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The Language of Learning in Family and Consumer Sciences: English Language Learners in Career Technical Education

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Abstract

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) content and English as a Second Language (ESL) strategies can be organically incorporated to create a successful education for an English Language Learner (ELL). This paper examines research gained from a survey Family and Consumer Sciences teachers and field observations from both high school and college English Language Learners. In the conclusion of this study, a lack of current research surrounding Family and Consumer Sciences and English as a Second Language was discovered along with the need to address how Family and Consumer Sciences teachers are supported in their endeavor to instruct English Language Learners with life skills in their courses.



Introduction

Education has long been considered the essential preparation for children to become functioning and contributing members of society (Garcia, 2011). Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) stem from the basics of Home Economics courses (American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences). However, this content has grown to include topics ranging from career preparation to interior design while continuing instruction in nutrition, culinary skills, childcare preparation, and clothing construction. Family and Consumer Sciences teachers today are trained to arm students with all the skills they will need to be a functioning adult in society (Nickols, Ralston, Anderson, Browne, Schroeder, Thomas, & Wild, 2009). In sum, Family and Consumer Sciences are critical to the success of youth.

English Language Learners (ELLs) are unique students in the United States education system who all have their own unique strengths and challenges. English Language Learners are students who mainly speak a language other than English as their native language (Garcia, 2011). ELLs have a wide range of English competency levels as each student's experience is different. Generally, ELLs are enrolled in American schools where English is the primary language of instruction. Consequently, the educational environment that ELLs enter presents the language barrier challenge.

Due to the life skills provided by FCS courses, many of these teachers face the language barrier challenge with their ELL students in a manner demanding practicality. The interactive nature of FCS courses allows for the easy integration of English as a Second Language (ESL) methods. From the teacher's perspective, a conflict can arise in the grading of ELLs or what pace the class can move at to ensure their comprehension. ELLs may transfer grammatical rules from their native language into their use of English which may be incorrect and cause them to lose points on written work (Levine & McCloskey, 2013). Additionally, many ELLs experience a silent period where they remain silent in class discussions until they feel com-

fortable with their understanding of the language which could cause a disruption in the normal allotment of class participation points (Levine & McCloskey, 2013). I suggest that Family and Consumer Sciences teachers have limited training on educating English Language Learners in a content area highly conducive to it. Specifically, I will investigate the perspectives of Family and Consumer Sciences teachers and field observations of English Language Learners in the classroom.

Literature Review

Family and Consumer Sciences and English as a Second Language teaching strategies can be linked in a variety of ways. The combining of these topics often happens organically in the classroom when a teacher looks for interactive ways to instruct. Family and Consumer Sciences as a section of Career and Technical Education serves ideally to prepare students for adult life in the home and career. The potential to improve both FCS and ESL lies in the successful and intentional integration of both into a regular classroom practice.

Family and Consumer Sciences

The idea of home economics was to prepare young women to be successful wives and mothers. The content that home economics adapted to Family and Consumer Sciences as modern society expanded the number of two-income households with the growing acceptance of women in the workforce. According to a report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, an estimated 48% of two-parent families were described as having two working spouses in 2015 (Employment Characteristics of Families Summary, 2016). When both spouses work outside the house, the traditional domestic duties are often needed to be split between both partners. Additionally, in a highly complex and competitive job market, young adults need to be prepared with an appropriate skill level and awareness to be able to succeed on their own.

Family and Consumer Sciences today encompasses the topics of nutrition, career readiness, interior design, early childhood education, fashion construction, financial fitness, and

healthy living (Nickols et al, 2009). Seen as practical skills, FCS teachers use visual and hands-on learning to help students gain mastery in these content areas (Mosenson & Fox, 2011). These practical skills are meant to improve the quality of life that a person can prepare for themselves.

As trends in education push more towards the importance of core content and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math) courses, Family and Consumer Sciences are often overlooked. This rating of Family and Consumer Sciences as less important can also affect how these teachers feel in their careers and the level of preparation that they receive. FCS classes may also be viewed by counselors or administrators as “slack” courses since they do not fall under the STEM category. This phenomenon increases the chances of a student being placed in an FCS class as due to the assumed less complex nature of the content. For an ELL student who may be unfamiliar with the vocabulary and the cultural connotations, they face as difficult of a language barrier in FCS courses as they would in any STEM course.

English as a Second Language

Language acquisition appears in a natural order and manner for most small children learning their first language. For second language students, particularly English Language Learners, learning a second language while learning content in that language magnifies the challenge. Universal Grammar is the principle that all human beings can learn and apply language and grammar rules of human languages (Hummel, 2014, p.14). This principle implies that ELLs possess the ability to use English practically if taught in an effective manner.

A variety of approaches can promote the language acquisition of ELLs. The interactionist position suggests that teacher interactions with ELLs and small group work with native speakers can promote language acquisition (Hummel, 2014). As such lower teacher to student ratios increase the amount of input time that a teacher can put into each ELL. Classrooms with low teacher to student ratios can create more language input time for ELLs by

creating groups with ELLs mixed in with native English speaking students (Reiss, 2011). Interactive and varied instruction strategies used in a welcoming environment cultivate effective learning by ELLs.

ESL teachers use a variety of methods and strategies to address their students need for content and language instruction. A three-tier response to intervention (RTI) model can assist in meeting the needs of ELLs at different language mastery levels. The first tier is characterized by ELLs receiving specialized language instruction by a qualified ESL teacher while still learning all their core material with the rest of their classmates and their normal teacher. To continue, the second tier encompasses more specific forms of language supplementation by increasing their time allotted for language learning or by providing specialized materials to assist in overcoming the language barrier to still learn the material. Lastly, the third and final tier is for students who may have individualized learning plans (IEP) and additional complementary services that may be specific to any personal disability (Levine & McCloskey, 2013). Just like each student’s bilingual range varies, so should their teacher’s approach for their education.

The level of learning demands placed on a student should be appropriate and consistent with their age and ability. In some instances, ELL students are placed in a grade or two lower than what their age would correspond to (Levine & McCloskey, 2013). Every bilingual speaker has a different ratio of fluency in their native language versus their second language. In linguistics, this is referred to as their bilingual range (Hualde, 2010). As some students use their native language only at home and their second language primarily in school, this addresses the need for more scrutiny to understand and address where their language skills may be lacking. When placing ELLs in a new school, their age and ability should both be considered.

To further complicate the proficiency levels of ELLs, language is understood in two formats: context reduced and context embed-

ded. To simplify, this divided language into academic and social spheres. Context reduced language is the language of academia and takes longer to acquire a comprehension of than context embedded language. Context embedded language is the language of the social sphere and includes what is known as basic interpersonal communication skills, or language used for daily social use (Levine & McCloskey, 2013, p. 29). Thus, a misinterpretation of students' abilities may be cause for them to be unnecessarily put into a special education program which Students may be fluent in English as their second language, but may still struggle to understand how it is used in the academic setting of their school.

When creating an effective learning environment for ELLs, the teacher plays a crucial part. There are five roles that teachers can accept to help ELLs feel welcomed and able to grow in the classroom: communicator, educator, evaluator, educated human being, and agent of socialization (Fillmore & Wong, 2000). As a communicator, teachers should be able to validate the way their ELLs speak and understand the potential for common learning mistakes. In the role of an educator, teachers should provide opportunities for ELLs to practically use their English skills and insert corrections only when necessary (Fillmore & Wong, 2000). The evaluator hat of teachers should ensure that students are not sorted into permanent groups based on ability too early in their education (Fillmore & Wong, 2000). As educated human beings, teachers should take responsibility for becoming competent in effective methods for teaching language. Lastly, teachers should see themselves as an agent of socialization by recognizing the value in the ELL's first language. As a result, it often falls to the classroom teacher to mitigate the challenges of ELLs.

In instructing ELLs, teachers must understand that they are not just teaching content, but also modeling language. Therefore, teachers should know how to segment information, how to distribute it, and how to ensure that students receive this information (Fillmore &

Wong, 2000, p. 13). Today's teaching force is encountering a high population of students that come from immigrant families, who they are unprepared to teach (Fillmore & Wong, 2000). Trends of policymakers creating benchmark assessments and limiting accessibility to bilingual education have created additional disdain and unwillingness to work with these students (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2013). This is a semi-logical trend as Standard English becomes more necessary in the workplace. Teachers need to be able to assess children's skill levels while still individualizing their instruction and respecting their diversity (Fillmore & Wong, 2000). Unfortunately, teachers' views of ELLs are affected by state and federal laws in addition to societal views of these students.

Implementation of effective ESL methods are crucial to both the success of teachers and ELLs. Teachers are encouraged to use the cognitive academic language learning approach (CALLA) Method for teaching ELLs at all levels (Herrera & Murry, 2016, p.321). This method focuses on teaching students to use metacognitive (e.g. KWL charts), cognitive (e.g. making inferences), and social/affective (e.g. cooperative learning) strategies to increase comprehension (Herrera & Murry, 2016, p.322-3). The CALLA Method uses five phases to accomplish its goals. The phases include: preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, and expansion. Generally, effective methods like the CALLA Method allow ELLs to reach their maximum comprehension potential in the classroom.

English as a Second Language within Family and Consumer Sciences

A lack of confidence in the ability to reach their students effectively tends to plague FCS teachers as they work to combat the language barrier between themselves and their students. FCS teachers should be prepared to lower the affective filter and show respect for the diversity that the ELL brings to the school (Allison & Rehm, 2011). This can start by simply learning to pronounce all the student's names correctly. Additionally, there is a struggle for teachers to connect with parents of ELLs. Hispanic parents can be especially hesitant to engage with

teachers if their own English fluency is not developed (Allison & Bencomo, 2015). The need for cross cultural awareness and preparation for FCS teachers is high.

Little appears to be noted in academia about the exposure of FCS teaching candidates to diversity in language. In addition, Family and Consumer Sciences has been based around mostly traditional American culture. Adaptation of content to include the cultural affective lenses of diverse sub-groups of ELLs should be considered, especially in the areas of nutrition (Nickols et al, 2009) and family relationships (Allison & Bencomo, 2015). FCS teachers, as a demographic, enjoy sharing and helping one another as evidenced by the compilation of resources uploaded by the Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers Facebook group that connects over 7,000 teachers across the country. In sum, the field of ESL in FCS is wide open for exploration.

Purpose Statement

Every single child that walks through the doors of a school classroom is different. They each have differing abilities and needs and hopes and fears. Students whose first language is not English face a larger host of needs in the American school system than most students do. The United States has been known as a country of immigrants since its early beginnings. However, the standard pattern of this melting pot was to peel off the cultural identity of these students and replace it with a coating of English-only, European cultural requirements. For example, many early immigrants to the United States would adapt their surnames to sound more American or English so that they would face less discrimination (Garcia, 2011). Historically, the United States education system has not provided an exceptionally welcoming environment for language diversity.

This historic disregard of minority languages has stigmatized the children who speak them in an educational setting. English Language Learners are often viewed as inherently less intelligent by their peers who respond to their occasional grammatical errors with mockery

(Cushner, McClelland, & Safford, 2012). Additionally, English Language Learners enter classrooms where their teachers have no experience with their native language and lack the adequate knowledge and methods to best educate them. Acceptance and respect of minority languages should be the first step to combat this historical condemnation.

Language minority students are set up as more likely to fail than to succeed in today's education system. English Language Learners are more likely to be placed in Special Education programs (Fillmore, 2000). They are also more likely to have grown up in poverty and less likely to be able to access postsecondary education and training resulting in continuous generations facing the same systemized battles (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2013). Consequently, ESL education is more important than ever.

The perspective that the only language that should exist in the United States is English is a faulty assumption that harms the educational achievement and psychological development of English Language Learners. It is essential that educators have the capacity to address the needs of their English Language Learner students in their regular classrooms to prevent the isolation of these students. An "us versus them" perspective is not conducive to the melting pot ideal that was posited by the American founding fathers.

Research Questions

This study aimed to answer three main concerns regarding ESL and FCS education. The first research question was framed as: *1) Do Family and Consumer Sciences teachers feel like they are provided with the necessary resources to instruct ELL's in the classroom?* This question aimed to answer whether or not teachers receive outside help in creating lessons inclusive to ELLs. The second research question stated: *2) During teacher training and education, do teachers receive adequate preparation to work with language minority students?* This question aimed to discover the amount of exposure to ELLs that teachers had access to prior to entering the workforce. The final research read: *3) Do teachers feel confident in their ability to work with*

English Language Learners? The purpose of this question was to uncover the comfort level that current teachers have with ELLs.

Methods

Survey

An online forced-choice survey hosted through Google forms was used to gather perspectives from FCS teachers. The survey was open from November 9, 2016 through November 25, 2016. Distribution of the survey occurred through voluntary participation of FCS teachers via the Facebook group, Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers and through email list services sent by Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) state advisers in twenty-seven different states.

This survey contained thirty-five questions to be answered in the format of Yes-No or four-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). The content of the survey included five demographic sorting questions designed to allow for conclusions to be drawn about geographical region, size of school, size of the community, average class sizes, and year the teacher graduated. The remaining thirty questions were randomized with each research question represented by ten specific survey questions. A full listing of the survey questions can be found in Appendix A.

Field Observations

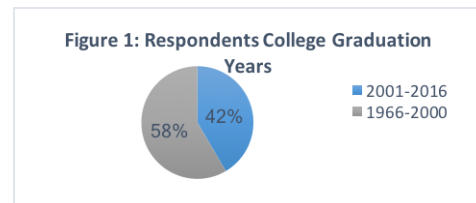
Tutoring. The first branch of the field experience included tutoring experience at a Midwestern high school with two freshmen male students who both spoke Spanish as their first language and English as their second. The tutoring sessions occurred in their regular classrooms during the school day. An average of 1-2 hours was spent with one or both students in either their English or Algebra class.

Lesson plan. The second branch of the field experience was the presentation of an hour-long lesson plan on résumés and cover letters on November 4, 2016. The audience of this presentation comprised of thirty-five students enrolled in the English as a Second Language program at South Dakota State University. The full lesson plan can be found in Appendix B.

Results

Survey

Using the previously noted methods, the survey was completed by Family and Consumer Sciences teachers from across the country. The final total of respondents to the survey equaled n=249. All questions were listed as optional, thus allowing some respondents to abstain from answering certain questions. The respondents were FCS teachers either current or recently retired within the United States. These teachers ranged in college completion dates from 1966 through 2016. The number distribution through the years is shown in Figure 1.



Additionally, these teachers hailed from twenty-seven different states. The distributions was as follows: Atlantic Coast: 28 respondents from seven states; Midwest: 151 respondents from eight states; Pacific West: 54 respondents from five states; South: 32 respondents from seven states. A remaining four respondents did not disclose their location. The distribution of respondents from specific states is shown in Table 1. The ratio of respondents teaching in urban to suburban to rural settings is 45:92:109. Teachers from a variety of backgrounds participated in the study with 53% of the respondents hailing from Midwestern corn belt states.

Due to the high amount of rural teacher respondents, a high percentage of smaller class sizes were shown in the responses. The survey results indicated that 44.1% of the respondents (n=109) teach class sizes between 21 and 30 students in their classroom at any one time. There were 33.2% of respondents (n=82) teaching classes of 11-20 students, 16.6% of respondents (n=41) teaching classes larger than 30 students, and 6.1% of respondents (n=15) teaching classes with 10 or less students. Close to three-fourths of these teachers surveyed teach classes

of less than 30 students which is ideal for one on one interaction with ELL students.

| | State | # of Responses |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Atlantic Coast | Connecticut | 1 |
| | Maine | 1 |
| | New Hampshire | 1 |
| | New York | 2 |
| | North Carolina | 20 |
| | Pennsylvania | 2 |
| | Virginia | 1 |
| Midwest | Illinois | 1 |
| | Indiana | 2 |
| | Iowa | 2 |
| | Kansas | 85 |
| | Michigan | 4 |
| | Minnesota | 3 |
| | Nebraska | 28 |
| | Ohio | 6 |
| | Pacific | Alaska |
| Idaho | | 1 |
| Nevada | | 1 |
| Utah | | 50 |
| Washington | | 1 |
| South | Alabama | 1 |
| | Arkansas | 18 |
| | Florida | 1 |
| | Georgia | 3 |
| | Louisiana | 2 |
| | Mississippi | 1 |
| | Texas | 6 |

Survey respondents also indicated the percentage of their students who were English Language Learners. As noted with the high Midwestern response to the survey, 45.7% of respondents (n=111) indicated that 10% or less of the students their school district are ELLs. This was followed by 30.9% of respondents (n=75) answering that 11-25% of their students are ELLs, 10.3% of respondents (n=25) answering that 26-50% of their students are ELLs, 9.5% of respondents (n=23) answering that over 75% of their students are ELLs, and the final 3.7% of respondents (n=9) indicating that 51-75% of their students are ELLs. Since the most densely populated states for ELLs are California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey

(Garcia, 2011, p. 61), these numbers appear consistent with the high population of Midwestern rural teachers that responded. These six states in the survey were represented by only a total of 10 respondents from four of these states as no data was received from California or New Jersey.

Research question 1. The first research question in this study aimed to discover if FCS teachers felt that they were given adequate resources from their school district to work with ELLs. A dominating 71.2% of teachers (n=173) in the survey indicated that their school district had an ELL specialist on staff. However, 52.8% of respondents (n=130) indicated that they do not receive instructional resources to help with their ELL students while 47.5% of teachers (n=112) disagreed and 11.4% of teachers (n=27) strongly disagreed that their administration did not provide in-service training for working with ELL students.

In response to questions reflecting on their perspective of programs designed to help their students, the respondents indicated their support. A majority of 53.2% of teachers (n=125) agreed and 32.8% of teachers (n=13) strongly agreed teachers believed that their school had an effective tutoring program available for ELL students. Additionally, 64.2% of (A, 58 SA) teachers (n=154) agreed and 24.2% of teachers (n=58) strongly agreed that they would like to have more access to lesson plans with ELL strategies and 73.7% of teachers (n=179) agreed along with 19% of teachers (n=19) who strongly agreed that they would like to be involved with creating individualized education plans for their ELL students in their classrooms. Despite indications of lacking resources, these teachers indicate that they want to help these students succeed.

Research question 2. Survey questions reflecting to the second research question aimed to uncover how FCS teachers viewed their preparation to work with ELLs. A clear majority, 68.4% of teachers (n=167), in the survey did not have a required course that taught about ESL methods during their teacher education program. Additionally, 72.2% of teachers (n=177)

did not choose or did not have the option to take an elective class on ESL methods. Lastly, 39% of teachers (n=96) disagreed along with 41.5% of teachers (n=102) who strongly disagreed that their content's methods course adequately discussed working with ELLs. As 58% of the teachers surveyed graduated their teacher education program prior to 2001, it is likely that many of their programs may not have felt the need at the time to include ESL methods in their preparation.

On the other hand, the teachers surveyed displayed a conflicting rate of exposure to cultural diversity. This included 56.6% of teachers (n=137) indicated that it was required for them to take a class on cultural diversity to achieve their teacher certification compared to 60.3% of teachers (n=146) who responded that their program did not require them to have field experience with students in areas of diversity. Additionally, 63.4% of teachers (n=156) indicated that they had taken a foreign language course in comparison to 36.6% of teachers (n=90) who had not. Even with this limited experience to different culture, only 30.3% of teachers (n=74) encountered ELLs while completing their practicum and student teaching to the 60.7% (n=174) who did not. Before entering the field, these teachers were not overexposed to culturally diverse students.

The attitude of professors in the teaching certification programs appears to be consistent per the responses to questions posed positively and negatively. There were only 2.2% of teachers (n=5) that agreed and 0.4% of teachers (n=1) that strongly agreed that their postsecondary instructors had a negative attitude towards ELL students while 59.1% disagreed (n=136) with 38.3% of teachers (n=88) who strongly disagreed that their teachers did not have a negative attitude. In comparison, 12.5% of teachers (n=28) disagreed and 1.8% (n=4) strongly disagreed that their instructors had a positive attitude towards ELLs while 72.8% of teachers (n=163) and 12.9% of teachers (n=29) strongly agreed that their instructors had a positive attitude towards ELLs. Clearly, the majority of respondents were taught by instructors with

positive sentiments towards ELLs.

Research question 3. The teachers surveyed also indicated a mixture of positive and negative perspectives towards ELLs. There were 62.9% of teachers (n=151) that agreed along with 31.3% of teachers (n=75) that strongly agreed that they feel positively towards working with ELLs. To continue this trend, 51.2% of teachers (n=123) disagreed while 19.2% of teachers (n=46) noted that they did not feel nervous when they had an ELL as one of their students in a class. In the classroom setting, 70% of teachers (n=166) agree along with 16.5% teachers (n=39) strongly agree that indicated that their ELL students feel included in class activities. However, 48.3% of teachers (n=116) agree while 37.5% teachers (n=90) strongly agree that they feel most comfortable teaching students with a background similar to their own while only 25.4% of teachers (n=61) agree and 2.1% of teachers (n=5) strongly agree that they feel most comfortable teaching students with backgrounds different from their own. FCS teachers had a mostly positive attitude towards ELLs with few negative reactions.

Communication between FCS teachers, ELLs, and parents of ELLs is influenced by the language barrier. There were 58.9% of teachers (n=142) who agreed with an additional 19.5% of teachers (n=47) who strongly agreed that they doubt their ability to understand their students' native languages. Additionally, only 23.7% of teachers (n=57) agreed along with 3.7% of teachers (n=9) who strongly agreed that they feel confident communicating with the parents of their ELLs. These respondents indicated that the teachers surveyed are unfamiliar with the cultural language(s) spoken by their ELLs.

Overall, a desire for more knowledge and support were shown by these teachers. When asked if their training to work with ELLs in the classroom was adequate, 47.7% of teachers (n=116) disagreed and 18.1% of teachers (n=44) indicated that they did not feel prepared compared to 29.6% (n=77) who agreed and 4.5% (n=11) who strongly agreed that they did feel prepared. A plurality of 47.7% of teach-

ers (n=116) agreed along with 10.7% of teachers (n=26) who strongly agreed that they have questions about communicating with their ELLs. Another 72.5 % of teachers (n=174) agreed while 9.2% of teachers (n=22) strongly agreed that they would like to learn more about working with ELL students. As indicated earlier, FCS teachers feel unprepared, yet these responses indicated that they want to know more about working with their ELLs.

Field Observations

Tutoring. From August 29th through December 1st, I worked with the English as a Second Language department at Midwestern high school of approximately 800 students. My original tutoring schedule was one class period on Mondays and one class period on Wednesdays where I worked with a freshman Spanish-speaking boy in his English class.

This schedule lasted for approximately six weeks. During that time, I would attend his English lecture and help him answer questions on the class's reading of *A Raisin in the Sun*. However, a continued pattern of absences by my student began in the third week that I was planned to work with him. I would continue to speak with the school secretary who would let me know if he had showed up for the day, left early, or was present. In the first four weeks alone, there were four absences which took up two weeks worth of planned tutoring sessions. At this point, I contacted the ESL education coordinator to plan for a new tutoring schedule as my student's schedule had changed to only morning classes.

The remaining couple weeks of tutoring I spent working with my student and one of his ELL classmates in their Algebra class. In this class I would listen to the lecture with my two students and then would go to the library with them to work on the assignment. During this time, I would walk through the first problem on their assignment with them and then have them explain to me what they were doing on the second assignment. Occasionally, I would speak in Spanish with the students during these explanations for further clarification if they were confused by my English

explanation.

While tutoring, I noticed several instances of separation or assumptions that were made about ELL students in general. One teacher mentioned to me that he was unsure if this student was going to pass the class due to his absences. Another teacher appeared flustered at continuously trying to have the student make up work. One of the first times that my student was absent, I was told that he was supposed to have had in-school suspension that day. The teacher that I spoke to about this believed that the student had skipped to avoid the suspension. Additionally, I was asked by one teacher if I thought he was understanding any of the content when I was not there helping him translate and comprehend. Lastly, in the two of my student's classes that I witnessed, he sat in the back and away from the rest of the students. In general, my ELL tutoring student appeared to lack solid reinforcement.

As frustrating as it was for me to show up to school when he was not there, I found motivation in the way he acted when I was there. On the first day that I was there this semester, he asked if I would be there every day. That same day I helped him find an Accelerated Reader book, *Code Talkers*, that he found interesting in because of its accreditation of bilingual speakers in World War II. Another class period, we discussed the idea of the American Dream; to which he explained it as getting an education, getting a good job, and buying a house. He also was polite and would pull out the chair for me or grab an extra novel during his English class so I could see the same material as he did. The last day that I was at the school, my student followed me out to my car, thanked me, and told me that he was going to try to take the exam to receive his General Education Diploma. In the end, this student showed me that an investment in his education was more than worth my time spent on him.

Lesson plan. I presented the lesson plan over career preparation on November 4, 2016 from 12pm-1pm in the University Student Union. The planned lesson can be seen in Appendix B. There were approximately thirty-five students

in attendance. The most difficult task that I encountered as the teacher in this scenario is that I did not have a “class roster” available to learn my students’ names ahead of time. The age similarity with my students also presented difficulties in creating a formal teaching setting. However, that is a difficulty that I will likely encounter in my first few years of teaching.

The most strikingly noticeable difference in this lesson presentation was the pace of the lesson and the level of detail and amount of content that I could incorporate. I had planned about twice as much content than what I could have covered with these students. I realized that this new and complicated material for my students required a lot more personal explanations. These explanations seemed to be best understood when phrased in as simple to understand language as possible. I also noticed that it was difficult to give personalized attention to each student in this context as there was a 35:1 student to teacher ratio. My limited understanding of the students’ diverse backgrounds also prevented proactive planning on my part.

This session proved that it is especially important to work one on one with English Language Learners as several of the students today had specific questions. The topic of résumés is a very personalized issue as no two people have the same experiences to include on a résumé in addition to each job that you apply for tends to have a personalized list of applicable skills that should be included. The various language proficiency levels in this class also provided a challenge. Several of the more proficient students were mixed in with students with lower proficiency which presented me with the task of adapting tasks for each group of students. In the group work section, the more proficient students led and helped explain to less proficient students what was being asked of them.

In the responses that the students left on sticky notes at the end of the lesson, a couple of trends were clear to see. The students listed that they liked the activities (group work where they developed a timeline of applying and then

created a poster with skills for a job), explanations of each section of the résumé, and that it was practical information. The dislikes of the students included comments on: wanting more examples, the time allotted was too short, complex vocabulary, and the font size on the PowerPoint. Lastly, the students commented on what they had learned including: writing down important experiences, brainstorming in a team, and how their résumé should look before submitting it to an employer. From these comments, I identified examples of how the ELLs in my lesson like to learn.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study strove to address three concerns. First, what challenges do FCS teachers face in preparation and guidance to work with ELLs? This concern was addressed through the survey of FCS teachers’ experiences. Secondly, what do ELL students experience in an English-dominated high school? To investigate this concern, I tutored at a Midwestern high school. Lastly, what considerations should be made to incorporate English as a Second Language strategies into Family and Consumer Sciences more effectively? I addressed this concern through reviewing relevant literature on the subject and planning and presenting my own lesson incorporating ESL methods. The lack of current material that is readily available on these increasing concerns were the drive behind this study.

Family and Consumer Sciences teachers have not been provided with an extensive background in working with English Language Learners. This is shown through the number of teachers that indicate that they do not feel like their programs prepared them. On the other hand, FCS teachers want to help their ELLs in any way that they can as the majority reflect a positive attitude towards them and want to be involved in making success plans. FCS teachers would benefit from additional ESL resources reflecting their content.

English Language Learners benefit from one on one instruction. The students in the lesson plan demonstration left feedback that

they learned more from interaction with the teacher. Additionally, the literature that knowing the student and respecting their cultural identity decreases the affective filter. The tutoring students improved comprehension in the algebra class after being able to ask their questions in a smaller setting and receive specific explanation to vocabulary that belongs to context reduced language.

Future changes to teacher education programs should include ESL methods threaded into regular content and methods courses. Cultural awareness exposure should also be increased for teaching candidates to limit the effect of affective filters once they enter the field. This paper aimed to examine the limited training of Family and Consumer Sciences teachers on work with English Language Learners. As such, I found that Family and Consumer Sciences teachers want to have access to English as a Second Language materials and that English Language Learners face an array of challenges in the school setting.

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Appendix A

The Language of Learning in Family and Consumer Sciences Education Survey

- 1) In which state do you teach?
 - a) (dropdown to select state)
- 2) I teach in a(n) _____ area.
 - a) Rural
 - b) Suburban
 - c) Urban
- 3) In what year did you graduate from your post-secondary institution/receive your teaching license? Please format as XXXX.
 - a) (short answer to input applicable year)
- 4) The average amount of students in your classroom at one time is _____ .
 - a) <10 students
 - b) 11-20 students
 - c) 21-30 students
 - d) 30+ students
- 5) The approximate percentage of English Language Learners in your school district is _____ .
 - a) less than 10 %
 - b) 11-25 % ,
 - c) 26-50 %
 - d) 51-75 %
 - e) greater than 75 %
- 6) Resources are provided in _____ different languages by my school district.
 - a) 0
 - b) 1-2
 - c) 3-4
 - d) 4 or more
- 7) My methods course in college adequately discussed teaching ELLs in my content area.
 - a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree

- d) strongly agree
- 8) During my higher education program (Bachelors, Masters, Certificate Program), I took an elective college course that taught me about ESL methods.
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 9) I receive instructional resources to help my ELL students.
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 10) I have taken a foreign language course(s).
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 11) My school district provides acceptable bilingual resources that are available for use in my classroom.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 12) I have questions about how I should communicate with my ELLs.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 13) My ELLs feel included in classroom activities.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 14) I have an ELL specialist in my school.
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 15) During my higher education program (Bachelors, Masters, Certificate Program), I took a program-required college course that taught me methods to work with English Language Learners.

- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 16) How many class periods do your ELLs spend in the regular classroom (non-ESL focused)?
- a) 0-1 hour
 - b) 2-3 hours
 - c) 4-5 hours
 - d) 6+ hours
- 17) I received adequate training to work with ELLs in the classroom.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 18) My higher education professors had a negative attitude towards ELLs.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 19) I want to learn more about working with ELLs.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 20) I would like to have access to more sample lesson plans that include ELL strategies related to my content area.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 21) I feel confident in my ability to communicate with the parents of my ELL students.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree

- 22) I believe my school district's tutoring program is effective in helping ELLs with their homework.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 23) I was required to take a class on cultural diversity in order to receive certification.
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 24) My ELLs also receive adequate instruction in the special education classes.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 25) I feel most comfortable teaching students with backgrounds similar to my own.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 26) Working with ELLs was frequently discussed during my college career.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 27) I doubt my ability to understand my students' native language(s)
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 28) My higher education program (Bachelors, Masters, Certificate Program) required work with students in different areas of diversity.
- a) Yes
 - b) No

- 29) I feel most comfortable teaching students with backgrounds different than my own.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 30) My administration provides appropriate in-service training for teachers to work with ELL students in our district.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 31) My attitude towards working with ELL students is positive.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 32) I feel nervous when I have an English Language Learner in my classroom.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 33) I believe that I should be involved in creating an individualized education plan for ELL students in my classroom.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 34) My higher education professors displayed a positive attitude towards ELLs.
- a) strongly disagree
 - b) disagree
 - c) agree
 - d) strongly agree
- 35) My practicum hours and/or student teaching experience exposed me to ELL students.

- a) Yes
- b) No

Appendix B

Diving into the Applicant Pool Lesson Plan: November 4, 2016

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Brief Description/Overview: focus on writing a cover letter and resume. In addition, we will practice interview skills while exploring the entire process of applying for a job. Lastly, we will take a look at how to follow up with employers in between the interview and the potential offer. | | |
| Level: | | |
| Total Length of lesson: __1__class(es) __50__minutes | | |
| Communicative Goals: | | |
| To be able to explain the new vocabulary. | | |
| Learning Objectives: | | |
| I. Identify the different parts of a resume and a cover letter | | |
| II. Explain the importance of writing a cover letter | | |
| III. Understand the order of the job application process résumé | | |
| Time | Procedures Followed | Materials/Texts |
| 5 Minutes 12:00- 12:05 | Warm-up Activity In groups students will place the pictures of each <u>step in</u> order on the timeline. They will then explain to the groups what action is happening in the pictures once they have ordered them correctly | Post boards Markers Pictures |
| 10 Minutes 12:05- 12:15 | Demonstration/ Input stage I Parts of a resume: explaining necessary categories and what information should be in there. Students fill in visual organizer sheet as they go along | Powerpoint visual Visual organizer 1.0 |
| 10 Minutes 12:15- 12:25 | Activity stage I Work with partners to identify what type of job they want and skills/experience they would need to be qualified for this job | Large notepads |
| 10 Minutes 12:25- 12:35 | Input Stage II Cover letter: explaining purpose, when & where to submit, and what to include in an effective cover letter | Power point Visual organizers 2.0 |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| 10 Minutes 12:35- 12:45 | Activity stage III Students will rate which cover letters written for historical figures are good ones and which ones need improvements. Will do think -pair-share to evaluate cover letters | Examples of cover letters (made for famous historical people as Frame of Reference) |
| (back up) Minutes | Activity stage IV Where can I find resources – match up activity – toss names of resource places into baskets representing who/what could help with that need (finding job apps, resumes, and cover letters) | Baskets labeled as resume, cover letter, job application, and resources written on paper to crumple and toss into respective pieces |
| 5 Minutes 12:45- 12:50 | Closure/Review/Reteach Stage IV if need time fill Sticky notes – leave a note of what liked, what didn't like, what learned | Sticky notes, pens, sheets on door |
| Assessments (Formative & Summative) | | |
| Template résumés and cover letters for take home (in normal scenario – would be turned in the next day as the assignment) | | |
| Instructor's Reflection: | | |
| What worked: The graphic organizers were utilized by the majority of the students to organize what they would put in their own resume. | | |
| What did not work: The standard font on the slideshow ended up being too small. The table set up limited the available space for group work and for student-teacher interaction. The amount of content proved to be too much for just one lesson without overwhelming the students. | | |
| Suggestions for next time: I would split up cover letters and resumes into two different lessons. I would insert a section that would allow the students to define each of the new vocabulary in their own words after I have described it. | | |