assessment, when the students were interviewed about their feelings about reading and if they thought reading was hard or easy, only three male students said they didn't like reading because it was hard. The five who like to read all thought reading is hard, but they explained they had to practice more.   For the pre- assessment, I did not intervene at all. I let the students read on their own and then I asked comprehension questions. As shown in the graphs the students' WIDA ACCESS scores indicate that the students are low to intermediate with reading comprehension. For all three assessments I graded each student on

the three comprehension questions, on a four-point scale, 0-4, with zero indicating no effort and 4 indicating excellent or above and beyond effort. With three questions, this means the highest score that can be acquired is 12, and the lowest score is 0. For the fluency part of the assessment, I graded each student based on the number of words they had in their passage and when errors were made the number of errors were deducted from their grade. In the end, the highest score could be 36-39 points depending on the passage and the lowest score 0. To have the same range I turned all grades into percentages.

The below table shows each students' progress from pre-assessment to post assessment. The first bar diagram shows the students' progress in fluency (accurate words and usage of punctuation), the second their comprehension questions' progress (where there is no pre- assessment score, the students had graded 0%), and the third shows the overall percentage progress for both fluency and comprehension.

Overall, the students showed great improvement when using the phonemic reading strategies and I was happy with the results the students accomplished. However, I think this type of inquiry needed a longer period of time to be conducted and most of the students I am concerned about were not part of the inquiry. The Newcomers

Reading Assessment Using Phonological Awareness
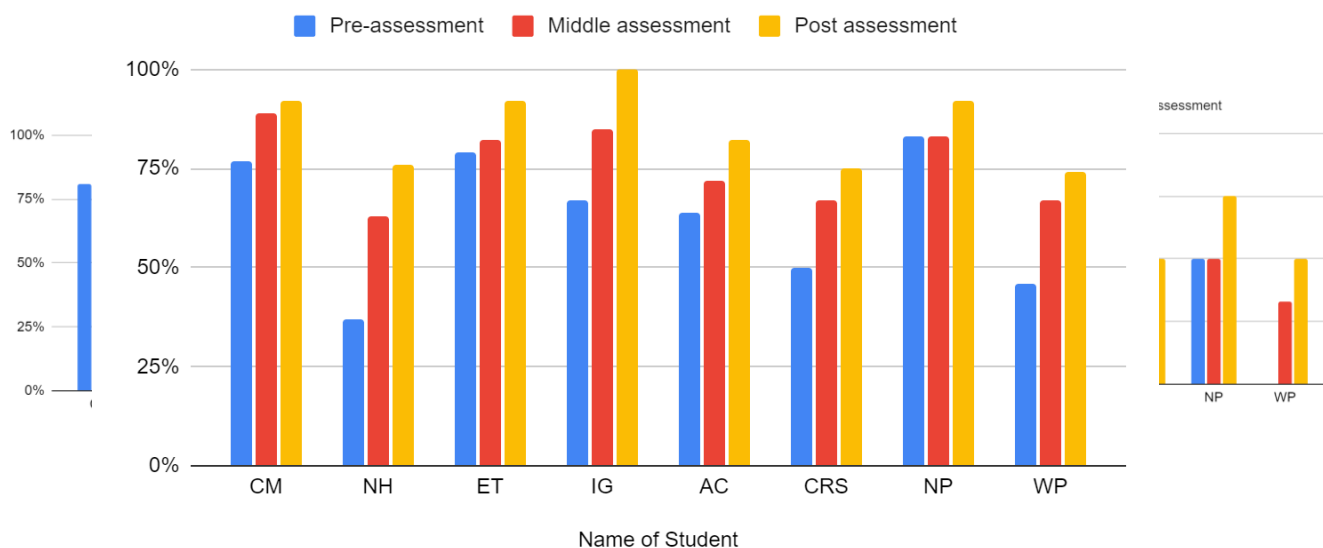
who still showed trouble with the comprehension questions are progressing in reading and although they do try their best in class, they are still shy to speak in English when asked questions directly.

It is important to mention some patterns that I observed during the assessments. During the assessments the majority of students repeated the same mistakes, even after intervening. Another pattern was that the NH who is a newcomer from Vietnam repeatedly did not pronounce the last letter from the words read. This is pronunciation difficulty this student has, and it can be misinterpreted her not being able to decode. Some students, although they could accurately decode, still had difficulty answering the comprehension questions with details. Another observation was that the students who were read to by their parents or have been educated in their home language seemed to catch up faster and use the new strategies more effectively than those who didn't have these experiences. This takes us back to our literature review from the previous course "Teacher Leadership in Practice" and proves that students who are in ELL because but were born and raised in the US without the educational experience of their "home language" tend to fall behind academically. Children whose home is not rich in literacy experiences, such as having books to read, a place for reading, listening to someone read aloud, and who do not receive deep language communication, may not develop the necessary foundation in vocabulary needed to succeed academically (Silverman, 2007; Mendoza, 2017). Moreover, when assessing the newcomers, I did not mark as incorrect common mispronunciations due to their native language.

Next Steps and Future Classroom Inquiry

Although the inquiry for this class is over, I am not quite there yet. I will continue to use the reading strategies mentioned in this inquiry and I will continue to monitor my students. In addition, I will include all students who were not part of this to participate in similar reading activities and use the reading strategies introduced earlier in this inquiry.

In the future I will start a similar inquiry at the beginning of the school year and use my data for my SGO (Student Growth Objectives). Depending on my students' needs I will adjust my inquiry to accommodate my students in the domains of language they need.

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