

**English Language Learner Shadowing:
A Catalyst for Improving Academic Engagement and Achievement of
Long-term English Language Learners**

Nicole Knight

Reach Institute for School Leadership

Faculty Advisors: Dennis Chaconas and Victoria Folks

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Abstract

The challenges facing Long-term English Language Learners (ELLs) are urgent and compelling. Defined as students who have been enrolled in United States schools for more than six consecutive years, many Long-term ELLs are silently languishing in our classrooms. Absent a district-wide effort to improve academic engagement and performance of this large and growing student subgroup, we are sure to see widening disparities in achievement as we fully implement the Common Core State Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards and their accompanying high-stakes assessments. Despite the widening achievement gap, most Oakland educators don't fully understand the characteristics and needs of these students. A review of the literature reveals that oral academic language development is essential to the academic success of Long-term ELLs, and academic discussion a key strategy. Through this action research study, I sought to empower instructional leaders with the knowledge and skill to help teachers increase academic speaking and listening of Long-term ELLs. At the heart of my intervention is ELL Shadowing, a process of collaborative inquiry grounded in a student-centered observation protocol. I facilitated the process at five pilot sites resulting in co-constructed action plans designed to support the academic engagement of Long-term ELLs in the classroom. At the culmination of the intervention, I conducted a thorough analysis of the data based on pre- and post-surveys, quick-writes, and transcribed debrief notes. I found that the intervention led to increased understanding of the characteristics and needs of Long-term ELLs, increased urgency to take action, improved ability to observe for academic speaking and listening of Long-term ELLs, and well-designed action plans. The intervention also resulted in a refined set of observation tools and an effective and accessible facilitation process. A significant factor in the success of the intervention was the personal connection and emotional response made possible through shadowing a student for an extended period of time.

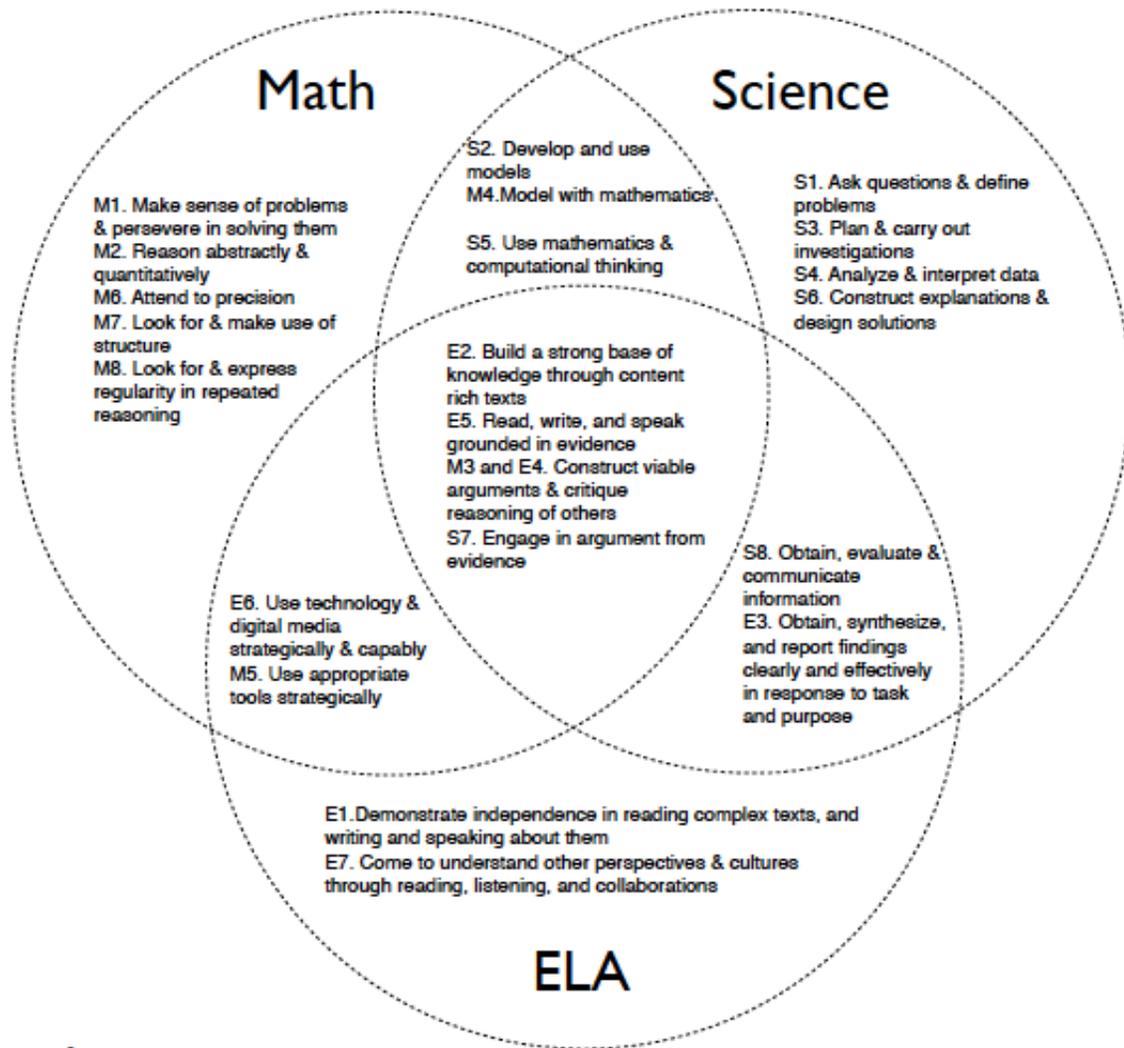
Introduction and Context

Addressing the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) is a compelling and urgent issue for the education community. The population of K-12 ELLs grew by 60% in the last decade, while the general student population grew by only 7%. There are now 5.3 million ELLs enrolled in United States K-12 schools, comprising 11% of the student population (Migrant Policy Institute, 2013). This percentage is almost twice as high in California, with ELLs making up 21.6% of total student enrollment (California Department of Education, 2014). One particularly alarming trend is the development of Long-Term ELLs, a significant subgroup of our ELLs. Long-term ELLs are language learners who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for more than six consecutive years and have not yet been reclassified as proficient in the English language. Six years is the approximate time needed for an English Language Learner to gain the social and academic language proficiencies to be reclassified (Collier, 1981; Olsen, 2010). Long-term ELLs typically have a strong command of social uses of the English language, yet do not have adequate academic language and literacy competencies to fully engage in the rigor of grade-level academic content. In fact, the gap between a Long-term ELL's skill set and the academic language demands of the content only widens as the student moves into higher grade-levels. In addition, many Long-term ELLs demonstrate patterns of disengagement and passivity, which presents further obstacles to their academic success (Olsen, 2010).

In the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), 69% of our English Language Learner population in middle and high schools are Long-term ELLs. Many educators are surprised to learn that 74% of our ELLs were born in the United States, debunking the

widely held notion that most ELLs in Oakland are recently arrived immigrant students who need the building blocks of language. Sixty-five percent of our 12th grade ELLs have been enrolled in U.S. schools their entire educational career. As evidenced through in-depth data analysis of Oakland Unified School District, there is a high correlation between students' Long-term ELL status and poor academic achievement across all college and career readiness measures in Oakland, including reading scores, CAHSEE pass rates, college required credit completion, and even graduation rates (See Appendix A). In fact, by many of the indicators above, Long-term ELLs fare worse than most other subgroups, even underperforming newcomers who have been in the country for less than three years. This persistently low performance is a crisis that goes largely unrecognized by educators in Oakland schools. Few are familiar with the term Long-term English Language Learner, much less the characteristics of these students, how our educational system creates Long-term ELLs or the instructional practices that best serve their needs (Olsen, 2010).

The adoption and implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) present additional challenges as well as opportunities in meeting the needs of our ELLs. These new standards include increased cognitive and language demands due to the focus on disciplinary-specific discourse practices such as arguing from evidence, critiquing the reasoning of others, and analyzing and interpreting data (see figure 1). Students will have difficulty demonstrating or even approximating mastery of the standards without a command of the complex language inherent in the discourse practices of the CCSS and NGSS (O'Hara et al., 2014).



The *opportunity* of the new standards for ELLs arises because these shifts in expectations necessitate a paradigm shift of the design and delivery of core academic subjects. All teachers of ELLs (not just ELD teachers) must modify their practices in an effort to provide ELLs with the opportunity and support they need to participate fully and succeed in content-area instruction. In other words, all teachers must be teachers of

language (Bunche, Kibler, O’Hara et al, 2014; Pimentel & Walqui, 2013). And yet, a commonly-held perspective among Oakland educators is that language instruction is the exclusive domain of the ELD teacher or ELD block. As a result of this mindset as well as a lack of teacher training in academic language and literacy instruction, many teachers do not provide students with an opportunity to learn and apply academic language in authentic and content-rich contexts. One of the consequences of the lack of attention to the academic language needs of our ELLs throughout the grades is the high number of Long-term ELLs falling through the cracks.

A critical player in managing this change is, of course, the principal. To provide the instructional leadership that will support teachers to improve instruction for ELLs, principals will need to develop deep understanding of instructional practices that help our diverse language learners to acquire the requisite academic language and discourse practices for academic success. Currently, principals are at emerging levels of understanding of the instructional shifts of the new standards, as well as understanding the diversity of our ELLs and their equally diverse language and literacy needs. Principals, in partnership with their school leadership teams, will need to deepen their pedagogical content knowledge base in both areas in order to understand what quality, language-rich instruction looks like in the classroom and to provide instructional leadership and guidance.

Absent a district-wide effort to proactively address the language needs of our students, we can expect to see the disparities between our Long-term ELLs and other subgroups significantly increase as we move towards full implementation of CCSS and NGSS and accompanying high-stakes assessments.

One promising step to better address the needs of our Long-term ELLs is the recent identification of academic discussion as a district-wide focal pedagogy in Oakland Unified School District, a move initiated and led by the English Language Learner Office I direct. The goal of this focus is to support our diverse language learners to meet the language and content demands of the new standards by fortifying academic language oral proficiency and by increasing engagement of all students (the research-based rationale for which can be found in the subsequent literature review). Academic discussion is interwoven into all professional learning initiatives for teachers across grade levels and content areas, and is the common focus of Instructional Rounds (for a description, see <http://www.instructionalrounds.com>), a protocol that every site is partaking in the 2013-2014 school year in which principals support each other around an instructionally-based problem of practice through walk-throughs and structured debrief. Analysis of the first cycle of Instructional Rounds revealed three key findings relevant to this topic. We found that generally principals 1) are not calibrated on what quality academic discussions look and sound like; 2) do not have the pedagogical content knowledge themselves to understand what instruction looks like that fosters academic discussions for *all* students; and 3) do not know how to use classroom observation data to identify actionable steps that support change in teacher practice. In addition, observations of academic discussion have generally focused on broad trends of student behavior without attention to engagement and the unique needs of Long-term ELLs.

Problem of Practice

The context provided above points to an urgent need for principal professional learning on the needs of their Long-term ELLs, the pedagogical practices that effectively

engage all students in academic discussion, and the leadership actions that support these practices. Despite this need, there is little to no opportunity to engage principals in this topic due to the many competing demands and initiatives that consume their network meetings and centrally-held professional learning spaces. Moreover, principals have expressed that professional learning is ineffective when it is not customized to their particular school context and without opportunities for immediate and direct application.

My problem of practice is that principals do not provide teachers instructional guidance in fostering academic discussions that is needed to improve the academic performance of Long-term ELLs. To address this problem and the need for contextualized professional learning for principals, I will develop and implement a protocol to engage principals and their leadership teams in a process of collaborative inquiry focused on Long-term ELLs' engagement in academic speaking and listening, resulting in a co-constructed action plan designed to impact classroom instruction.

Literature Review

Introduction to the Literature

In this literature review, I argue for focused attention to the instructional needs of Long-term English Language Learners and for the central role that instructional leaders play in advancing systemic equity. The status of Long-term ELLs is not an inherent attribute, rather a result of language-poor, inconsistent programs and instruction typically marked by low rigor and low expectations (Garcia, 2012; Hakuta, 2002; Olsen, 2010, Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Long-term ELLs have unique needs that must be addressed

if they are not to be foreclosed from opportunities to pursue college and career (Freeman and Freeman, 2007; Olsen, 2010). In order to succeed academically, particularly considering the advent of the Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, Long-term ELLs need to acquire the academic language of the disciplines. Therefore content area instruction must teach language and content in tandem (Bunche, 2012; Bunche et al., 2013; Waqui & Heritage, 2012); accordingly, all teachers must be language teachers and address the language demands of their respective discipline (Bunch, 2012; Bunch et al., 2013; Garcia, 2012; Kinsella & Dutro, 2010; Linqunti & Hakuta, 2012; Moschkovich, 2013; Olsen, 2010). There are two theoretical frameworks that illuminate the instructional needs of Long-term ELLs: oral academic language development (August & Shanahan, 2006) and sociocultural learning (Vgotsky, 1978). I will make the case that a focus on academic discussions is a powerful and empowering pedagogy that addresses both of these needs in the context of content-area instruction and provides a bridge to the academic literacy competencies that Long-term ELLs typically lack yet need for academic success (Bunche et al., 2013; Fisher & Frey, 2012; Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer & River, 2006; O’Hara, Zwiers & Pritchard, 2014; Olsen, 2012; Zwiers & Crawford, 2011). For this to be realized, however, instruction utilizing academic discussion must be linguistically responsive to ensure diverse language learners are expected and supported to fully participate (Fisher & Frey, 2012; Gibbons, 2002; O’Hara et al., 2014).

I will then explore the role of the instructional leader as a critical agent in leading for systemic equity (Skrla, Scheurich, Garcia, & Nolly, 2001). I will begin by establishing the importance of the principal as instructional leader while recognizing the

limitations of the research: a lack of consensus on what principal actions best impact student outcomes, and a limited research base on instructional leadership with specific regard to accelerating achievement of ELLs (Eflers & Stritikus, 2013). I turn to Leithwood's (2012) construct of transformational leadership to ground the subsequent research. I will then identify three common themes from research on instructional leadership generally as well as the research on systemic equity for ELLs congruent with transformational leadership: holding and communicating vision (Bryk et al., 2010; Eflers & Stritikus, 2013; Garcia, 2012; Hallinger & McCary, 1990; Quinn, 2002; Scanlan & Lopez, 2012; Shein, 2004); building capacity through professional community (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) and leading learning-centered conversations grounded in data (Copeland, 2003; Shein, 2004; Spillane & Coldren, 2011; Wellman & Lipton, 2004). In addition to this, I will describe the research that speaks explicitly to what leaders need to know and do to impact outcomes for ELLs, such as surface and address assumptions and deficit-based views of ELLs (Eflers & Stritikus, 2013; McKnzie & Scheurich, 2004), and provide instructional guidance that demonstrates understanding of the basic premises of second language acquisition and language-rich pedagogy across the content areas (Eflers & Stritikus, 2013, Garcia, 2012; Scanlan & Lopez).

Because, as stated in my problem of practice, instructional leaders do not fully acknowledge or grasp the challenges facing Long-term ELLs, the review takes a close look at data-based inquiry as a lever for interrupting inequity. Shein's (2004) framework on managing change proposes using disconfirming data to create "survival anxiety" and to communicate a compelling reason to change. Spillane and Coldren (2004) offer the construct of "diagnosis and design" in which the problem is fully understood before

attempting to solve the problem. The role of relational trust (Bryk et al., 2010; Wellman & Lipton, 2004) and psychological safety (Shein, 2004) is underscored as a requisite condition for data-based conversations. Lastly, I consider Wellman and Lipton's work on collaborative inquiry to understand the three stages of data-based learning conversations.

Understanding Long-term English Language Learners

English Language Learners are generally referred to as a homogenous unit, both in accountability systems and in the practitioner literature (Miramontes, Nadeau, Commins, 1997; Olsen, 2010). They are in fact a diverse group with different socio-demographic characteristics, including home language, age, time in country, and English language proficiency level (Freeman, Freeman & Mercuri, 2003). The spectrum of adolescent, secondary ELL students includes Long-term ELL students; newcomers with strong educational background in their home country; and newcomers with interrupted formal education, such as refugees and children of migrant families (Freeman and Freeman, 2007; Olsen, 2010; Olsen and Jaramillo 1999; Walqui & Heritage, 2012).

As indicated in Table 1, Long-term ELLs, many of whom have spent most or all of their life in the U.S. and have had subtractive language instruction¹, often have limited proficiency in their home language, putting them at a disadvantage to even adolescent newcomers with strong native language and literacy foundation (Genesse & Riches, 2006). The typical trajectory of a Long-term ELL is steady progress in language proficiency from the beginning to intermediate English proficiency levels at which point they tend to plateau in language development (Freeman & Freeman, 2007; Olsen, 2010).

¹ Instruction that develops English at the expense of the home language as contrasted with additive language instruction such as Dual Immersion models that aim to develop both the home language and English.

Although social uses of English are generally cemented, it is at this point that ELL students need to demonstrate a command of high levels of academic English in order to meet the criteria for reclassification as proficient in English language fluency²; for some, this is a barrier that takes years to overcome and for many, this barrier proves insurmountable (Faltis & Wolfe, 1999; Freeman & Freeman, 2007; Gándara & Merino, 1993; Garcia, 2012; Harklau, Losey, & Siegal, 1999; Linquanti, 2001; Olsen, 2010).

Table 1. Differences between adolescent Long-term ELLs (LTELLs) and other adolescent ELLs

Type of learner	Characteristics	Language proficiency (X = present)			
		Conversational language		Academic language	
		English	Native language	English	Native language
Likely to reclassify as fluent English proficient within expected time frame (1–4 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recent arrival to U.S. (< 3 years) ● Adequate schooling in home country ● Catches up academically quickly ● May still score low on standardized tests given in English 	X	X		X
At-risk of becoming an LTELL student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recent arrival to U.S. (< 3 years) or child of migrant laborers ● Interrupted or limited schooling in home country, including U.S. ● Limited native language literacy ● Poor academic achievement 		X		
LTELL student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6+ years in U.S. schools ● Below grade level in reading 	X	X		

² Per California Ed Code, reclassification criteria includes advanced levels of English language proficiency as demonstrated by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), basic skills in literacy as demonstrated by a level of basic or above in the California State Test (CST), teacher recommendation, and parent consultation (California Ed Code 313, 60810, and 60812).

	and writing ● Low test scores ● Often inconsistent ELL program support				
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Source: Adapted from Olsen and Jaramillo (1999), Olsen (2010), and Freeman and Freeman (2007).

In Laurie Olsen’s seminal report, *Reparable Harm* (2010), she identifies the typical characteristics of this ELL typology. Long-term ELLs tend to have strong *social* language in both the home language and English and weak *academic* language and literacy skills in both languages. Because many of these students have spent all or most of their educational career in the U.S. schools, they haven’t had the opportunity to build academic language in their home language to draw upon in the way that newcomers with adequate schooling in their home countries do. Additionally, they generally are not aware of or know how to advocate for their own academic needs (Olsen, 2010). Although Long-term ELLs may recognize that they struggle academically, they are not clear as to why school is so hard for them or why their academic performance is so low on standardized tests. Many express the intention of going to college but aren’t aware of the level of rigor required and what academic competencies they need to develop to reach these high levels (Freeman, Freeman & Mercuri, 2003; Olsen, 2010).

There is recognition that ELLs must do “double the work” in learning academic content while developing language (Short and Fitzsimmons, 2007). This is compounded in the case of those Long-term ELLs who have long struggled in school and have become “non-participants, silent, passive, skilled at remaining under the radar, and not being called upon” (Olsen, 2012, p. 6). Coupled with the social pressures common to

adolescence, the level of disengagement in school leads to just getting by, in the best case scenario, and disproportionate drop-out rates in the worst case scenario (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011; Olsen, 2010). Therefore, instructional and programmatic responses need to consider the academic, language, and social and emotional needs of these students.

By the time the student reaches middle or high school, s/he has not developed a level of academic literacy needed to successfully meet the demands of the content areas with their discipline-specific ways of thinking, talking, reading, and writing (Olsen, 2010). According to the Adolescent English Language Learners Literacy Advisory Panel, academic literacy:

- Includes reading, writing, and oral discourse for school
- Varies from subject to subject
- Requires knowledge of multiple genres of text, purposes for text use, and text media
- Is influenced by students' literacies in contexts outside of school
- Is influenced by students' personal, social, and cultural experiences
(Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007).

In order to meet the needs of ELLs, and adolescent Long-term ELLs who stall out at the intermediate level of English language proficiency due to gaps in academic language and literacy, there is a need for specific strategies targeted at this more difficult period of language development that consider the unique needs of this typology (Olsen, 2010).

It is important to note that the status of Long-term ELLs is not an attribute of the student; rather, the result of a system that has underserved these students through inconsistent and weak language programs and instruction, insufficient teacher

preparation, narrowed curriculum, lowered expectations, and in some cases, interrupted educational experiences (Garcia, 2012; Hakuta, 2002; Olsen, 2010, Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). The lack of understanding of some basic premises of second language acquisition on the part of site and district leadership has resulted in too many programs that either track ELLs in low-level classes with simplified curriculum or ignore the language needs of ELLs all together and place them in the sink-or-swim scenario of the unsupported mainstream classroom (Gwynne, Parja, Ehrlich, & Allensworth, 2012; Olsen, 2010).

What works for Long-Term ELLs

While there is a large research base on best practices for ELL students generally, there is little that provides guidance to practitioners on how instruction should differ to meet the varying typologies of ELLs (Olsen, 2010). One exception are the recommended areas of focus posed by Laurie Olsen (2012) that specifically address the unique needs of Long-term ELLs: oral language development, student engagement, academic language, expository text (reading and writing), consistent routines, goal setting, empowering pedagogy, rigor, community and relationships, and study skills. Outside of Olsen's research, most of the literature speaks to what works for ELLs more generally.

In terms of the best programmatic approach for ELLs, the research is divided. One camp strongly advocates for a daily block or separate class dedicated to English Language Development (ELD) so that there is a space for explicit instruction of the language and literacy skills that are not addressed in the content classes (Genessee, Lindholm & Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2009; Kinsella & Dutro, 2010; Olsen, 2010;

Saunders & Goldenberg, 2010). Challenging this notion are those researchers who argue that language instruction in isolation or not in service of content is not effective and that explicit language instruction is best situated in the context of each discipline (Bunche, 2012; Bunche, Kiberler, Pimentel & Walqui, 2013; Waqui & Heritage, 2012).

Despite the divide on the role of ELD, there is consensus in the literature among researchers of both camps that a separate language block taught apart from content is insufficient. In order to accelerate language and academic proficiency for ELLs, schools must provide language-rich instruction across the curriculum, throughout the school day (Bunche, 2012; Bunche et al., 2013; Gibbons, 2002; Kinsella & Dutro, 2010). Pauline Gibbons, the author of two influential books on academic language and literacy - *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning* (2009) and *English Learners, Academic Literacy, and Thinking* (2002) - has long advocated for an integrated model of language instruction, cautioning that ELLs will face significant disadvantage if they do not master the discipline-specific registers, and pointing out that the development of discipline-specific language is intrinsically connected to the content and concept development that can only happen within content instruction. For example, the Common Core Math Standards call upon students to reason abstractly and quantitatively (see p. 4, figure 1). To do this, students must be able to recognize and use the language of inductive and deductive mathematical reasoning. This mathematics-specific language includes applying vocabulary that may have different meanings in other contexts (e.g., proofs, variables, conjecture) as well as syntactical structures such as the conditional (if..then) to make hypotheses or solve problems. Learning the language of mathematical reasoning outside of the context of math instruction is analogous to learning to cook by reading a book of

recipes without ever stepping into the kitchen. In the humanities, students must learn the language of argument and analysis in order to accomplish content-centric tasks such as sourcing primary documents, analyzing the persuasive appeals of a speech, or crafting a rebuttal to an argument (Common Core State Standards, 2010). A renewed call for shared responsibility for language instruction now permeates the literature with the advent of the Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards due to the inherent high language demands across the disciplines of these new standards (Bunch, 2012; Bunch et al., 2013; Garcia, 2012; Kinsella & Dutro, 2010; Linquanti & Hakuta, 2012; Olsen, 2010; Moschkovich, 2013).

Long-term ELLs demonstrate a unique set of characteristics and instructional needs that must be addressed if we are to avoid increased disparities in achievement. The research clearly points to a need for shared responsibility for English language development throughout the instructional day. This raises the question: What does language rich instruction look like for ELLs across the content areas, particularly for Long-term ELLs who are already struggling academically? This literature review led me to two broad theoretical frameworks: second language acquisition, in particular the development of oral academic language; and sociocultural learning.

The Role of Oral Language Development and Academic Language and Literacy

We can address the instructional needs of Long-term ELLs through a focus on oral academic language development and socio-cultural learning. Teachers can integrate both foci by fostering academic discussions while attending to students' unique language and

social and emotional needs. In this way, teachers can help fill the gaps that hinder academic development of Long-term ELLs.

Second language acquisition describes the process through which a person acquires a new language (Kennison, 2013). Although many ELLs experience an instructional program which approaches language acquisition as a linear progression of grammar and vocabulary skills and with a focus on mastery or correct use, experts in the field understand language acquisition as much more complex and dynamic process (Larsen-Freeman, 1997), one that occurs through experience using language in authentic ways activating a variety of modes of communication, such as listening and speaking to others in conversations, interpreting ideas, collaborating, and producing language in order to inform or persuade (Krashen, 1982).

Oral Language

The research is clear that oral proficiency in English is critical to the development of literacy and future academic success. In one highly referenced study, *Developing Literacy in Second-Language Learners* (2006), August and Shanahan found that strong oral language is associated with both comprehension skills and writing proficiency. The authors attribute the wide disparity in literacy skills between Language Minority students (those who speak a home language other than English or a non-standard form of English) and English proficient students to a lack of oral proficiency in English. An important finding of their report (August & Shanahan, 2006, p. 4) is that although oral proficiency is critical to literacy and academic achievement, “student performance suggests that it is often overlooked” in instruction. Their recommendation is that “extensive oral English

development must be incorporated into successful literacy instruction.” A key variable in second language acquisition are the opportunities and amount of time language learners have to practice language with peers at higher levels of English proficiency. Because many ELLs have limited to no opportunities for speaking and listening in English with strong language models outside of school, it is imperative that teachers provide instructional support of oral language development in English within the context of the classroom (August & Shanahan, 2006; Crawford-Brooke, E., 2013; Gibbons, 2002; Olsen, 2010; Williams, Stathis & Gotsch, 2008).

Academic Language

The acquisition of *academic* oral language as a bridge to academic literacy is more complex. Academic language goes beyond the traditional notion of vocabulary and syntax (sentence structure). According to second language acquisition theorist, Jim Cummins, “academic language refers to the cognitively challenging, context-reduced academic registers of school, which rely on the words and structures used, and on reasoning and making inferences for understanding and interpretations” (1989). Linguist Lily Wong Fillmore adds to this definition in her explicit connection to literacy, “Academic language is the language of texts. The forms of speech and written discourse that are linguistic resources educated people in our society can draw on. This is the language that is capable of supporting complex thought, argumentation, literacy, successful learning; it is the language used in written and spoken communication in college and beyond” (Maxwell, 2013). While students from middle and upper-class families are likely to come to school with both the academic language and conventions of academic discourse and thinking, for many of our students, and certainly our ELLs, this

“academic capital” needs to be intentionally cultivated in school if we are going to address the disparities in achievement (Crawford-Brooke, 2013; Hakuta, 2002; Olsen, 2010; Olsen, 2012; Zwiers, 2007). Because, as we see in Fillmore’s understanding of academic language – the language of texts – simply fostering students’ basic oral language skills is not sufficient; teachers need to provide experiences that require and support students to use academic language in speaking and interaction with others (Kinsella, 2012; Zwiers, 2007).

Sociocultural Learning

Another reoccurring theme that surfaced in the literature is the social nature of learning. Sociocultural learning is primarily based on the work of psychologist and educator Leo Vgotsky. One central tenet of his theory is that learning is intrinsically social rather than individualistic. Vgotsky posits that, “human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them” (1978, p. 88). Therefore, instruction that requires students to learn in isolation counters the basis of learning, particularly in the case of instruction focused on using language for communicative purposes (Gibbons, 2002; Walqui, 2006; Williams et al., 2008; Zwiers, 2007). Similarly, second language acquisition experts Cummins (1989) and Gibbons (2002) draw upon Paulo Friere’s notion juxtaposing a “transmission” model of pedagogy and one of “reciprocal interaction.” In a transmission model of language instruction, the teacher provides direct instruction, models the use of new language, engages students in guided practice, and then provides corrective feedback. The emphasis of this type of curriculum and instruction is on learning discrete language skills such as the grammar of past tense, vocabulary, conventional spelling, etc. In

contrast, “reciprocal interaction” is a model that requires dialogue between teacher and students and among students, emphasizes meaningful use of language in discourse, and favors collaborative learning structures. Cummins also points out that opportunities for reciprocal interaction give students more agency over their own learning, an important factor when addressing the social and emotional factors of Long-term English Learners, many of whom have become passive, disengaged participants in their education (Olsen, 2010).

Academic Discussion

Given the critical role of oral language development, academic language development, and socio-cultural learning to the academic success of ELLs, it follows that a focus on instructional practices, such as academic discussion, that foster speaking and listening through student-to-student interactions will benefit ELLs, particularly our Long-term ELLs who need instruction that engages, or re-engages, them into the life of the classroom. However, studies have painted a dismal picture of what actually occurs. One study found that ELLs spent only four percent of the school day engaged in school talk and two percent of the school day discussing focal content of the lesson (Zwiers, 2011). Simply providing students the opportunity to engage in dialogue with other students does not mean that all students are supported to benefit from the experience.

In Oakland public schools, we define academic discussions as “purposeful, sustained conversations about content, anchored in grade-level texts and tasks, that require students to work together to co-construct knowledge and negotiate meaning in order to attain high levels of thinking and deep understanding about a topic or a text” (see

<https://sites.google.com/a/ousd.k12.ca.us/quality-academic-discussions/overview>).

Academic discussion is further clarified by understanding the distinction between “output” and “interaction”. **Output** is the production of written or oral language whereas **interaction** requires a dialogic exchange in which students are building on each other’s ideas using discussion skills such as clarifying, fortifying, and negotiating ideas (Fisher & Frey, 2012; Gibbons, 2002; O’Hara, Zwiers & Pritchard, 2014). Much of the student talk in classrooms using strategies such as Round Robin³ or Think-Pair-Share⁴ are likely to result in output - a reporting of ideas - and not reciprocal interaction – a co-construction of ideas (Cummins, 2007; Zwier & Crawford, 2011).

The Common Core State Standards place increased emphasis on the ability to engage in high quality discussion. The Speaking and Listening Standards (Common Core Initiative, 2010) call on students to “initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade-level topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.” In addition, the discourse practices of the new standards represented in the Venn diagram of figure 1 (p. 5), require students to use sophisticated levels of language to engage in disciplinary thinking. For example, students will be required to use argumentative skills just as marshaling evidence from grade-level, complex text to justify a position or required to explain how models represent scientific or mathematical concepts.

³ Round Robin- a student talk strategy in which students in a small group go around in a circle, each sharing an idea or response to a posed question

⁴ Think-Pair-Share – a student talk strategy used in pairs to respond to a question or prompt. First, students have an opportunity to think about their response, each person then shares with their partner, then the teacher asks students to share their ideas/responses with the whole class.

Although the challenge of preparing ELLs across all proficiency levels is daunting, these new demands also present an opportunity to engage ELLs in high levels of language production and dialogic interaction in academic, discipline-specific contexts, precisely the experiences research suggests is critical to the language development and academic success of ELLs, particularly adolescent learners (Bunche et al., 2013; Fisher & Frey, 2012; Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer & River, 2006; O’Hara et al., 2014; Olsen, 2012; Zwiers & Crawford, 2011).

The literature provides ample reasons for why academic discussion is beneficial for language acquisition. It allows students to hear more language from students and teachers who serve as language models (Gibbons, 2002; Kinsella, 2012) and provides them with an opportunity to produce language in contextualized and purposeful ways as they apply form (e.g., grammar, vocabulary) and function (e.g. to clarify, explain, argue) in order to build ideas (Bunche et. al, 2013; O’Hara et al, 2013; Zwiers & Crawford, 2011).

Gibbons (2002, p. 15) suggests that academic language is more likely to develop when there is “press on their linguistic resources” and students focus not only *what* they are saying but *how* they say it; that is, adjusting language in communicative tasks based on purpose and audience. Research on discourse in science instruction has found that students develop linguistic awareness when teachers make the features of “science register”⁵ explicit and provide students opportunities to use this register, i.e., think and talk like a scientist, through communicative, content-based activities (Lee, Quinn & Valdes, 2013). Such instruction across the disciplines will prepare students for the

⁵ Registers are “language varieties associated with a particular situation of use” (Walqui & Hertiage, 2012)

linguistic flexibility they need to negotiate different situations in a variety of academic and, ultimately, professional contexts (Walqui & Heritage, 2012).

Research on the impact of argumentation on content understanding of ELLs is particularly compelling. One study of the implementation of Collaborative Reasoning, a discussion strategy, found that when ELLs were supported to engage in argumentation, that is to formulate a claim and substantiate this claim with reasons and evidence in discussion with others, their performance in all four domains – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – improved, with the strongest impact being increased use of evidence and elaboration in their writing (Zhang, et al., 2011). Similarly, studies in science classrooms found that students who were asked to construct an argument demonstrated deeper content understanding and better retention of this understanding than those who were exposed to the same information but did not construct an argument (Osborne, 2010). Additional research corroborates the role of academic discussion in enhancing learning and language via argumentation (Chin & Osborne, 2010; Nussbaum, 2011).

What ELLs need to engage in and benefit from Academic Discussion

In order for ELLs, and particularly for Long-term ELLs who are already struggling academically, to meet the expectations of the Speaking and Listening Standards as well as the rigorous discourse practices of the Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, content teachers will need to provide a variety of supports. The research points to a small number of high leverage practices and considerations that can be used across content areas that will support ELLs of all language proficiency levels to fully benefit

from academic discussions (Fisher & Frey, 2012; Gibbons, 2002; Kinsella, 2011; O’Hara et al., 2014; Mohr & Mohr, 2007; Zhang et al., 2011; Zwiers, 2007; Zwiers & Crawford, 2011).

The importance of developing a rich, talk-worthy task is one common theme in the practitioner literature. A task that is *not* talk-worthy may only require students to retell, summarize, or recall a fact. In contrast, a talk-worthy task requires all students to engage in talk (Gibbons, 2002; O’Hara et al., 2014; Zwiers & Crawford, 2011) and focuses on a problem or question and a shared goal to resolve it (Fisher & Frey, 2012). It should call upon students to spend most of their time on higher-order and disciplinary thinking (e.g., sourcing in history or justifying a method for problem-solving in math) to grapple with academic content grounded in the big ideas or essential question of the lesson or unit of study (Fisher & Frey, 2012; Zwiers & Crawford, 2011).

The role of questioning is also emphasized in the research. The most common questioning technique follows a pattern of Initiation-response-evaluation (IRE); that is, the teacher asks students a question (often a question with a correct answer in mind), an individual student responds, and the student indicates whether or not it was a good or correct answer. This type of classroom discourse pattern is an example of the transmission model of pedagogy rather than the reciprocal interactive model that the research suggests supports deep learning (Zwiers, 2007). Instead, teachers should pose open-ended questioning that invite elaborated responses and co-construction of understanding, and require different solutions, perspectives or even controversy. Follow-up questions should require students to justify or elaborate on their thinking. These questioning practices are important for all learners, but critical in soliciting extended

responses for ELLs and therefore increased opportunities for developing academic speaking and listening (Zwiers, 2007; Zwiers & Crawford, 2011).

Without careful attention to equity in using these practices, teachers may inadvertently delay the language development of ELLs (Zwiers, 2007). In one study, Zwiers (2007) found that ELLs were asked low-level questions (recall, basic facts) while English proficient students were asked higher-level, more open-ended questions (analysis, evaluation). Additionally, Zwiers found that teachers accepted short, one-word, non-academic responses from ELLs, and even completed their thoughts when they struggled to articulate their thinking. While the intent might be to avoid discouragement, this actually serves to stunt language and academic progress. In contrast, a study on scientific discourse in the classroom found that novice science teachers saw the greatest gains in student performance by pressing ELLs for evidence (Lee et al., 2013). Essential to providing ELLs the support in articulating their thinking is the use of wait time. In a multi-year study, Rowe (1986) found that increasing the typical time a teacher waits between posing a question and accepting a student response from one to three seconds resulted in between a 300% and 700% increase in the length of the student response, and in a significant increase in the number of students who voluntarily participate. For ELLs, wait time is particularly important as it provides the student time to code switch (i.e., think in home language and switch to another) or to articulate their thoughts into words (Mohr & Mohr, 2007).

To support ELLs' understanding and use of academic language, teachers need to model the target language, i.e., language of the discipline, provide resources that students can draw upon (e.g., sentence frames, word banks) and provide them time to rehearse this

language through whole-group teacher guidance or small group practice (Zwiers, 2007). The emphasis when applying this language to discussion within the context of an academic task should be on meaning-making and communicating ideas while allowing for imperfect or flawed language that approximates the academic language and thinking of the discipline (Lee et al., 2013; van Lier & Walqui, 2012; Walqui & Heritage, 2012), supporting student to develop as “emerging experts” (Zwiers, 2007). While ELLs benefit from judicious feedback on correct and precise usage, an overemphasis on corrective feedback has been found to shut down ELLs’ talk and in fact hinder language development (Cummins, 1989; Moschkovich, 2012; Walqui & Heritage, 2012).

The literature on discussion structures (whole class vs. small group) suggests the highest impact for ELLs are small group and paired discussions. When ELLs have the opportunity to rehearse their ideas orally in small groups or pairs, their participation in whole-class discussions increases in both frequency and quality (Zhang et al., 2011). Additionally, small group or paired conversations maximize speaking time for ELLs (Zwiers & Zehler, 1994) and allow for “message redundancy” i.e., the repetition of key ideas and their related vocabulary, authentic language use, and opportunities for peer feedback (Gibbons, 2002; Kagan, 1995). Heterogeneous grouping of students for discussions are favored for ELLs as a way to interact with students with stronger language models. This intentional grouping has proven to be an effective way to scaffold language and content for less proficient language learners (Kinsella, 2011; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; Olsen, 2010; Walqui, 2006).

Developing a respectful classroom climate is recognized as important for any classroom discussion. For ELLs, a sense of safety is a prerequisite for the kind of risk-

taking students need to take in using flawed language in academic contexts (Gibbons, 2002). Second language acquisition theorist, Stephen Krashen (1982), proposes the “affective filter hypothesis” that claims low motivation and low self-esteem raise an affective filter and forms a kind of “mental block” that hinders language acquisition. For Long-term ELLs, the issue is further exacerbated due to years of academic struggle resulting in, for many, disengagement and an absence of self-efficacy (Olsen, 2010). In Olsen’s report on Long-term ELLs, *Reparable Harm* (2010, p. 33), she suggests that Long-term ELLs “need invitation, support and insistence that they become active participants in their own education.” In other words, simply providing opportunities for students to engage in discussion is insufficient; there must be attention to classroom climate and the development of discussion norms as well as structures that require and support equitable participation, so it is no longer a choice to disengage from the classroom experience (Kagan, 2002; Zwiers, 2011).

The research overwhelmingly points to 1) oral language development, with a focus on academic language, and 2) socio-cultural learning as two constructs that form the backbone to any pedagogically sound approach. The fostering of academic discussion attends to both constructs. Teachers should employ specific, research-based practices that support Long-term ELLs’ success in discussion including: talk-worthy tasks, questioning techniques, wait time, modeling and rehearsal of language, strategic grouping, and norming.

Instructional Leadership

Clearly, the aforementioned practices require robust teacher preparation. While there is general agreement that high quality teaching is the most significant factor in student performance (Darling-Hammond, 1999), the research suggests that the influence of the principal closely follows (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; SRI International, 2011) and is key in cultivating teacher quality (Samson & Collins, 2012); therefore, the two can be understood as tightly connected. This section turns to the role of instructional leaders in leading change and in addressing issues of equity specific to diverse language learners.

The empirical evidence establishing a correlation between strong leaders and effective schools is extensive (Quinn, 2002). Despite this, there is not agreement among researchers on what principal actions best impact student outcomes (Elfers & Stritkus, 2013). The divergence in the research is starkest on the role of principal to improve *individual* teacher practice. Some argue that principals should be primarily invested in what happens in the classroom through observations and feedback and aligning instructional support to move practice (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworht, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010). Others suggest that principal time is best used on organizational management and not on day-to-day instructional issues (Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010). However, there is consensus in the literature examining leadership of racially and linguistically diverse schools that site-based *instructional leadership* focused on equitable practices is a key factor (Elfers & Stritkus, 2013; Garcia, 2012; Samson & Collins, 2012; Scanlan & Lopez, 2012). For the purposes of this review, we will use Leithword's description of instructional leadership as, "a series of behaviors that is designed to affect classroom instruction" (Quinn, 2002).

Unlike the wide research base on the role of principal, the literature that speaks specifically to equity-focused, culturally and linguistically responsive instructional leadership is narrow in scope. Nevertheless, there are common themes consistent with the broader research body on the actions that effective instructional leaders take. These include holding and communicating vision (Bryk et al., 2010; Copeland, 2003; Ekers & Stritkus; 2013; Hallinger & McCary, 1990; Quinn, 2002; Scanlan & Lopez, 2012; Shein, 2004), building capacity through professional community (Bryk et al., 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012), and leading learning-centered conversations grounded in data (Elfers & Stritkus, 2013; Wellman & Lipton, 2004). This section of the literature review will explore these interconnected leadership actions as well as effective practices specific to enacting change for ELLs (Elfers & Stritkus, 2013; Garcia, 2012; Scanlan & Lopez, 2012).

In the accountability–preoccupied era of No Child Left Behind, much of the leadership around ELLs has been compliance-oriented, focusing on control over people, and the reliance on systems of rewards and consequences as key drivers for change (Garcia, 2012; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Leithwood, 2012). Leithwood refers to such a stance as transactional leadership and rejects this in favor of transformational leadership, which assumes motivation, fostering commitment to school vision and capacity building to be the key drivers for change. According to Leithwood (2012), a transformational leadership model recognizes the principal’s key function as instructional leadership but broadens the scope of this focus from the classroom to a more systemic view of school improvement. One of the key elements of transformational leadership, echoed in the literature on instructional leadership more generally, centers around vision-

setting, or establishing and communicating a clear and compelling direction for the school, and the ability to inspire stakeholders to organize their efforts around this vision. (Bryk et al., 2010; Copeland, 2003; Ekers & Strituku, 2013; Hallinger & McCarty, 1990; Quinn, 2002; Scanlan & Lopez, 2012; Shein, 2004). To lead for equity, it follows, effective leadership of linguistically diverse schools explicitly communicates a vision that strives for equitable outcomes and is inclusive of *all* students and attentive to the needs of ELLs (Garcia, 2012).

A related role of the instructional leader is to build capacity of educators to realize their school vision. Authors Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that the avenue to develop this teacher capacity, or “professional capital”, is to foster “social capital”, the notion that a collective working towards common goals is more powerful than the individual. The authors substantiate this assertion by citing research that when social capital is present at a school, as evidenced by strong collaborative culture and communities of practice, teachers evaluated as poor perform just as well as average teachers. Providing the conditions for social capital to flourish can also lead to cultural shifts, or change within systems so that a school or district organization is not dependent on any one person, but the change becomes a part of the cultural fabric (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). The focus on cultivating professional and social capital is particularly compelling for leadership of schools with high populations of ELLs, given the research on the inadequate pre- or in-service training teachers receive on meeting the needs of ELLs in the content areas (Garcia, 2012).

Social capital requires the leader’s active, deliberate, and on-going cultivation of relational trust so that there is the psychological safety necessary for teachers to

collaborate and to take risks, and there is a culture of learning that is encouraged, even expected from the community (Bryk et al., 2012; Quinn; 2002). Absent this level of trust, collaborative structures are unlikely to take root in any meaningful and sustained way.

Leading for Equitable Outcomes for ELLs

Skrla et al. (2001) argue that to make gains in closing the achievement gap, systemic equity is necessary. This is defined as, “the transformed ways in which systems and individuals habitually operate to ensure that every learner – in whatever learning environment that learner is found – has the greatest opportunity to learn enhanced by the resources and supports necessary to achieve competence, excellence, independence, and self-sufficiency for school and for life” (p. 6). Leading for systemic equity calls for skillful leadership in visioning and capacity building as explained above, as well the ability to surface the beliefs, values and assumptions that shape how and what we communicate about and to students of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Elfers & Stritikus, 2013; Wellman & Lipton, 2004).

For example, in a review of the research on how effective leaders have helped improve teaching practices and outcomes for ELLs, researchers Elfers and Stritikus (2013) found that equity-focused leaders attend not only to advancing academic achievement (high outcomes for all students), but also to the sociocultural dimensions of a school. These include systemic issues such as inexperienced, underprepared teachers and tracking of ELLs in low-level classes, as well as educators’ attitudes and their manifestations such as low expectations, deficit views of ELLs, and marginalization of ELLs by their peers or their teachers. In the same vein, in a paper providing

recommendations for principal preparation, McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) identify “equity traps”, assumptions that prevent educators from believing their students can achieve, that principals need to be aware of and actively work to counteract in their school communities, one of which is deficit thinking. A deficit view is defined as “a theory that posits that the student who fails in school does so principally because of internal deficits or deficiencies” (Mckenzie & Scheurich, p. 8) and includes viewing students’ cultural or linguistic background as shortfalls to overcome. Deficit thinking leads to a myriad of programmatic decisions such as tracking ELLs in remedial classes and instructional moves such as inequitable question distribution (Olsen, 2010; Zwiers, 2007) and simplification of curriculum. An antidote to this equity trap, according to the authors, is for the leader to assume an asset-based approach in which the “funds of knowledge” that students bring, such as prior experiences and home language, are acknowledged and built upon. In other words, instead of lowering expectations for students due to a perception that a student is incapable, the teacher should actively learn about the knowledge and skills the student does have and use these as a bridge to new learning (Mckenzie & Scheurich, 2004). Additional research points to the important role that the school leader has in shifting a deficit mindset of staff by holding and communicating high expectations for all students (Bryk et al. 2012; Haycock, 2001; McKenzie & Scheurich, 2004; Quinn, 2002; SRI International, 2011).

The literature suggests that in order to provide leadership in preparing ELLs for academic success, leaders need foundational pedagogical content knowledge to understand the specific language needs of these students, basic premises of second language acquisition (i.e., the role of oral language development, the difference between

social and academic language, the developmental trajectory of ELLs, and how this differs by ELL typology), and the aforementioned practices that best accelerate language and academic development (Elfers & Stritikus, 2013; Garcia, 2012; Scanlan & Lopez, 2012). In addition, leaders must communicate to staff that language instruction is the responsibility of all teachers, and provide them with professional development that develops teachers' capacity to integrate language and content without compromising the rigor of grade-level expectations (Elfers & Stritikus, 2013; Scanlan & Lopez, 2012). For practices to achieve the intended outcomes for ELLs, the leader has a role in not just building capacity but attending to successful implementation of new instructional practices for ELLs. They must ensure ongoing, sustained focus on an instructional practice through multiple opportunities for professional learning, time and support for lesson planning using the new practice, as well as a collaborative professional culture where teachers receive support and feedback from their colleagues (Echevarria, Richards-Tuto, Chinn, & Rattleff, 2011). Undergirding this is the understanding that developing proficiency in a second language while simultaneously learning content is a difficult, long task that has no easy fixes, and requires above all, high quality, linguistically and culturally responsive instruction (Garcia, 2012). It is the responsibility of the leader to provide instructional guidance and leadership for managing change and in ensuring that equity is truly systemic and not sporadically present.

Finally, the leader must model a stance of continuous learning and improvement by modeling learner-focused conversations (Elfers & Stritikus, 2013). Because equity-centered pedagogy necessitates that instruction responds to the varying needs that students demonstrate, a focus on understanding the students' challenges and assets is

instrumental and is best done through engaging the professional community in the examination and analysis of data (Elfers & Stritikus, 2013; Wellman & Lipton, 2004). It is on this topic that the following section of the literature review will take a closer look.

The research explored above suggests that leading for systemic equity requires a transformational form of leadership by centering efforts around school vision and goals and fostering social capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Leithwood, 2012). In addition, the research on leading linguistically diverse schools implies that leaders must address socio-cultural factors and develop at least foundational knowledge of language development and instruction (Garcia, 2012).

Diagnosis and Design

Interrupting inequities requires leaders to not only be instructional leaders but managers of change, particularly at sites where staff may hold underlying assumptions, values, and beliefs that are counter-productive to addressing the needs of diverse learners, or where educators are resistant to letting go of deeply ingrained practices that do not serve the student population (Garcia, 2012). The research presented below argues for managing change through a process of continual inquiry that begins with: 1) using “disconfirming data” to establish a need to change; 2) diagnosis, or problem-identification; and 3) design, or collaboratively identifying responses to the problem.

In his work on organizational change, Shein (2004) identifies three processes for managing change: unfreezing or unlearning; cognitive restructuring or new learning; and refreezing or reinforcing new learning and behavior. The first phrase is the subject of this review. Shein proposes that sharing “disconfirming data” is the first step in enacting

change. Disconfirming data is information that shows that reality does not match up to espoused goals and causes some dissonance or disequilibrium among members of the professional community. The goal of presenting this data is to produce “survival anxiety”, in other words, a sense that the organization has no choice but to change. Wellman & Lipton (2004) conceptualize this anxiety as “recognizing the gap” which leads to a choice: “grow or remain static” (p. xiv).

A related construct posited by Spillane and Coldren (2004) is that of diagnosis and design. The authors argue that diagnosis and design (or prognosis) are in fact central to the role of instructional leadership. Diagnosis framing includes identifying the problem and the underlying causes and nature of this problem, whereas design framing entails finding a solution and developing an action plan in response to the problem. Both are distinct and necessary processes.

The process of problem definition, according to Spillane and Coldren, is not about discovering problems, but constructing them by selecting data strategically and analyzing them to tell a story or build an argument that a problem worth paying attention to exists (Spillane & Coldren, 2011). Data in and of itself does not have meaning; it is in its interpretation that sense-making and resulting prognosis can occur (Wellman & Lipton, 2004). Spillane and Coldren (2004) remind us that although diagnosis is in service of design (a solution that leads to improved outcomes), many poor decisions can be traced to insufficient or erroneous understanding of the problem. Therefore, adequate problem-definition is an area worth spending time on, which can result in both well-matched solutions as well as an anchor that focuses the leadership’s attention on what matters in the midst of many daily distractions and competing initiatives (Anfara & Donhost, 2010;

Hallinger & McCary, 1990; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Shein, 2004; Spillane & Coldren, 2011; Wellman & Lipton, 2004).

Because the use of disconfirming data and the resulting “survival anxiety” can lead to paralysis or other unproductive reactions such as denial or scapegoating, the leader must foster “psychological safety” so that the community does not become defeatist; rather, they see the remedy as actionable and achievable, and are ensured they will be supported in their efforts to change (Shein, 2004). Shein offers eight requisites for psychological safety to occur, amongst these a compelling vision, adequate professional learning and follow-up support, and an opportunity to apprentice into the new practice while receiving coaching and feedback.

Although the work of Spillane and Coldren (2011) presented thus far suggests that the principal holds the primary charge of diagnosis and design work, these authors acknowledge this cannot be done in isolation of the broader community. Other research agrees that involving teachers and teacher-leaders from the inception and distributing the leadership work throughout the process is, in fact, an essential part of the work of the leader (Copeland, 2003; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Diagnosis and design that results from the work of the collective will result in shared commitment for improvement that would not occur otherwise (Copeland, 2003; Wellman & Lipton, 2004).

The research suggests that diagnosis and design is best approached through *continual inquiry* centered on student learning so that it becomes a part of the professional culture. As Copeland (2003) explains, “This process of inquiry does not cease; rather, the work is best thought of as an ongoing effort to build greater capacity

with regard to instructional practices that improve learning among those who work in the school community. People in the school reform their basic work around identifying, striving to solve, and continually revisiting critical problems” (p. 376).

Facilitating the process of Diagnosis and Design

Wellman and Lipton’s work (2004) on collaborative learning cycles provides a framework for a facilitator to engage a professional community in the diagnosis and design process. They caution that absent a trusting collaborative culture, data will be received with fear and defensiveness. This echoes the call in the literature for relational trust as a foundation for school improvement efforts (Bryk et al., 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan; 2012). Wellman and Lipton’s suggested data-based collaborative inquiry cycles through three stages: 1) Activating and Engaging; 2) Exploring and Discovery; and 3) Organizing and Integrating. In the first stage, the facilitator readies the community for engagement with data by surfacing expectations, predictions, and assumptions that help the facilitator and the community become aware of the lenses through which they may approach the data, and allows the facilitator to proactively deal with any defensiveness. The second stage of *exploring and discovery* is where the data interpretation and analysis occurs. The authors state that two habits of mind are needed to engage in this process, “conscious curiosity and purposeful uncertainty” (p. 47). In the final stage, *organizing and integrating*, two things occur: theories of causation that inquire into root causes (diagnosis); and problem solving or action planning that is tightly connected to the diagnosis (design). The planning should include discussion of expected outcomes resulting from the action plan, as well as what evidence will be collected to measure improvement.

Based on the analysis of the literature, I conclude that the process of diagnosis and design is critical for systemic equity to be achieved. Given the inadequate understanding of the instructional needs of Long-term ELLs as implied in my problem of practice, a collaborative effort to identify the problem and formulate solutions is essential to any sustained change. The literature shows that the instructional leader plays a central role by creating a compelling need for change through disconfirming data, setting the conditions for psychological safety, and engaging the school community in the process. Finally, the literature suggests that diagnosis and design should be situated in ongoing inquiry focused on student learning so that it becomes a part of the professional norm.

Conclusion

The urgency in addressing the Long-term ELL crisis is clear and compelling. If we do nothing differently, we are sure to see the achievement gap widen drastically, leading to more closed doors for this growing population of students. The research is convincing that infusing pedagogy that focuses on oral academic language development and socio-cultural learning as a bridge to academic literacy has and can lead to positive outcomes for ELLs. Fostering academic discussion across all content areas is one such pedagogy. Leaders have a critical role in enacting this change. But to do so, they must communicate a vision that holds high expectations of *all* students, foster professional and social capital among their teachers, and model evidence-based conversations that strive to deeply understand the challenges facing Long-term ELLs before taking action. In addition, principals must lead from a place of authority on the language needs and best practices that will accelerate language and academic development of language learners.

Based on my review of the literature, I conclude that OUSD leaders must ensure that Long-term ELLs have opportunities to fully engage in academic discussions in all content areas. This requires change in teacher practice and mindset. In keeping with the literature on transformational leadership, principals can lead this change by motivating the school community to focus on equitable outcomes for Long-term ELLs through clearly articulated goals, investing in teacher capacity, and engaging the community in on-going equity-centered conversations. A promising entry point is collaborative inquiry grounded in data on the academic experience of Long-term ELLs. Skillful facilitation of collaborative inquiry is necessary to achieve the desired results of fostering equity-focused practice. Therefore, my intervention is to prepare a protocol to lead site leadership teams in student-level observation and analysis called ELL Shadowing. This protocol triangulates student observation data of academic speaking and listening with academic performance data in order to engage in diagnosis and design, resulting in an action plan informed by the research-based practices outlined in this review. The process aims to develop awareness and understanding of the language needs and the socio-cultural experience of Long-term ELLs as well as the best practices that can lead to continuous improvement over time. Moreover, the process models for the instructional leader how to engage the professional community in collaborative inquiry in service of systemic equity.

Table 2. Theory of Action

Theory of Action			
Problem of practice	Literature review	Intervention/Innovation	Expected change
<p>Long-term ELLs languishing in schools</p> <p>Increased language demands of the CCSS and NGSS call for high levels of academic language proficiency</p> <p>Academic discussion a key strategy to address needs of Long-term ELLs</p> <p>Limited access to provide principals professional learning</p> <p>Problem of practice: Principals do not provide teachers instructional guidance in fostering academic discussion that is needed to improve the academic performance of Long-term ELLs</p>	<p>Long-term ELLs (characteristics and needs of)</p> <p>The role of oral academic language development</p> <p>Academic Discussion as an instructional strategy</p> <p>Instructional leadership</p> <p>Diagnosis and Design</p>	<p>1. Field test tools and train facilitators in ELL Shadowing protocol</p> <p>2. Four full cycles of ELL Shadowing protocol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 ½ hr. data dive and pre-ELL Shadowing PD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4 hr. ELL Shadowing observations and debrief ▪ 2 hr. co-construction of action plan 	<p>Impact Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased understanding of the needs of Long-term ELLs ● Increased urgency and commitment to address the needs of Long-term ELLs ● Improved ability to collect and analyze ELL Shadowing observation data ● Well-designed action plans with tightly connected diagnosis and design <p>Design Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refined ELL Shadowing protocol and tools ● Effective facilitation of diagnosis & design

Intervention Plan

My intervention plan was designed to develop and facilitate a generative process to engage school leadership, principal and teacher leaders, in examining and addressing issues of inequity, particularly as they pertain to ELLs. The intervention centered on the facilitation and debrief of a student-centered observation protocol called ELL Shadowing in which observers note evidence of academic speaking and listening of Long-term ELLs at three-minute intervals. The process and tools were adapted from Soto’s work described in her book *ELL Shadowing as a Catalyst for Change* (Soto, 2011). By focusing on

understanding the classroom experience from the perspective of individual students, I hoped to raise awareness of the challenges and root causes of Long-term ELL status, resulting in increased urgency of site leadership to take action (Spillane, 2011).

Additionally, through a process of collaborative inquiry grounded in data (Wellman & Lipton, 2004), I aimed to develop participants' understanding of the needs of their Long-term ELLs and how to apply research-based practices to address these needs (Olsen, 2010 & 2012).

There were two principle phases of the intervention: 1) facilitator training and field-testing and 2) implementation of the full ELL Shadowing cycle at 5 pilot schools. The purpose of the first phase was two-fold: to develop capacity of facilitators to lead a process of diagnosis and design with site leadership teams and to refine the process of ELL Shadowing and its accompanying tools. To do this, I convened a group of eight facilitators-in-training, six of whom are specialists or coordinators in the ELL Office I direct, one literacy specialist, and the research coordinator for Oakland Unified.

The facilitator training was comprised of two 2-3 hour workshop on both pedagogical content and facilitation as well as 2 half-days of field testing in borrowed classrooms followed by a debrief. The workshop on pedagogical content included reading and discussion of research on second language acquisition, Long-term ELLs, and practices to foster academic discussion for ELLs. The workshop on process included the premise of diagnosis and design as well as facilitation moves that create the psychological safety that research suggests is needed to engage in authentic inquiry (Shein, 2004; Wellman & Lipton, 2004). During the two field testing sessions, I paired participants to observe the same student in order to test the observation tool and process,

and to refine and calibrate our use of these. Each observation session was followed by a debrief of our learning, reflection on the process, and implications for refinement.

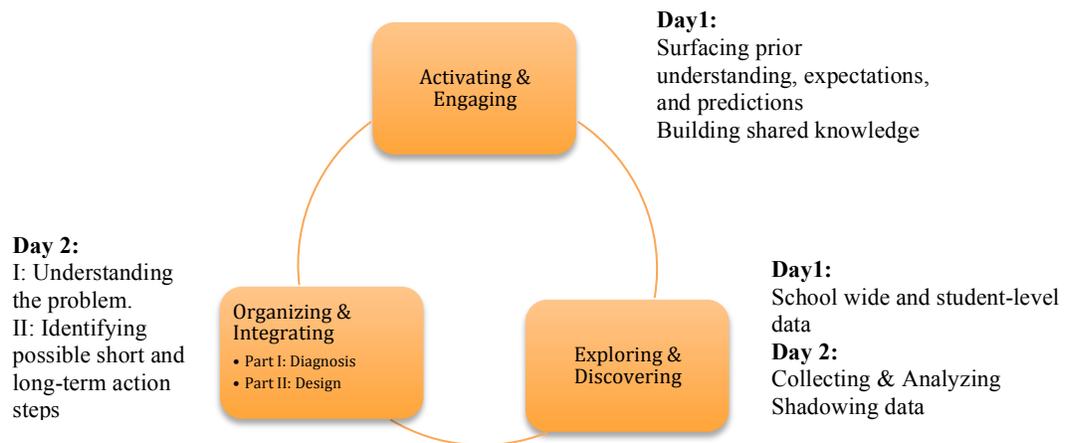
The second phase of the intervention was the actual implementation of the ELL Shadowing cycle at 5 pilot sites, all OUSD middle schools. Two sites that share the same campus did the experience together, so there were a total of four ELL Shadowing events with five school communities. I invited one of the facilitators-in-training to co-plan and co-lead the first two days of the cycle at each site due to her experience in middle school, deep knowledge of Long-term ELLs and strong facilitation skills. The remaining facilitators-in-training attended at least one pilot site engagement as participant observers.

In preparation for ELL Shadowing, I asked the principal of each site to invite at least 2 teacher leaders or other representatives of their Instructional Leadership Team. Research suggests that distributive leadership builds capacity beyond the principal to hold the work, results in greater buy-in of staff and shared commitment to implementation of the desired outcomes (Copeland, 2003; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Given the gravity of the Long-term ELL problem and the need for shifts in teacher and leadership practice, the inclusion of Instructional Leadership Team members was essential to the success of the intervention.

Joining the site instructional leadership was the principals' supervisor, members from our Quality Accountability and Analytics department (data analysts or research associates) as well as from Leadership, Curriculum and Instruction. The purpose of including outside members was to provide support in significant data collection through the ELL Shadowing observation and to provide expertise and diverse perspectives during

the diagnosis and design process. My intervention took this cross-departmental team through the three stages of collaborative inquiry as described by Lipton and Wellman (2004): 1) Activating and Engaging; 2) Exploring and Discovery; and 3) Organizing and Integrating (see figure 2).

Figure 2. The Cycle of Collaborative Inquiry. Adapted from Wellman & Lipton, 2004



For stage one, I began with a short video produced under my direction that highlights interviews of Oakland Long-term ELLs and expert Laurie Olsen (see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yiJ1R_hQveY). The video builds foundational knowledge about Long-term ELLs and highlights the urgency to take action. I *engaged and activated* the site team members by providing them an opportunity to share their hopes and dreams for their ELLs, what they have already put in place to address the needs of their diverse language learners, and to surface their expectations for the experience. This activation of prior knowledge and experience builds trust by allowing the site participants to identify their assets and challenges and provides important context for facilitators and the outside partners (Wellman & Lipton, 2004).

In the second stage of collaborative inquiry, *exploring and discovery*, I led the ELL Shadowing team in a data dive to, as Shein (2004) posits, create disequilibrium and a compelling need for change. We looked at both demographic and academic performance data of Long-term ELLs at the district, site, and student level. I framed the data analysis by asking participants to assume two habits of mind: *purposeful uncertainty* and *conscious curiosity* (Wellman & Lipton, 2004 & 2012). By establishing these two attitudes as a norm for looking at data, I hoped participants would refrain from judgment, premature conclusions, or rationalization, and instead be intentional about welcoming diverse perspectives while seeking to understand the problem. Moreover, the research reminds us that establishing clear norms for looking at data helps to reduce defensiveness and establish relational trust (Wellman & Lipton, 2004). Following a short discussion about the two aforementioned habits of mind, my co-facilitator prepared the ELL Shadowing team for the observation protocol by introducing the observation tools (Appendix B) and leading the team in guided practice using classroom video. We ended Day 1 by asking participants to predict what they would see while shadowing. This helps surface assumptions both for the benefit of the participant and the facilitator (Wellman & Lipton, 2004).

The actual shadowing of an ELL student is the crux of the second stage: *exploring and discovery*. In the beginning of Day 2, each member of the ELL Shadowing team observed one Long-term ELL in up to three classrooms over the course of at least two hours. Participants used the observation tool to tally the frequency and type of academic speaking and listening at the top of each three-minute interval and take qualitative notes on other relevant behaviors observed in between the three-minute marks. An ELL

Shadowing Guide developed during the field-testing phase with look-fors and codes provided observers a focus to the qualitative data note-taking (included in Appendix B).

The third stage, *organizing and integrating*, is the heart of the process of diagnosis and design. In order to maximize the engagement and opportunity for sense-making of all participants, discussions varied in format between pair-shares, whole group discussion, and a series of fishbowls (see detailed agenda in Appendix C). After giving time for participants to individually tally their quantitative data and note important qualitative data on post-its, we began the debrief. First, my co-facilitator led an activity called one-word response in which each participant shared one to three words to describe the experience of their student. This was followed by a pair-share for participants to further debrief what they learned about their student and in what ways the experience added to their understanding of the student's status as a Long-term ELL. The one-word response and pair-share activities allowed participants to process what was for some a very emotionally charged experience.

The next series of activities was designed to analyze the aggregate data to note trends and outliers. First, in order to lift these school-wide patterns, each participant shared what they observed in the data without making any judgments or "because" statements. According to Wellman and Lipton (2004, 2012), exploring the data before jumping to interpretations is a crucial step. Mining data for patterns, outliers, and insightful observations leads to a deeper shared understanding and avoids superficial analysis of the data that may not challenge biases or false assumptions. Next, I led the first fish bowl discussion of site leadership members into the exploration of theories of causation to attempt to better understand what the data surfaced and what root causes

might explain these data, and to define the problem that the site leadership site felt most important to address. Investing time to clearly identify the problem before jumping to solutions is more likely to result in well-designed and focused leadership actions (Spillane & Colden, 2004 & 2011). I chose a fish bowl format, in which one group discusses while another observes, because it allows a space for the site team to draw causal connections between the data and the school context. In turn, the guest participants are required to step back and listen to the site perspective before offering suggestions.

The aforementioned activities were all designed to thoroughly diagnose the problem unique to each site. In order to ensure the subsequent design, or action plan, was not only tightly connected to the diagnosis but also based on research-based best practices for ELLs, we provided some possible next steps (See Appendix D: Post-ELL Shadowing Actionable Next Steps: *Using the Results to Leverage Change*) aligned to research. Because we recognized that each site is in a very different place in terms of their support for ELLs, we organized the next steps into three tiers. At the foundational level, Tier 1 describes a site at the initial stages of considering the needs of their ELLs; and at the highest level, Tier 3 describes a site with strong structures and practices for ELLs already in place. Using this document, site leadership members self-assessed and came to consensus on which tier best represented their site's current reality. We then turned to the second fishbowl discussion, this time for the guest participants to provide consultancy on possible implications and next steps based on the data analysis and the site's self-assessment. Finally, the site leadership team members had an opportunity to engage in the last fishbowl discussion to respond to what they heard and to identify short-term and long-term next steps.

On a later date, I met with the principal of each site to develop a strategic action plan (Appendix E) to narrow the design elements, name expected outcomes, create a timeline, and plan for alignment of resources, both site-based and central office. The principal had the option to meet with me individually or to invite Instructional Leadership Team members. The expectation was that the principal would then bring the action plan to the Instructional Leadership Team and to their supervisor for further discussion and refinement.

Figures 3 & 4. Overview of Intervention Plan

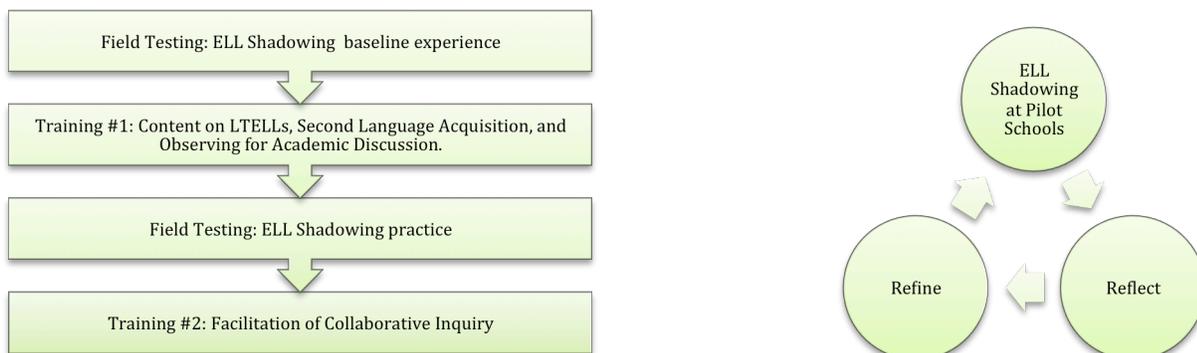


Table 3. Activities at Pilot Sites

Activities	Connection to Theory and Research
<p>Day One: Pre-ELL Shadowing engagement (2 ½ hours)</p> <p>Framing and Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions, share a hope and dream you have for your ELL • View and reflect on video about LTELLs • Review purpose and process of ELL Shadowing. • Input on relevant the research <p>Data Dive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review norms for data dive • Leadership provides context on current site work • Analyze site-level ELL data and student-level Long-term ELL data with dummy IDs <p>Preparing for ELL Shadowing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce tools • Guided practice and calibration with a video • Closing reflection: <i>What do you predict you will see? What do you hope to learn?</i> 	<p>Cycle of Collaborative Inquiry: Activating and Engaging</p> <p>Psychological Safety</p> <p>Disconfirming data as a catalyst for change</p> <p>Pedagogical Content Knowledge for Leaders</p> <p><i>Key References: Bryk et al, 2010; Shein, 2004; Wellman & Lipton, 2004 & 2012</i></p>

Activities	Connection to Theory and Research
<p>Day Two: ELL Shadowing observations and debrief (4 hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norms and important reminders of observation process • ELL Shadowing observations • Debrief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reflection on individual student ○ Observations of data ○ Exploring Root Causes ○ Implications and Next Steps ○ Closing 	<p>Diagnosis and Design</p> <p>Cycle of Collaborative Inquiry: Exploring and Discovering</p> <p>Learning-Centered Conversations</p> <p><i>Key References: Copeland, 2003; Shein, 2004; Spillane & Coldren, 2004 & 2011; Wellman & Lipton, 2004 & 2012</i></p>
<p>Day Three: Strategic Action Planning with site leader (2 hours)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review quantitative and qualitative data and synthesis of debrief • Pull out principle problem(s) to address • Coached session to complete Site Action Plan 	<p>Diagnosis and Design</p> <p>Cycle of Collaborative Inquiry: Integrating and Organizing</p> <p>Transformational leadership</p> <p>Leading for Equity</p> <p><i>Key References: ; Elfers & Stritkus, 2013; Leithwood, 2007; Spillane, 2011 Wellman & Lipton, 2004 & 2012</i></p>

Research Methods

My research methods and data collection were grounded in the intended outcomes of my intervention. I sought to support instructional leaders' understanding of and urgency for meeting the needs of Long-term ELLs as well as their ability to design an action plan to improve instructional practices for this targeted subgroup. Because this protocol and process is novel and untried in OUSD schools, I was equally interested in

collecting data that would inform and improve the design elements of the protocol, such as the tools and facilitation process.

Data Collection

I used a variety of data collection tools. During the facilitator training and field testing, I used pre- and post-surveys to measure increased understanding of Long-term ELLs, a sense of urgency, comfort in using the tools, comfort in facilitation, and feedback on the process itself. I also had facilitators-in-training do quick-writes at the conclusion of the field-testing and input sessions to inform need for further input, calibration, and refinement of the observation tool.

During the school pilots, I used a similar pre- and post-survey excluding questions about comfort in facilitation and including an additional question about next steps participants planned on taking as a result of the experience. I also transcribed the notes from the post-observation group debrief, and collected and evaluated the action plans based on a set of criteria I developed. For both experiences, I kept a research journal which helped to capture some additional anecdotal data as well as my reflections that informed the on-going tuning of the design. All data collection tools can be found in Appendix F.

It should be noted that in the pre- and post-survey data collection in the school pilots are not perfect matches. There was slight variance of the number of participants who completed the pre-survey and the post-survey at some sites, although this was insignificant. The total number of pre-survey responses was 26 and the post-survey

responses was 25. In my data analysis, I considered the aggregate responses, not site-level or individual matches.

Data Analysis

To analyze pre- and post-survey Likert Scale data, I compared the responses to like questions and noted the percent increase or decrease. For responses from the pilot site participants, I totaled the responses across all schools and did a similar comparison of pre- and post-intervention results. I then created a spreadsheet and input all of the open-ended survey responses as well as each line from the transcribed debrief discussions. I created codes based on my expected outcomes and additional codes as new patterns emerged (Craig, 2009). I then coded each line of the spreadsheet, multiple-coding when appropriate. When filtering by codes, I was able to distill themes across sources and the five pilot sites related to my expected outcomes and surface some unexpected outcomes.

To analyze the action plans, I developed an evaluation checklist (Appendix F) with four criteria:

- 1) Responds to the data and theory of causation surfaced during the ELL Shadowing process (data dive and observations)
- 2) Includes instructional practices that foster academic speaking and listening for Long-term ELLs
- 3) Has clear outcomes and measures of success and a timeline
- 4) Leadership team developed action plan with _____ support (no, little, moderate, substantial)

To assess the first criterion, I compared the comments from the post-survey and debrief notes that I coded as diagnosis with those I coded as design, additionally, noting what showed up on the leader's action plan. I then analyzed to what extent the problems identified were addressed in the design (Spillane & Colden, 2004 & 2011). Criteria #2

and #3 were easily evident in the action plan. I assessed criterion #4 based on the amount of coaching support I provided, which varied from facilitative to very hands-on.

Table 4. Expected Changes and Data Sources

	Expected Change	Data Source #1	Data Source #2	Data Source #3
Impact	Increased understanding of the needs of Long-term ELLs	Pre- and post-survey	Transcribed debrief	Research Journal
	Increased urgency and commitment to address the needs of Long-term ELLs	Pre- and post-survey	Transcribed debrief	Research Journal
	Improved ability to collect and analyze ELL Shadowing observation data	Pre- and post-survey	Quick writes (facilitators-in-training only)	Research journal
	Well-designed action plans with tightly connected diagnosis and design	Pre- and post-survey	Transcribed debrief	Action Plans (using criteria to evaluate)
Implementation	Improved facilitation of process of diagnosis and design	Pre- and post-survey	Quick writes (facilitators-in-training only)	Research journal
	Refined ELL Shadowing protocol and tools	Pre- and post-survey	Quick writes (facilitators-in-training only)	Research journal

Data Analysis and Findings

Analysis of the data surfaced findings about both the impact of the intervention on site leadership’s knowledge of and commitment to improving instruction for Long-term ELLs as well as the design and implementation of the intervention.

Impact Data Overview

This participatory action research project sought to address the issue of a persistent yet largely unrecognized equity issue in Oakland schools, that of Long-term English

Language Learners. The literature points to a number of high leverage practices that benefit Long-term ELLs, including the critical role of student engagement in academic speaking and listening (August & Shanahan, 2006; O'Hara et al., 2014). It follows then that an observation that specifically looks for these behaviors would tell us how well the needs our Long-term ELLs are currently addressed. I hypothesized that the ELL Shadowing observation focused on evidence of student academic speaking and listening situated in a process of diagnosis and design would raise awareness, increase urgency, and better prepare instructional leaders to identify both the problems leading to the poor performance of Long-term ELLs and the research-based actions that best address these problems.

Analysis of the impact data surfaced four main themes: 1) the process led to increased understanding of the characteristics and needs of Long-term ELLs, overwhelmingly due to the personalization of data through the ELL Shadowing observation and debrief; 2) the intervention resulted in improved ability to collect and analyze ELL Shadowing observation data; 3) participants expressed increased urgency to address the needs of Long-term ELLs; and 4) the process resulted in well-designed action plans although the support principals needed varied widely. Although my problem practice centered on the site instructional leaders, I collected data on the impact of the intervention on all participants in the case of the first three themes. The culmination – the action plan - was primarily the design of the principal, which allowed me to measure the impact of the intervention on this critical player.

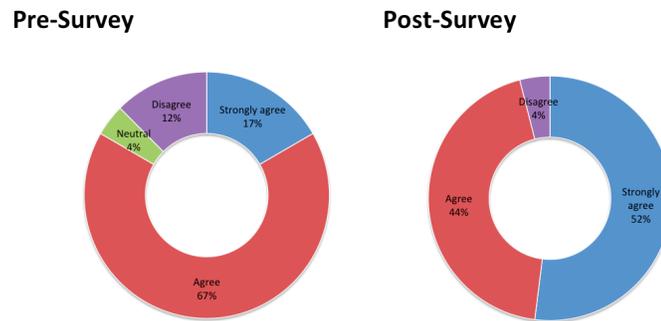
Impact Data: Increased Understanding of Needs of Long-term ELLs

A primary goal of my intervention was to build participants' foundational understanding of Long-term ELLs: their typical characteristics, experiences in school, and instructional needs. The literature underscores the critical role instructional leaders have in modeling and facilitating learner-centered conversations grounded in data (Copelan, 2003; Shein, 2004; Spillane & Coldren, 2011; Wellman & Lipton, 2004). A requisite to lead these types of conversations about Long-term ELLs is a solid understanding of this student subgroup and how the typical characteristics manifest at their site. The data provides strong evidence that my intervention successfully achieved this goal. What I did not foresee was the extent to which this deepened understanding would be attributed to the personalization of the data as a result of the ELL shadowing observations.

I administered the pre-survey to all participants prior to any engagement in the topic. Even in the pre-survey Likert Scale responses (see figure 4), participants across the five schools gave themselves high marks for the ability to explain the characteristics of Long-term ELLs, 84% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this assessment. Even so, their level of confidence increased after the Days 1 and 2 (pre-ELL Shadowing engagement and observation/debrief). The number of participants who agreed or strongly agreed increased 12 percentage points to 96%. More notably, the respondents *strongly* agreeing increased from 44% to 67%, a 23% increase.

Figure 4

I can explain the characteristics of a Long-term ELL



The qualitative responses in the post-survey as well as the observation debrief notes provides insight into *what contributed* to the increase in understanding. Interestingly, there is limited evidence that the direct input provided in Day 1’s pre-engagement, i.e., the opening video and review of research were a significant factor. Rather, overwhelmingly, it was the experience of shadowing a student for two hours that gave participants lasting insight into the Long-term ELLs at their site.

One participant shared in the post-survey that, “It was instructive to shadow a student and *see first-hand their academic experience* [emphasis added] during a slice of their school day.” Similarly, another participant commented, “I always understood the district and state definitions for LTELS but *the classroom observation gave me personal details and richer context* [emphasis added].” Both statements are indicative that the shadowing experience brings life and meaning to an otherwise general or abstract concept.

Specifically, participants were struck by the high level of disengagement and silent compliance, typical characteristics of Long-term ELLs identified in the research (Olsen,

2010). A site teacher leader responded in the post-survey, “My observations of the student being academic disengaged yet obedient seemed to be echoed by other participants as well.” Similarly, a guest participant noted, “I wasn't sure what to look out for before, but after group discussions and classroom observations common themes emerged: student stays under the radar, doesn't use a lot of academic language, maybe well behaved but is disengaged from the work.” Other descriptions include *bored*, *quiet rule-follower*, and *passive*.

Some comments provide evidence that participants were making connections between the research I presented and their focal student's experience. For example, one guest participant reported on the post-survey, “It was amazing to see the quote that says LTELs speak 2% of the time during the school day *actually play out* [emphasis added]. My student said one word in 2 hours!” A site teacher leader wrote, “According to the research, the data and the share-out in our meeting, I feel that LTELL's are generally disengaged, silent, and either have a desire to share and do not have the skills to do so or are used to staying silent and not having to talk.” This suggests that some participants were struck and even surprised to see descriptions of Long-term ELLs as referenced in the research truly reflected in Oakland students. Seeing the behaviors manifest leaves no doubt that these are also the traits of students in our classrooms.

Another interesting point I identified is that the ELL Shadowing provided observers insights into student experiences in a way that other protocols do not. One principal noted that, “when you follow one student, you get different data than through [Instructional] Rounds or walk-throughs.” An assistant principal similarly reflected, “Shadowing an LTEL student was a very powerful experience--*it personalized the data*

and shed light on the student experience [emphasis added] in a way that I've never participated in.” A teacher leader stated, “When you think about what one student is experiencing, it *changes the way you think about your instruction* [emphasis added] and what it means to reach all students.” A facilitator-in-training added, “ELL Shadowing is the most powerful observation protocol I have experienced. Unlike Instructional Rounds, that focuses on teacher practice and only provides extremely short observation time in classrooms, ELL Shadowing provides educators with the time and the lens to truly get to the student experience.” These comments underscore the value-add of the ELL Shadowing tool and process that deepens understanding of *student* needs in a distinct and powerful way.

These data illustrate the impact that triangulation of the research, site- and student-level data collected through student-centered observation can have on the understanding of this group of students. Additionally, it was clear through the participants' responses that the ELL Shadowing experience provides a window into the life of the student that is significantly more impactful than communicating a definition; it shows how the typical characteristics of Long-term ELLs manifest in instructive and emotive ways.

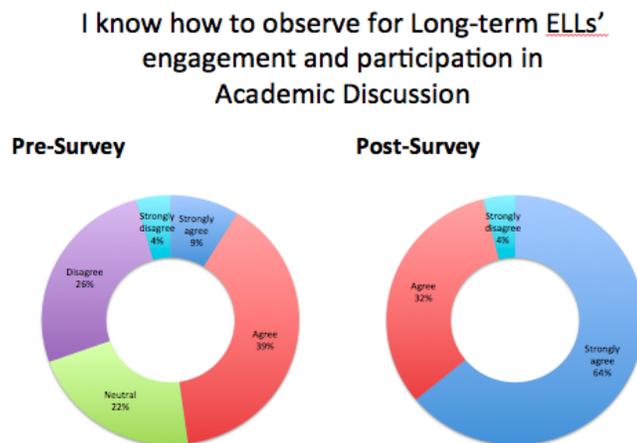
Impact Data: Improved ability to collect and analyze ELL Shadowing observation data

As described in detail in the literature review, there is significant body of research that points to the importance of academic oral language development (August & Shanahan; Olsen, 2010) and engaging students in quality academic discussions as a key strategy in the success of ELLs (Bunche et al., 2013; Fisher & Frey, 2012; Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer & River, 2006; O'Hara, Zwiers & Pritchard, 2014; Olsen, 2012;

Zwiers & Crawford, 2011). Therefore, my intervention centered around an observation protocol that focused attention on ELLs’ engagement in *academic speaking and listening*. As expected, the data revealed that the intervention resulted in improved ability of all participants - instructional leaders, teacher leaders, and central office partners - to observe for these behaviors. In fact, the impact proved to be significant in participants’ confidence in conducting such observations. Additionally, the data indicates that participants’ analysis of the observations led to increased awareness of the proportion of teacher versus student talk and the instructional practices that led to this scenario.

As evident in figure 5 below, the pre- and post-survey responses demonstrate a marked increase in the participants who expressed confidence in their ability to observe for Long-term ELLs’ engagement and participation in academic discussion. Initially, 30% of participants disagreed with this statement compared to only 4% after the intervention, a 26% decrease. Conversely, those who indicated they agree or strongly agree with this assessment increased by 51%, from 45 to 96% of participants. That all but one participant agreed with this statement provides affirming data that the intervention solidly met this desired outcome.

Figure 5



In considering *impact*, I am concerned primarily with increasing participants' ability to conduct student-centered observations. Further discussion of the use and calibration of the actual tool is explored in the section below on the implementation and design of the intervention.

In addition to increased confidence in the ability to conduct observations of Long-term ELLs, I was interested in what participants lifted up as important from the observations. I found through transcribed debrief notes and post-survey comments that the most prevalent learning was increased awareness of the lack of student talk and the contributing teacher behaviors, such as the lack of structures that ensure equity of voice. Several participants noted surprise and dismay that in the span of two hours, their Long-term ELL spoke very little, and in some occasions not at all, even in the midst of group work or discussion. One participant commented, "My student only spoke when she was prompted." Another noted, "Student spoke 2 one-word utterances of academic talk during two periods." Similarly, another observer remarked, "My student didn't speak any academic language or social language for the whole shadowing- even when the teacher asked for whole class choral response."

Although the observation was designed to focus primarily on student behaviors, the observation tool with its qualitative note section, also captured teacher behaviors. The observers noted how instructional moves impacted the student's engagement in academic speaking and listening. Indeed, many comments in the post-survey responses noted the causal relationship between teacher moves and student academic talk. Called out in

particular was the dominance of teacher talk and unproductive questioning strategies. For example, one principal said, “The preponderance of teacher directed, teacher centric, dependent learning is frustrating,” and a principal at a different site commented, “I’m surprised by the amount of teacher talk, since we have talked about that so much in our PLCs.” Similarly, a guest participant wrote in her post-survey, “I noticed a lot, and was surprised by the amount of teacher directed facilitation. I noticed more IRF [Initiation-Response-Feedback]⁶ than other types of teacher questions,” and another, “The amount of teacher talk, directions, and preparation don’t allow for a lot of student engagement in academic discussion.” One even noted that, “The teacher posed questions and sometimes answered these himself.” Another participant added, “The teacher provided plenty of guided opportunities to interact academically in oral discussion, and almost universally, the kids didn’t.”

These comments provide evidence that observers were able to track not only frequency of talk, which tells part of the story, but also the teacher practices that contribute to what we see students experience. For example, a germane observation consistent with the research is that students need much more than the *opportunity* to engage in academic discussion; the teacher must provide deliberate scaffolds and structures to ensure ELLs are supported to fully participate (Fisher & Frey, 2012; Gibbons, 2002; Kinsella, 2011; O’Hara et al., 2014). This is significant because in order to lead for equitable outcomes, instructional leaders need to be able to have these types of

⁶ IRF or Initiation, Response, Feedback is a type of teacher-student interaction in which the teacher poses a question, the student responds, and the teacher provides feedback such as “That’s correct.” While it is a good way to check for understanding, it is very teacher directed and can impede student-to-student discourse when overused.

learner-centered conversations that clearly connect evidence of student learning with teacher actions (Wellman & Lipton, 2004).

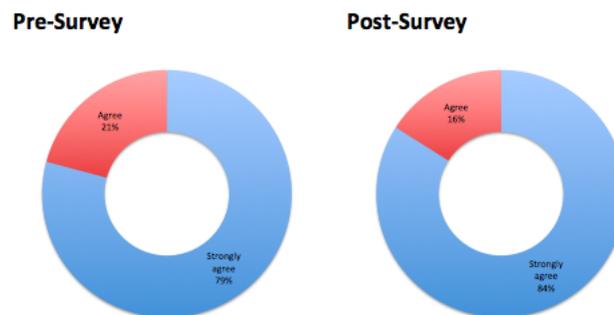
The evidence above clearly substantiates that participants did in fact improve their ability to collect and analyze Long-term ELL observation data. Not only did the vast majority feel more comfortable observing Long-term ELL engagement in academic discussion, observers were able to surface relevant observations and draw important conclusions about the frequency of student talk, the teacher practices that inhibit talk or the lack of intentionality in ensuring all students participate. Also of significance is that participants now have the access and ability to use this student-centered observation tool independently. In fact, several participants expressed their intent to add the Shadowing protocol to their toolbox of observation practices (more on this below).

Impact Data: Increased urgency in addressing the needs of Long-term ELLs

In addition to building knowledge and skill to better address the needs of Long-term ELLs, my intervention was designed to raise the level of urgency to take action through analysis of compelling data and the ELL Shadowing experience. The research on leading for systemic change stresses the importance of communicating a clear vision grounded in a moral imperative, and inspiring others to rally around this vision (Bryk et al., 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Leithwood, 2007). It stands to reason that before leaders articulate a vision and clear goals for addressing the needs of Long-term ELLs, they themselves must feel fire in their bellies to lead change that disrupts inequitable outcomes for our ELLs. Therefore, measuring evidence of the sense of urgency among principals is key.

Based on survey and debrief data, I found that the intervention led to an increased sense of urgency among all participants. The Likert Scale data of the pre- and post-survey does not provide much insight into the impact of the intervention since 100% already agreed or strongly agreed prior to the intervention that addressing the needs of Long-term ELLs should be a district priority. There was a marginal 5% increase in the respondents who strongly agreed with this statement (see figure 6).

Figure 6 **I believe that addressing the needs of Long-term ELLs should be a priority for OUSD**



More telling are the qualitative comments that strongly suggest a heightened level of urgency among participants. One teacher leader acknowledged, “It’s been a population that’s been ignored and forgotten. The less we do about it, the harder it will be for students to succeed in school as they progress through grade levels.” Another teacher leader remarked, “We need to help students become college and career ready. As of right now, LTELLs are not getting enough support to be successful. It is imperative that we provide an equitable experience for all students in OUSD, and that is not happening right now.” And yet another teacher leader added that, “We have a large population of these students. We are doing a disservice to our students by not prioritizing Long-term ELLs.”

Several leaders expressed a sense of responsibility to take action as a result of the ELL Shadowing engagement. The principal at one site asserted, “This group is languishing and I believe [that even] without additional resources we can do better to meet their needs.” He went on to talk about the lack of rigor and low demand on students he observed in the classrooms adding, “We could do a lot more with very little change by raising expectations for students.”

These leaders attributed their increased understanding of Long-term ELLs to the personal connection they made through the observations. Leaders from two different sites specifically connected the sense of urgency to the experience of ELL Shadowing. One principal stated, “I feel responsibility, and charged to do something about it... the operationalizing means getting people invested. How to get people invested? Put a face on the student, and [see] the student’s reality.” A teacher leader at a different site wrote in her post-survey, “When you follow a student, you kind of can't let them go: you feel responsible for them and you see how critical the support is and how high the stakes are.” The emotional response evoked for these participants is indicative that the personal connection made by shadowing one student was pivotal in creating a sense of urgency.

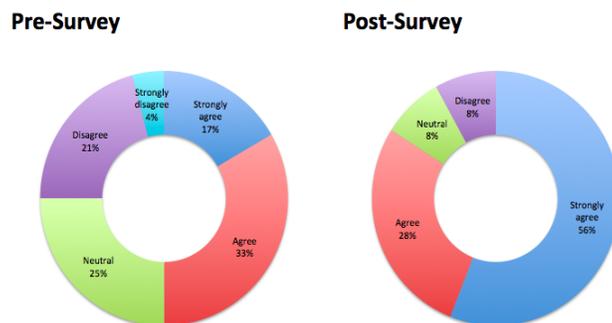
Impact data: process resulted in well-designed action plans

The final intended outcome in terms of the *impact* of the intervention was the development of well-designed action plans. I looked for evidence that the action plans are informed by research-based practices, include as a central component a focus on academic discussion for Long-term ELLs, and address the problems identified during ELL Shadowing debrief. In my analysis of the data, I found that in general, leaders were

able to draw upon practices for Long-term ELL supported by the research. In addition, I found that 1) action plans reflected a range of the leader’s ability to design a plan tightly connected to diagnosis and 2) varying levels of coaching support was needed to arrive at clear next steps and desired outcomes.

Before taking a closer look at the culminating action plans, it is worth noting the pre- and post-survey data assessing participants’ ability to identify next steps that benefit Long-term ELLs based on the classroom observations. This is important because, ultimately, leaders should be able to observe student actions and provide instructional guidance on actionable next steps for the teacher. The survey results demonstrate that the intervention had a strong impact in this regard. The percentage of those who disagreed with the statement *I can identify actionable next steps that benefit Long-term ELLs based on classroom observations* decreased 13 percentage points from 21% to 8% (see figure 7). The two respondents who still disagreed with this statement after the intervention both explained that as data analysts, they do not have the classroom experience to feel qualified to recommend next steps. The number of participants who agreed or strongly agreed with this statement increased 34 percentage points from 50% to 84%.

Figure 7 I can identify actionable next steps that benefit Long-term ELLs based on classroom observations



Analysis of the completed action plans provides insight into how well the leader was able to integrate new learning about Long-term ELLs in a way that responds to the student-centered observations and the unique needs of his or her site. To describe the findings, I will identify each of the schools as Site A, B, C, D, and E. As explained in Research Methods section above, I used a simple rubric to evaluate the action plans. I rated each criterion on a 1-4 scale, a rating of one representing no evidence and a rating of four representing substantial evidence (see Table 5).

Table 5. Summary-level Evaluation of Site Action Plans

Criteria	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
1. Responds to the data and theory of causation surfaced during the ELL Shadowing process (data dive and observations)	3	4	2	4	4
2. Includes instructional practices that foster academic speaking and listening for LTELs	4	4	2	4	4
3. Has clear outcomes and measures of success and a timeline	2	3	2	3	3
4. Leadership team developed action plan with _____ support	1	3	1	3	4
Total score	10/16	14/16	7/16	14/16	15/16
Rating for criteria #1-3: 1- no evidence; 2 - little evidence; 3 - moderate evidence; 4 - substantial evidence Rating for criterion #4: 1- substantial support; 2 - moderate support; 3 - light support; 4 - no support					

In four of five sites, I found that the action plans adequately responded to the data and theories of causation surfaced during the observation debrief. For example, Site B identified a couple of central problems that were clearly addressed in their next steps.

First, the leadership recognized that they lacked an explicit equity focus on ELL achievement. They attributed this to the attention of leadership and staff on the growing population of African-American students at the expense of attention to ELLs. To address the stated need for more urgency and focus on Long-term ELLs, their action plan includes regular engagements with ELL data such as goal-setting and progress monitoring in order to inform school-wide instructional goals but also to increase data literacy of the leadership and to keep the Long-term ELL on the front burner. This is significant because it points to two related best practices highlighted in the research: a school culture of continual inquiry (Copeland, 2003) and the examination and analysis of data to inform school wide instructional goals (Elfers & Stritikus, 2013; Wellman & Lipton, 2004).

Site D's action plan provides another example of tight alignment between diagnosis and design. Two of the problems that the group surfaced in the debrief and that the principal then focused on in the action planning were 1) lack of intentional structures to support discourse and 2) low expectations of students. The first is addressed in the action plan by providing on-going professional development and support to foster academic discussion for ELLs. The second problem identified falls in the sociocultural dimension such as deficit mindset that is so critical for leaders to tackle if they are to interrupt inequities in their building (Elfers and Stritikus, 2013; McKenzie and Scheurich, 2004). This intangible and complex problem the leader plans to address by explicitly naming a school-wide focus of advancing achievement of Long-term ELLs, presenting compelling and disconfirming data to create urgency and a shared sense of purpose (Shein, 2004),

and holding teachers more accountable through frequent observation and feedback cycles that look at how the teacher is engaging all students in discourse.

School C, on the other hand, demonstrated little evidence that their identified actions adequately addressed the problem. Despite the fact the debrief surfaced low participation in academic speaking and listening of Long-term ELLs in comparison to their non-ELL peers, there was not a strong commitment to taking this up with an equity lens. For example, while actions did include promoting academic discussion through PD and PLC cycles, there is no explicit attention to ensuring that Long-term ELLs are supported to fully participate and therefore benefit from academic discussion. Additionally, although there was acknowledgement of how consistent structures and instructional practice of academic discussion benefit ELLs, there are no clear actions that show how the leadership will carry this out with a large staff with very diverse practices and a strong culture of autonomy.

The second criterion I identified for a well-designed action plan was professional development and support for teachers to implement instructional practices that foster engagement in meaningful academic speaking and listening. The research is clear that this is critical to improving the language and academic development of Long-term ELLs (O'Hara et al., 2014; Olsen, 2010). My analysis found that all five sites included such plans; however, the attention to addressing the specific needs of Long-term ELLs varied. For example, Site C identified vague goals for a professional development focus on academic discussion with no mention of specific practices that are found to especially benefit language learners, such as protocols that ensure equity of voice. On the other hand, three of the sites included internal use of the ELL Shadowing observation tool to

engage a wider group of teachers in the shadowing process and to monitor the progress of the engagement of Long-term ELLs. The latter action step demonstrates a strong commitment not just to increasing student talk, but to tackling the needs of this particular group of students.

The third criterion looks for evidence of clear outcomes, timeline, and measures for success. Ratings were generally lower for all schools in this category because of a lack of specificity of timeline. I attribute this in part to the timing of the intervention. Since the intervention occurred in the spring, most action plans will be fully operationalized in the next school year. Sites A and D each scored a 2 because their plans also lacked clear outcomes or measures of success.

The last criterion determined the level of support needed to complete the action plan. On the high end, site E required no support as this was developed almost entirely in partnership between the Instructional Facilitator and principal. For sites B and C, I led them through the process by asking coaching questions to get at all of the components of the action plan. As the leaders shared their thinking, I took notes and then articulated their identified next steps using the action plan template. In other words, I facilitated their thought process and took notes, but the action plan was a reflection of their ideas. On the other end, sites A and C needed substantial support to complete an action plan. To complete site A's action plan, I held an additional meeting with an external coach who supports the teachers' professional learning and growth. We worked together to develop a professional development plan aligned to the principal's stated goals. In the case of site C, the principal and his assistant principal brainstormed some actions that are reflected in the plan but because many of the details were not hashed out due to the short meeting

time and lack of clarity on the part of the leadership, I completed much of the action plan on my own and submitted this to the site leadership and principal supervisor as a recommendation.

As evidenced above, the development and final action plans demonstrate that all leaders were able draw upon research-based practices that address the needs of Long-term ELLs. However, the data also highlighted the need for differentiated levels of support for and accountability of leaders to both articulate equity-focused practices and follow through with a plan that clearly articulates the connection between the problem and the design.

Implementation and Design Data Overview

In addition to measuring the impact of my intervention, I also analyzed data to refine and improve the implementation of the intervention throughout the process. Analysis of the data revealed that I met the following implementation outcomes: 1) an effective ELL Shadowing protocol and its accompanying tools and 2) effective facilitation of the process of diagnosis and design process with site leadership. Because ELL Shadowing is not only a new practice for me but also a new protocol for Oakland educators generally, my action research was deeply concerned with the design elements. My hope was to create a powerful and accessible tool that can be used broadly in Oakland to conduct equity-centered observations and a new process to lead productive learner-focused conversations that improve instruction for students traditionally outside of the sphere of success.

Implementation Data: Refined ELL Shadowing protocol and tools

At the heart of my intervention was the experience of shadowing a Long-term ELL. Therefore, an effective and accessible ELL Shadowing observation protocol and tool was critical to the intervention's success. Analysis of the data suggest that this was achieved as a result of field testing, on-going reflection, and revisions of both the process and tools.

The ELL shadowing observation tool underwent several iterations throughout the intervention process. I first established baseline data on the utility of the ELL shadowing observation tool during the facilitator training. Each trainee conducted an observation of a Long-term ELL using a prototype of the tool with no prior calibration and minimal explanation. Following the observations, we debriefed what we learned about the student we shadowed and reflected on both the process and tool. Participants' quick-writes and my research journal provide insight into the reflections that led to important revisions.

One issue that came up repeatedly was the need for clarity of the purpose of the quantitative and qualitative sections of the observation form. The original observation form adapted from Soto (2012) privileged the collection of quantitative data, tallies noting frequency of academic speaking and listening, with very little space for or guidance on the content of the qualitative data collection. While group members recognized the value of noting frequency of student talk, some worried that this would not allow us to measure the *quality* of talk or level of student *interaction*, an important point given the district-wide focus and professional learning on academic discussions. One participant explained in her quick-write, "It seems that [the original protocol] was

intended to get at a much more broad strokes picture of what LTELs are experiencing. My guess would be that it's trying to differentiate whether they get to talk or don't talk, and not at the quality of discourse and discussion.” Similarly, another trainee noted the advantages and limitations of looking at quantitative data, “ELL Shadowing can provide some easy-to-interpret data about patterns of participation that can be useful for a class or school. The process leans toward the objective rather than subjective side, which means we might lose some of the more complex and rich individual contributions of students.” Another expressed uncertainty of how the tally marks will lead to change in practice, “I need to better understand how this data is going to support instructional and systemic changes. How will the tally marks tell a story?” These comments are representative of the group’s grappling with the purpose of the protocol: Are we trying to lift up the lack of academic student talk, or are we trying to understand how deeply Long-term ELLs engage academically? The answer we came to during the debrief is that we are trying to do both in an effort to tell a fuller story of the Long-term ELL experience while emphasizing the importance of academic speaking and listening.

The need to represent more than merely the *frequency* of talk resulted in a new iteration of the tool with significantly more space for open-ended qualitative notes. Additionally, we created an ELL Shadowing Guide (see Appendix B) that provides look-fors to narrow the focus of qualitative notes on capturing evidence of student interaction and academic discussion (e.g., students co-constructing knowledge and building on each other’s ideas, the use of academic language) as well as key teacher moves that might explain observed student actions. These include questioning practices and use of language scaffolds appropriate to students’ language proficiency level.

Another need for clarification that surfaced concerned the *definition* of academic speaking and listening. After the first field test of the tool, one participant wrote, “Using the shadowing protocol, it appeared the student was using academic language to either speak or listen the entire time. In reality, she struggled with the content and spoke with a social register. This sounded like a common experience among all participants.” The question this raised was: Does academic speaking and listening denote use of academic register or talk about academic content even when informal, social register is predominant? After much discussion, we landed on the latter, and clarified in the ELL Shadowing Guide that we are giving students credit in the tallies for speaking and listening as long as they are discussing the focal content. This conclusion was grounded in the research that suggests students should be allowed to apprentice into the use of academic language, thus allowing students to use a range of social and academic language to make meaning of content (Van Lier & Walqui, 2012). At the same time, we recognized that teachers need to actively and intentionally cultivate the language of school, especially for those students who do not come to school with the “academic capital” needed to achieve academically (Kinsella, 2012; Zwiers, 2007). Therefore, we included additional expectations in the ELL Shadowing Observation Guide that the observer take note of the use of academic or social language in the qualitative section.

After making these refinements to the tool - more qualitative space and explicit definitions of academic speaking and listening - I led the facilitators-in-training through a second round of field testing. Notes from the field-testing debrief and quick-writes indicate we were in general agreement that the revised observation tool had the potential to tell an important and well-rounded story about Long-term ELL’s academic

engagement. One trainee noted in his quick-write following the second field-test, “When you combine the snapshots [quantitative tallies] with the qualitative observations, you end up with a pretty useful all-around observational tool for language, engagement and even management.” The trainee who had previously questioned the purpose of the tool during the first round of field-testing concurred, “I have a better understanding of how ELL shadowing will be a strong motivator for systemic change in practice. I now see with more clarity the importance the tally data as well as the anecdotal data to form a story of the student experience. Having more space to write was helpful!” Another participant connected the team’s productive struggle with the right form of the tool to our broader goals in shifting practice, “Based on today, I think we are in the process of refining how we gather data, what is significant data and how the tool can help us determine that the concept of shadowing data collection is powerful and at the verge of transforming teacher practice and surfacing patterns that will possibly help us direct our coaching strategically.” This comment is an illustration of Spillane and Coldren’s assertion that data in and of itself does not hold meaning; it is constructed in a way that makes an argument or tells a story (2011). The careful crafting of the observation tool was critical to ensure we are surfacing the data for site leadership that will paint an accurate picture and inspire change to take up instructional practices that benefit Long-term ELLs.

The facilitators-in-training agreed that the field-testing not only resulted in a strong, useful tool but also in calibrated understanding for how to use the tool in observations. As one noted, “Involving us in developing and refining the data collection protocol helps to develop skill and confidence.” Recognizing the importance for *all* observers to have

some level of calibration, the process at pilot sites included guided practice of the tool with a classroom video. As noted in my research journal following the pre-engagement at the third pilot site, “The time to calibrate was so important. Each time we use the video, we have the opportunity to reinforce and clarify the meaning of academic speaking and listening and to address common confusions such as the difference between listening to another student and listening in a small group.” While the implementation and impact data suggest that the achieved goal of a refined observation tool was met, the need for calibration during each session was reinforced and at times, surfaced a new need for clarification in definition or in use of the tool. For example, we did not fully clarify the meaning of *academic listening* until the very last pilot site when one of the participants asked if students should be given credit for engaging in academic listening when listening to the teacher review procedures (e.g., homework, transitions) or discipline a student. We decided that this would not count as academic listening because it was not specifically related to content. This reinforced the need for continuous calibration to ensure that all observers are prepared to use the tool and that we clarify misconceptions as they arise.

Implementation data: Effective facilitation of diagnosis and design process

Getting site leadership to have honest, productive conversations about the unaddressed inequities at their site requires skilled and intentional facilitation (Wellman & Lipton, 2004). In designing the intervention, I sought to develop a process that was psychologically safe for participants (Shein, 2004) and that led to planned actions that are well-matched to the issues that underlie the identified problem(s) (Spillane & Coldren, 2004). Overall, the data suggests the facilitation accomplished these two goals.

Shortcomings that did arise were remedied by making adjustments throughout the process.

Implementation Data: Strong tools, structures, and protocols

My data analysis confirmed that the tool, structures, and protocols that I developed were effective and well received. In particular, I found that the time devoted to exploring root causes made the strongest impact.

As evidenced in the post-surveys, participants had a positive experience and expressed overall appreciation for the process. For example, one participant wrote, “The training was amazing. Templates, instructions, and structures were clear. There were enough activities to keep all observers engaged and learning. This is one of the better run trainings in OUSD.” A teacher leader commented, “This was a valuable process. We came away with clear next steps. I am in favor of doing this again next year.” And a principal enthusiastically wrote, “This has been one of the most productive experiences. This will become one of my pantheons of worthwhile tools.”

The post-surveys, quick writes and my research journal provided insight into what was most helpful particularly in terms the diagnosis and design process. There were several participants who called out the value of the Post-ELL Shadowing Next steps (Appendix D), which includes a three-tiered continuum of existing supports and structures for ELLs, with next steps appropriate for each tier. Site participants and one of the principal supervisors commented that this tool helped identify attainable, actionable steps that are informed by research for what works for Long-term ELLs.

Additionally, the post-survey evidenced positive feedback on how the process allowed for honest conversation, engagement, and equity of voice. In particular, a handful of participants noted appreciation for the series of fishbowl conversations during the debrief, in which one group spoke at a time while the second group observed. This structure allowed ample time for site leadership to be in deep conversation with each other as well as a designated time to just listen to the outside perspectives of the guest participants.

In reviewing the debrief notes, I found the first fish bowl discussion, in which site leadership discussed root causes, to play a critical role in the diagnosis and design process. Site participants were asked to explore *why* we saw what we saw in the observations and data before jumping to any solutions. At one site, a teacher leader rationalized the results of the observation data by pointing out, “It’s the time of the year, we just had a big push for the SBAC [state testing]... and we’re getting ready for Expo.” The principal responded by acknowledging that while this is all true, teachers will always have an excuse for why we’re not seeing meaningful discourse in the classrooms. At a different site, the principal likewise hypothesized that teachers were “on a mad dash” to finish end-of-year projects. This time it was a teacher leader who countered, “I think there’s pressure around Expo, but I don’t think it’s an excuse. If we’re doing Expo for a purpose, there’s no reason why there wouldn’t also be talk in that.” The discussions at each site then explored more deeply what contributed to the observed teacher and student behavior. The first site’s principal identified low expectations, “ I feel like sometimes there’s an unspoken contract -- that as long as you’re quiet, it’ll be alright.” At the second site, a teacher leader noted how easy it is for teachers to fall into their comfort

zone and become “lazy in our practice”, suggesting a need to be in constant and “hot pursuit” of the academic speaking and listening the research emphasizes is needed for academic success of Long-term ELLs (Olsen, 2010). At a third pilot site, a two-year teacher and Instructional Leadership Team member openly shared how the observation led her to reflect on her own practice,

Being a somewhat new teacher, I had just gotten control of my classroom with management system that works. It works in direct instruction. When I tried to get [students] to turn and talk with a discover activity, it got really out of control, and I thought, “No, we’re not going there.” I’m understanding that it’s not about me and my comfort level. Yeah, things might go bad sometimes, but we have to all practice together sometimes. The vulnerability – we have to be willing for things to go bad, to make mistakes. We have to do whatever it takes to make a good environment for students.

These accounts illustrate the power of the facilitated space just dedicated to exploring root causes. Had this step not been included with ample time, important assumptions and acknowledgement of sociocultural root causes would have remained hidden. In the case of all of these sites, the action plans explicitly attended to the excavated root causes such as low expectations, complacency, and vulnerability.

Implementation Data: Importance of continual revisions

Throughout the process, data was collected to inform refinements in facilitation. One such refinement was in response to a principal who stated in his post-survey that the “debrief was too long, and I’m not sure we needed the 2.5 hour long pre-meeting the day before.” Two other principals expressed concern prior to the engagements that the process required too much time of their leadership team during the pre-engagement. I responded by making some adjustments to the agenda by cutting the time on sections

when I thought it wouldn't compromise the process. These included shortening introductions and removing a couple of pair discussions. At the same time, I made sure not to shorten the time of the fishbowl conversations that were essential to the diagnosis and design process, as illustrated in the examples above.

After the first pilot site, one of the guest participants - a data analyst - suggested that we include a short interview of the student following the two-hour shadowing period. In her post-survey, she wrote, "I think it is important to hear from [the students] because their instructional experience is only part of the bigger picture. I am not sure that shadowing their instructional experience alone gave me much insight on their characteristics, but rather on their day-to-day school experience." This led to the inclusion of an optional, short interview conducted directly following the observation, if it felt appropriate to pull the student out of class for a couple of minutes. The data provided from the interviews at subsequent pilot sites provided additional insights about the students that were discussed during the debrief and in most cases contributed to the ultimate design of the action plans.

While these revisions ultimately resulted in more effective tools and facilitation, the importance of recurrent reflection and refinement in service of continual improvement should also be noted.

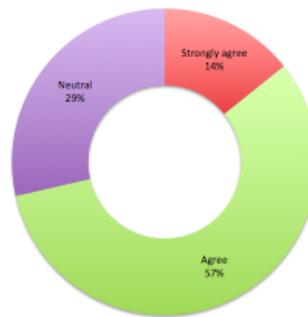
Implementation Data: Future facilitation

Essential to the continuation and broader application of ELL Shadowing is the ability of the trained facilitators to also lead the process. Therefore, I was interested in not only looking at not only how the process worked for site participants but how

accessible the facilitation process is for others to take on. At the conclusion of the intervention – field-testing and implementation at pilot sites – I surveyed the facilitators on their preparedness to lead the process themselves. As demonstrated in Figure 8, 71% of the facilitators agreed or strongly agreed that they feel confident in their ability to facilitate the process. Those who responded “neutral” only attended one pilot site

Figure 8

After attending the Facilitator Training and at least one pilot site's Shadowing event, I am confident in my ability to plan and facilitate an ELL Shadowing event at a site



ELL shadowing experience and indicated they would need to participate another time before they felt comfortable taking a facilitator or co-facilitator role. On the other hand, those who expressed confidence in facilitation had participated at multiple pilot sites. For example, the participant who co-facilitated parts of the process at all four engagements noted, “I feel confident to facilitate because I was able to observe Nicole's expert facilitation numerous times, each time getting a clearer sense of what areas to emphasize and questions to anticipate.” Similarly, another wrote, “Being able to watch the ELL

Shadowing Protocol at three sites provided ample modeling of the protocol and how to respond to questions and comments that come up during the process. In fact, I did an informal ELL Shadowing protocol with an EL Specialist at another site and it was productive.” Additional comments confirmed that the process provides an accessible and strong structure. One trainee noted, “The structure of the ELL Shadowing is clear, so I feel I could step into it fairly easily.” Data from these future ELL Shadowing facilitators confirm that the structures and processes are clear and accessible, and that with sufficient modeling and opportunities for co-facilitation, I have every reason to believe they will be prepared to successfully lead a full ELL Shadowing cycle.

In conclusion, my intervention met, and at times, surpassed all of the expected outcomes in terms of both impact and implementation. As substantiated above, I found that the intervention resulted in:

- 1) increased understanding of the needs and characteristics of Long-term ELLs, primarily due to the student shadowing experience;
- 2) improved ability to effectively collect and analyze ELL Shadowing observation data;
- 3) increased urgency to take action in addressing the needs of Long-term ELLs;
- 4) well-designed site action plans to address the needs of their Long-term ELLs, provided differentiated levels of support for principals; and
- 5) the design of an effective and accessible student-centered observation protocol and a strong facilitation process grounded in collaborative inquiry.

Implications and conclusions

The lessons learned from my participatory action research and corroborated by the literature review have implications for future ELL Shadowing as well as for the work to address inequity more generally. These include the importance of 1) personalization of data through student shadowing to spark a need for change; 2) exploring root causes; 3) collaborative instructional leadership; 4) differentiated and on-going support, progress monitoring and follow up; and 5) field testing and calibration of new tools.

1. The Power of Personalizing Data Through Student Shadowing

One of the prevalent and poignant themes from my action research is the power of connecting student data reports and research to an individual student's experience. Participants commented time and again on the emotional reaction evoked through shadowing a student. The experience helped observers see the statistics and research come alive in their student in a way that was both instructive and compelling.

In order to achieve equitable outcomes for historically underserved students such as Long-term ELLs, there must be irrevocable and shared commitment to serving these students. To accomplish this, the literature on transformational leadership points to the need to unite the school community around a clear and compelling vision (Garcia, 2012; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Leithwood, 2012). When that vision requires educators to change their practice, there is deep work that needs to happen to manage change, beginning with using disconfirming data to create a need to act (Shein, 2004) and articulating a moral imperative (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Although the ELL district- and student-level data reports certainly provides disconfirming data that help us to

“recognize the gap” (Wellman & Lipton, 2004), I found that what really created a sense of urgency for participants was the opportunity to see the classroom experience from the perspective of one student for an extended length of time. As educators take on the difficult work of ensuring all students have the opportunity to excel, they should consider grounding the work in not just quantitative student data, but the student experience as well. While the target population of this study was Long-term ELLs, similar protocols should be considered to help sites better address the needs of other underperforming and underserved student groups such as Special Education students or African-American males.

2. Exploring Root Causes

A clear finding from my action research data is the importance of exploring root causes before identifying solutions. Spillane and Coldren (2004) caution us that many misguided solutions can be traced back to erroneous or surface-level problem identification. My research found that providing a sacred space for discussing the issues underlying the data at hand helps to avoid such misdiagnosis. Participants surfaced assumptions and beliefs such as low expectations or fear of vulnerability that were key to identifying meaningful solutions that ultimately showed up in the site action plans. This finding suggests two implications for the facilitation of the process of diagnosis and design. First, perhaps obvious but critical, is to ensure there is a protected space just for discussing root causes before moving to implications. Absent this, participants can be tempted to prematurely jump to solutions. Second, community members need to feel safe to name the underlying problems of an issue. In my intervention, I addressed this need by adapting the first stage of collaborative inquiry as described by Wellman and Lipton

(2004): *activate and engage*. We established norms and gave participants ample opportunity to share the site context, their hopes as well as their challenges. These moves are essential in establishing a trusting environment that allows for honest and productive learner-centered conversations.

3. Collaborative Leadership

Although not an identified expected outcome, my research underscored the importance of inclusive, collaborative leadership. Of particular interest to this study is the research of Hargreaves and Fullan on the importance of cultivating social capital, or the capacity building of educators to work in strong community (2004). In this way, change in a school does not rest on the principal alone, but becomes an integral part of the cultural fabric of the community. My research data is rich with examples of how the knowledge and sense of urgency for meeting the needs of Long-term ELLs is now held not just by the principal but among the Instructional Leadership Team members. The engagement of stakeholders from the inception of the diagnosis and design process will more likely result in shared commitment to follow through on agreed upon next steps (Copeland, 2003; Wellman & Lipton, 2004). Therefore, facilitators of principal professional learning, whether ELL Shadowing or another protocol, should consider involving teacher leaders and other stakeholders in the process from the beginning.

4. Differentiated Site-Based Support

Another important theme that surfaced from the intervention is the need for differentiated support of the principal. While the teacher has the closest impact on students, the research is clear that the principal is instrumental in creating *systemic* equity

in a school (Garcia, 2012; Skrla, 2001). My research suggests that when supporting principals in the process of diagnosis and design, the facilitator needs to gauge the skill, will, and capacity of the leader, and differentiate support accordingly. The data analysis revealed varying levels of principal capacity to identify both the problems leading to the poor performance of Long-term ELLs and the research-based actions that best address these problems. While designing action plans well-matched to diagnosis is key to effectively leading for equity, it is of course only the beginning. Leaders and their teams will need on-going support to operationalize their action plans and to monitor the progress of academic engagement and development of their Long-term ELLs. The facilitator of this type of intervention should consider the range of support they are able to offer from occasional consultancies with the principal to aligned support in facilitating inquiry-based professional learning with the staff. If the goal is to develop capacity of site leadership to lead collaborative inquiry on their own, it is essential to explicitly model this process and provide continued support until this becomes integrated into the fabric of the school's professional culture.

5. The Role of Field-Testing and Ongoing Calibration

A final implication that emerged from the study is the importance of field-testing and ongoing calibration. The tools used in my intervention evolved considerably from the first field test with the facilitators-in-training to the first implementation at a pilot site. Additionally, the calibration with sites using classroom video ensured that everyone was prepared for the observation and that any misconceptions or confusions were surfaced and addressed. The fact that participants were confident in their use of a new and very distinct tool to observe individual student actions speaks to both the value of field-testing

before and calibration during implementation. Further, engaging the facilitators-in-training in shaping the tool and process led to deep understanding of its use and purpose which will give these facilitators ability to lead with confidence.

Implications for Future Study

This action research points to several areas for further investigation. While the study investigated the impact of an equity-focused intervention on site-based and central instructional leaders, there is a wealth of data that can be explored to better understand the characteristics and needs of the students who are shadowed. Once adults are fully calibrated on using the observation tool, the quantitative and qualitative data can be collected within and across schools to understand patterns and outliers. Investigation capturing the language students are using would give us great insight into the linguistic features of Long-term ELLs' talk so instruction can better target their language development needs. Further study of classrooms in which we see more academic speaking and listening would lift up bright spots and help us to better understand what best practices look like in classrooms serving Long-term ELLs.

Another potential study would follow the pilot sites' implementation of the action plans. These could include looking into questions such as: How does a high capacity site carry out the action plan? What helps or hinders implementation? What are the specific leadership actions that show positive results in moving teacher practice? What specific teacher practice leads to improved academic engagement and development for their Long-term ELLs? What experiences, professional development, and support contribute to a change in practice?

Both of these potential studies would contribute to the limited body of research on the teacher and leadership practices that specifically impact Long-term ELLs.

Conclusion

One of the most formidable challenges in Oakland is interrupting the inequities of students outside of the sphere of success. The issue of Long-term ELLs has very recently surfaced as a long-standing, yet unrecognized inequity we need to address. Given the large and growing numbers of Long-term ELLs, all Oakland school stakeholders must recognize that the success of OUSD in preparing all students for college and career readiness is dependent on the success of Long-term ELLs. This action research project sought to raise awareness of OUSD's Long-term ELLs, deepen understanding of and urgency for addressing their needs, and support leaders to identify actionable next steps based on student observations through a process of collaborative inquiry. The data collected throughout the research process found that I successfully met the expected outcomes. Key to the success was the design of the tools and a facilitation process centered on diagnosis of the problem and design to address these problems. Given the limited amount of research and attention given to the issues facing Long-term ELLs, ELL Shadowing should be considered by leaders across our district, state, and country as a catalyst for change.

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Appendices

Appendix A. OUSD data

- A.1: ELL data overview
- A.2: ELL groups and reclassification in middle school
- A.3: ELL groups and reclassification in high school

Appendix B. ELL Shadowing Observation Tools

- B.1: ELL Shadowing Observation Form
- B.2: ELL Shadowing Guide

Appendix C. Pre and Post agenda

- C.1: Pre-ELL Shadowing Observation Agenda
- C.2: ELL Shadowing and Debrief Agenda

Appendix D. Post-ELL Shadowing Actionable Next steps

Appendix E. Strategic Action Plan template

Appendix F. Data Collection Tools

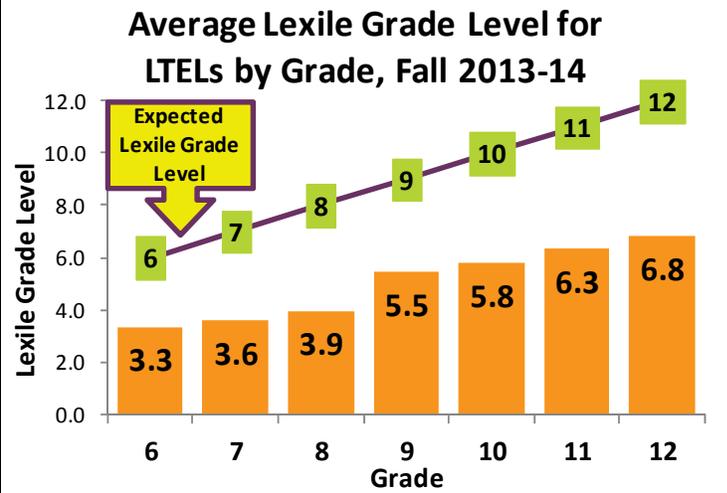
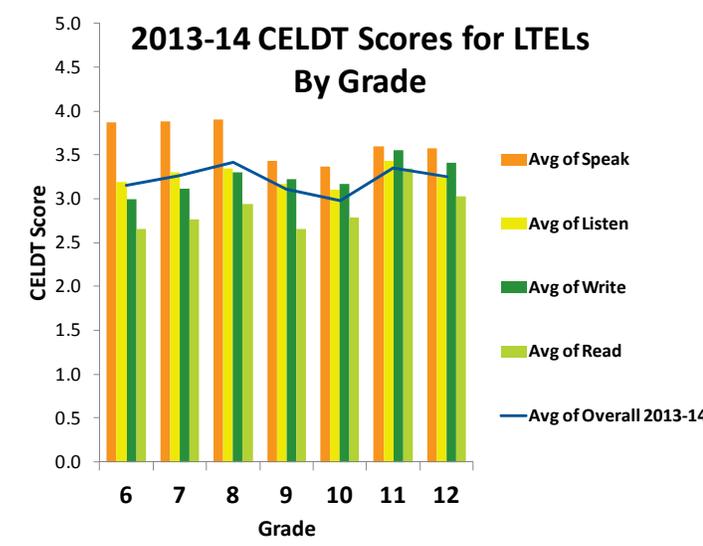
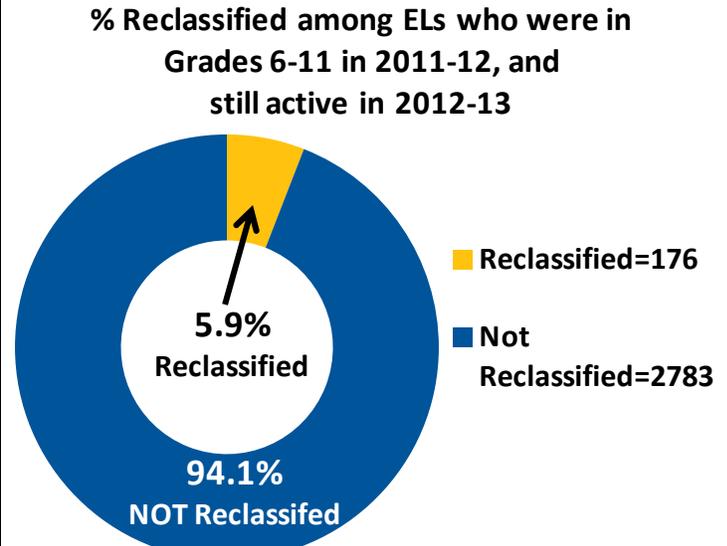
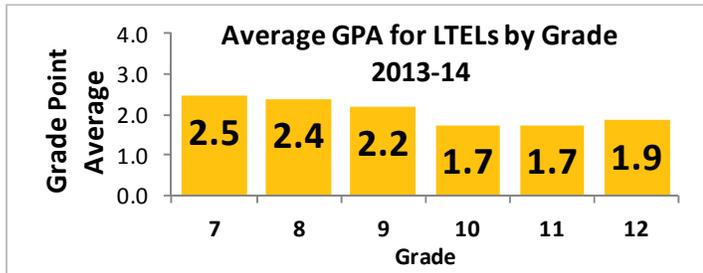
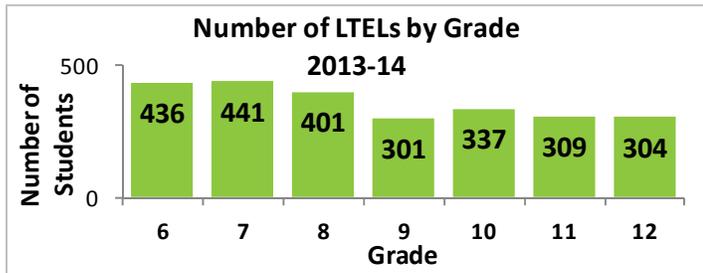
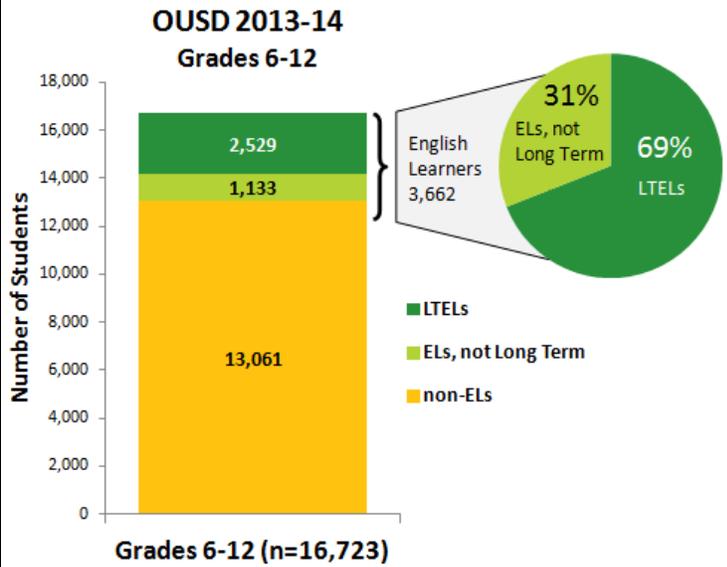
- F.1: Pre-Survey Facilitator Training
- F.2: Post-Survey Facilitator Training
- F.3: Quick Write after Facilitator Training Session #1
- F.4: Quick Write after Facilitator Training Session #2
- F.5: Quick Write after Facilitator Training Session #3
- F.6: Pre-Survey: ELL Shadowing at Pilot Sites
- F.7: Post-Survey: ELL Shadowing at Pilot Sites
- F.8: Evaluation of Site Action Plan

Long Term English Learners in OUSD

Long Term English Learners (LTELs)

are students who have been in the U.S. school system as English Learners for more than 6 years.

- Their English language development often gets stuck at the intermediate level (CELDT 3) or lower.
- LTELs struggle academically, especially with reading and writing.
- LTELs often have a strong command of language needed in social contexts, yet have weak academic language.
- 74% of OUSD LTELs were born in the US.



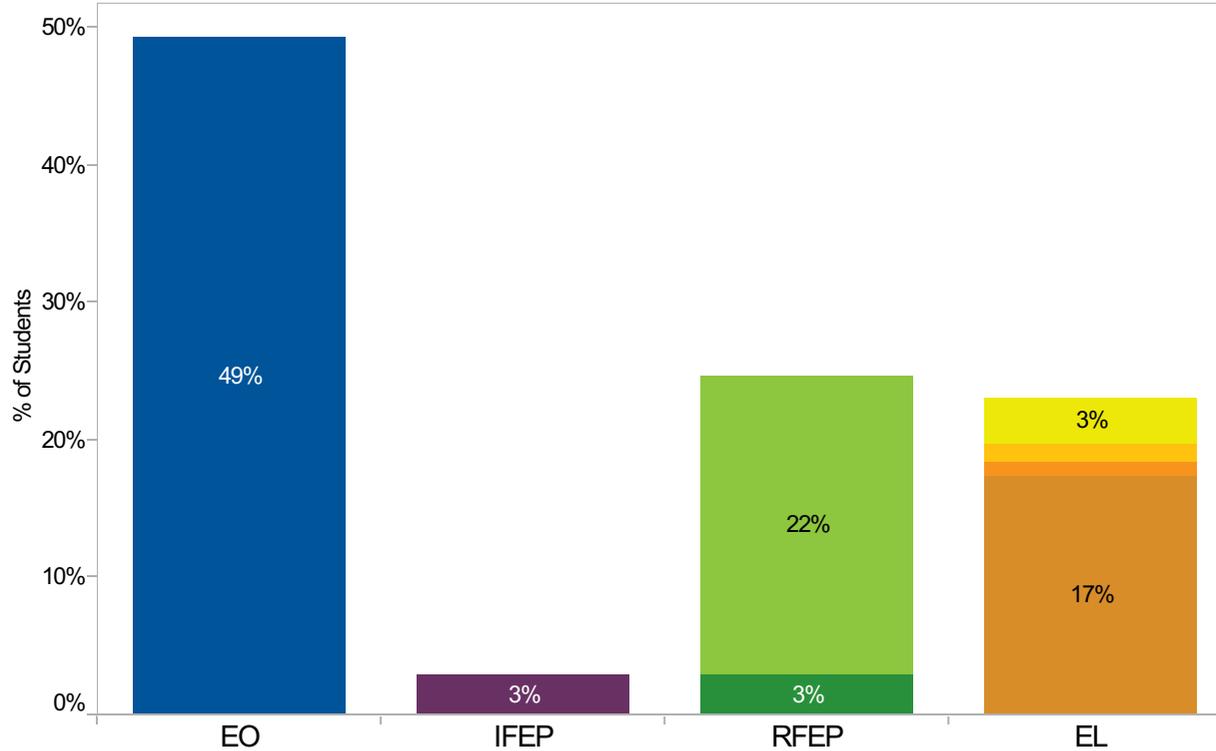
A *Lexile* is a measure of a student's reading ability or a measure of how difficult a text is. The student's Lexile measure can tell us if the student is reading at the expected level for the student's grade.

All Middle Schools - Grade 6-8

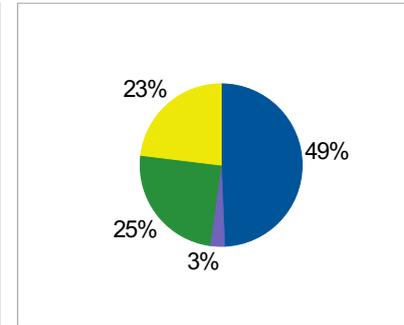


Community Schools, Thriving Students

**% of Students on Oct 2013
by English Fluency Category and Subgroup**

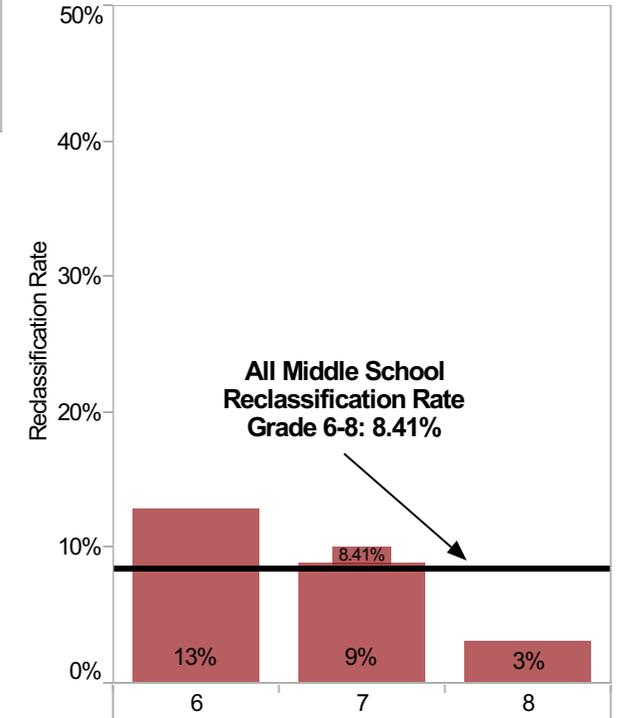


All Students by Fluency Category



- Fluency Subgroups**
- EO
- IFEP
- RFEP - Recently ..
- RFEP - Long Ter..
- EL - Recently En..
- EL - Progressing
- EL - At Risk of L..
- EL - Long Term

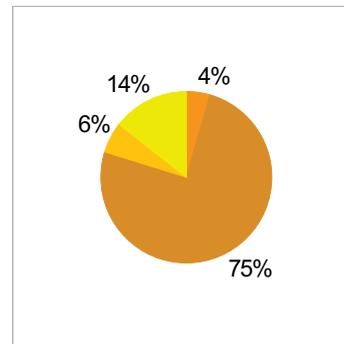
**2011-12 to 2012-13 Cohort
Reclassification Rate by Grade**



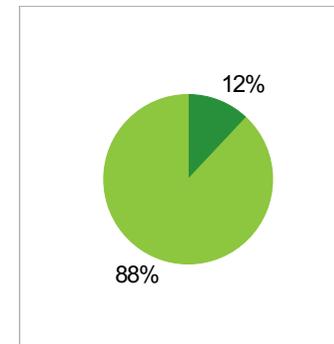
**# of Students on Oct 2013
by English Fluency Category and Subgroup**

	EO	IFEP	RFEP	EL
EO	3,631			
Total	3,631			
IFEP		214		
Total		214		
RFEP			218	
			1,597	
Total			1,815	
EL				76
				1,278
				98
				245
Total				1,697

EL Students by Subgroup



RFEP Students by Subcategory



**Cohort Number of Reclassifications
by Grade**

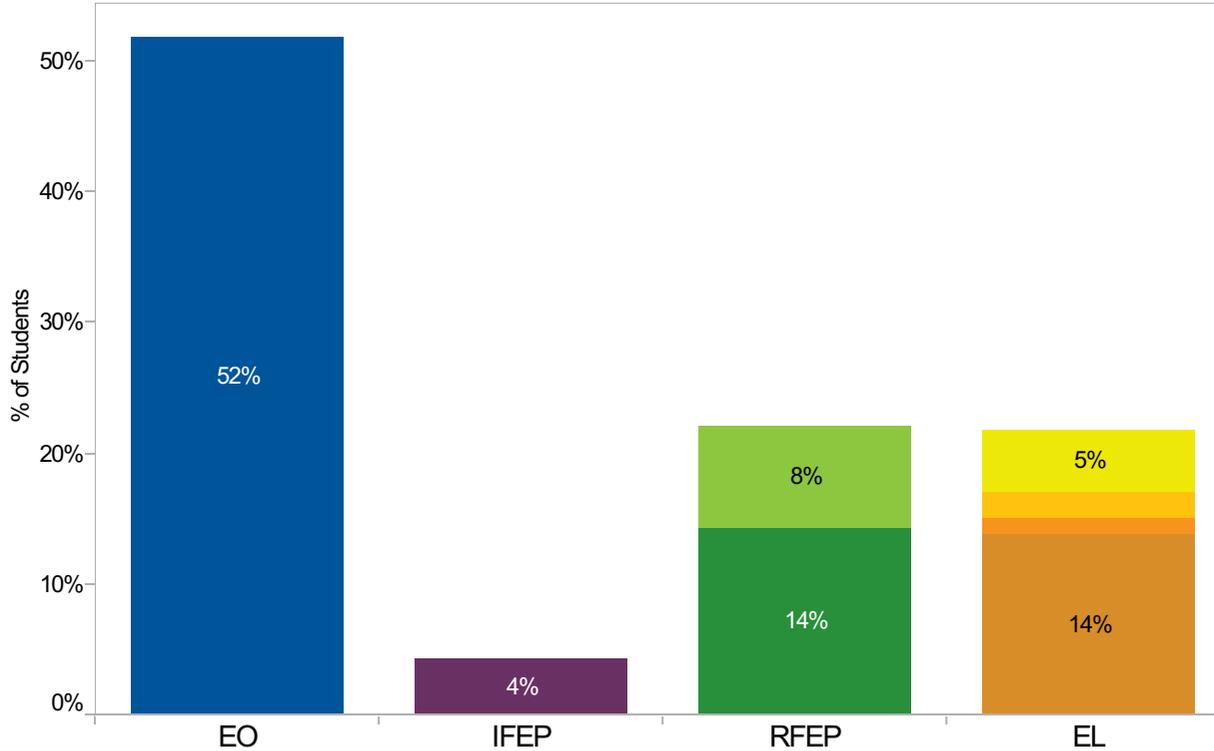
Grade	Total EL 2011-12	Total RECLs 2012-13
6	593	76
7	517	46
8	542	17

All High Schools - Grade 9-12

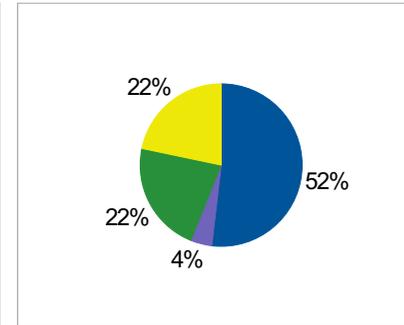


Community Schools, Thriving Students

% of Students on Oct 2013 by English Fluency Category and Subgroup

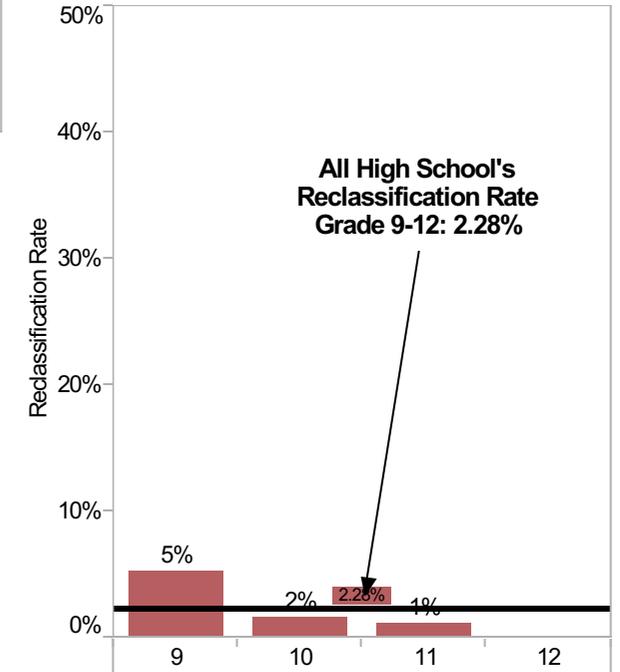


All Students by Fluency Category



- Fluency Subgroups**
 - EO
 - IFEP
 - RFEP - Recently ..
 - RFEP - Long Ter..
 - EL - Recently En..
 - EL - Progressing
 - EL - At Risk of L..
 - EL - Long Term
- Fluency Categories**
 - EO
 - IFEP
 - RFEP
 - EL

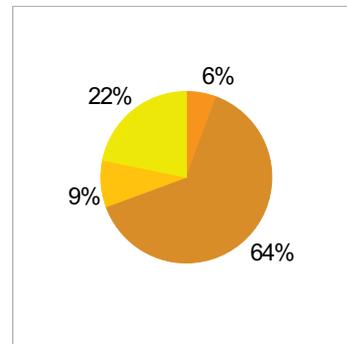
2011-12 to 2012-13 Cohort Reclassification Rate by Grade



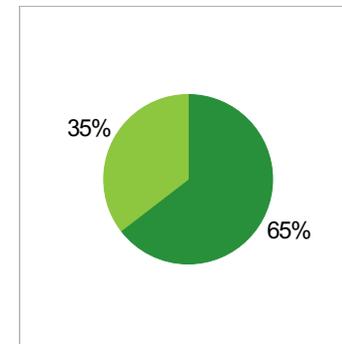
of Students on Oct 2013 by English Fluency Category and Subgroup

Category	Subgroup	EO	IFEP	RFEP	EL
EO	EO	4,693			
	Total	4,693			
IFEP	IFEP		385		
	Total		385		
RFEP	RFEP - Long Term Proficie..			1,295	
	RFEP - Recently Proficient			710	
	Total			2,005	
EL	EL - At Risk of LTEL				112
	EL - Long Term				1,252
	EL - Progressing				173
	EL - Recently Enrolled				428
	Total				1,965

EL Students by Subgroup



RFEP Students by Subcategory



Cohort Number of Reclassifications by Grade

Grade	Total EL 2011-12	Total RECLs 2012-13
9	500	26
10	459	7
11	348	4
12	317	

ELL Shadowing Observation Tool

Student: _____ School: _____ CELDT Level _____ Gender: _____

Grade: _____ Years in US schools: _____

Time	Activity/ Location of Student	Academic Speaking	Academic Listening	Student is Not Speaking or Listening (Check-one)
		<input type="radio"/> 1 - Student to student <input type="radio"/> 2 - Student to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student to small group <input type="radio"/> 4 - Student to whole class <input type="radio"/> 5- Teacher to student <input type="radio"/> 6- Teacher to small group <input type="radio"/> 7- Teacher to whole class	<input type="radio"/> 1- Student listening mostly to student <input type="radio"/> 2- Student listening mostly to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student listening mostly in a small group <input type="radio"/> 4- Student listening mostly in a whole class setting	<input type="radio"/> 1- Reading or writing silently <input type="radio"/> 2- Student is off-task <input type="radio"/> 3- Other _____
		Qualitative observations		
		<input type="radio"/> 1 - Student to student <input type="radio"/> 2 - Student to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student to small group <input type="radio"/> 4 - Student to whole class <input type="radio"/> 5- Teacher to student <input type="radio"/> 6- Teacher to small group <input type="radio"/> 7- Teacher to whole class	<input type="radio"/> 1- Student listening mostly to student <input type="radio"/> 2- Student listening mostly to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student listening mostly in a small group <input type="radio"/> 4- Student listening mostly in a whole class setting	<input type="radio"/> 1- Reading or writing silently <input type="radio"/> 2- Student is off -task <input type="radio"/> 3- Other _____
		Qualitative observations		
		<input type="radio"/> 1 - Student to student <input type="radio"/> 2 - Student to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student to small group <input type="radio"/> 4 - Student to whole class <input type="radio"/> 5- Teacher to student <input type="radio"/> 6- Teacher to small group <input type="radio"/> 7- Teacher to whole class	<input type="radio"/> 1- Student listening mostly to student <input type="radio"/> 2- Student listening mostly to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student listening mostly in a small group <input type="radio"/> 4- Student listening mostly in a whole class setting	<input type="radio"/> 1- Reading or writing silently <input type="radio"/> 2- Student is off -task <input type="radio"/> 3- Other _____
		Qualitative observations		
		<input type="radio"/> 1 - Student to student <input type="radio"/> 2 - Student to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student to small group <input type="radio"/> 4 - Student to whole class <input type="radio"/> 5- Teacher to student <input type="radio"/> 6- Teacher to small group <input type="radio"/> 7- Teacher to whole class	<input type="radio"/> 1- Student listening mostly to student <input type="radio"/> 2- Student listening mostly to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student listening mostly in a small group <input type="radio"/> 4- Student listening mostly in a whole class setting	<input type="radio"/> 1- Reading or writing silently <input type="radio"/> 2- Student is off -task <input type="radio"/> 3- Other _____
		Qualitative observations		

Time	Activity/ Location of Student	Academic Speaking	Academic Listening	Student is Not Speaking or Listening (Check-one)
		<input type="radio"/> 1 - Student to student <input type="radio"/> 2 - Student to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student to small group <input type="radio"/> 4 - Student to whole class <input type="radio"/> 5- Teacher to student <input type="radio"/> 6- Teacher to small group <input type="radio"/> 7- Teacher to whole class	<input type="radio"/> 1- Student listening mostly to student <input type="radio"/> 2- Student listening mostly to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student listening mostly in a small group <input type="radio"/> 4- Student listening mostly in a whole class setting	<input type="radio"/> 1- Reading or writing silently <input type="radio"/> 2- Student is off-task <input type="radio"/> 3- Other _____
		Qualitative observations		
		<input type="radio"/> 1 - Student to student <input type="radio"/> 2 - Student to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student to small group <input type="radio"/> 4 - Student to whole class <input type="radio"/> 5- Teacher to student <input type="radio"/> 6- Teacher to small group <input type="radio"/> 7- Teacher to whole class	<input type="radio"/> 1- Student listening mostly to student <input type="radio"/> 2- Student listening mostly to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student listening mostly in a small group <input type="radio"/> 4- Student listening mostly in a whole class setting	<input type="radio"/> 1- Reading or writing silently <input type="radio"/> 2- Student is off -task <input type="radio"/> 3- Other _____
		Qualitative observations		
		<input type="radio"/> 1 - Student to student <input type="radio"/> 2 - Student to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student to small group <input type="radio"/> 4 - Student to whole class <input type="radio"/> 5- Teacher to student <input type="radio"/> 6- Teacher to small group <input type="radio"/> 7- Teacher to whole class	<input type="radio"/> 1- Student listening mostly to student <input type="radio"/> 2- Student listening mostly to teacher <input type="radio"/> 3- Student listening mostly in a small group <input type="radio"/> 4- Student listening mostly in a whole class setting	<input type="radio"/> 1- Reading or writing silently <input type="radio"/> 2- Student is off -task <input type="radio"/> 3- Other _____
		Qualitative observations		
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		Qualitative observations		

ELL SHADOWING GUIDE

GENERAL

When shadowing your students, please remember:

- there are two ways you will gather data: 1) a quantitative “snapshot” taken at the top of the 3-minute mark; and 2) qualitative data at and in-between the 3-minute interval. These include student actions, key phrases from student talk, and relevant teacher moves.
- position yourself in full view of the student you will be shadowing (you may have to adjust or move around the classroom at times).
- try not to give away the identity of the student you are watching to the student, other students, or the teacher. You may observe other students during the 3 minute intervals.
- Academic speaking and listening denotes student talk about academic content even when students use a range of language register (social to academic language). Please note the evidence of use of social or academic language in the qualitative note section.

CODING ABBREVIATIONS & EXPLANATIONS:

The coding is best to lift patterns AFTER you take the qualitative notes. If you are comfortable with the abbreviations, you may use these as short-hand when taking notes.

Output vs. Interaction	Academic vs. Social register	Teacher moves: While the primary focus of ELL Shadowing is the focal student, you may also note teacher actions
<p>OP = Output: When a student merely shares an answer without having to respond to something that was shared. An important foundational step towards engaging in authentic interaction. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think-Pair-Share - Round Robin <p>INT = Interaction: Requires students to co-construct meaning through discussion and multiple turn-taking. Examples of student actions that indicate interaction include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - asking clarifying or probing questions - adding on to others’ ideas - agreeing or disagreeing 	<p>AL = Academic Language: Formal language that includes precise, discipline-specific academic vocabulary. Essential for success in school.</p> <p>SL = Social Language: Informal, general language of everyday communication.</p>	<p>Types of teacher questions:</p> <p>IRF= Initiation, Response, Feedback (generally a question with a “right” answer)</p> <p>OPQ= Open-ended question (generally a question with no “right answer”)</p> <p>FQ = Follow-up questions, especially those that require students to elaborate or explain their thinking</p> <p>Other:</p> <p>SCAF= Language Scaffolds (word bank, sentence frames, graphic organizers, etc)</p> <p>GLT= Grade level task</p>

**Roles**

Facilitator:

Timekeeper:

Notetaker:

PRE - ELL SHADOWING MEETING

- Honor confidentiality
- Assume positive intent and be solution oriented
- Share and appreciate divergent views
- Be guided by two habits of mind: “Conscious curiosity” and “purposeful uncertainty”

Outcomes:

- Build a common understanding of the purpose, process and intended outcomes for ELL Shadowing Protocol
- Highlight academic oral language development and academic discussion as essential components for academic success of ELLs
- Analyze school wide ELL data to better understand the current reality of ELLs at this site
- Gain familiarity with the ELL Shadowing Observation tool and understand important logistics related to day of Shadowing

Time	Topic	Process/ Notes
3:30 – 4:10 (30)	Opening & Framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introductions. Review norms, outcomes, agenda, roles ○ Pre-survey ○ Whip: (everyone) What are hopes and dreams you have for our ELLs? (site) What is one challenge that ELLs face at your site that might be a hindrance to these hopes and dreams? ○ View and Reflect on Long-term ELL video: Pair-Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What did you hear the students and families say about their experiences, their hopes and their dreams? ○ How does this connect to the hopes and dreams you hold for your ELLs?
4:10 – 4:20 (10)	ELL Shadowing: The what, the how, and the why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Read overview of ELL Shadowing ✓ Text code questions, excitements, areas that align with your hopes and dreams for ELLs ✓ Clarifying questions, excitements—Popcorn
4:20 – 4:30 (10)	Overview of the Research	<p>Input on...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oral/Academic Language Development ○ Academic Discussion ○ Output vs. Interaction <p>Think-Pair-Share: <i>What is something you learned, or an idea that was confirmed, related to the importance of oral academic language development for ELLs?</i></p>
4:30 – 5:00 (30)	Data Dive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unpack the two habits of mind: “Conscious Curiosity” and “Purposeful Uncertainty”. What do these mean to you? How will they support our work together in the Shadowing process? What other norms do we need to hold while looking at the data? (5) Popcorn ○ Site context: What is currently being done to support your ELLs, your Long-term ELLs? (5)



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review the fluency group dashboard: Who are ELLs at this site? What is their current reality? (8) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What do you notice? What pops out? ○ What questions do these data raise? What do you want to learn more about? ○ Long-term ELL data roster. (8) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What can we celebrate? What do we wonder? What does the data not tell you? ○ Popcorn share what you learned about the site's ELLs / LTELs to the whole group (4)
5:00 – 5:30 (30)	ELL Shadowing Protocol Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduce and review Observation Tool and Guide, Q&A (10) ○ Guided practice with a video (Trios=ELL Office person with site person) (20)
5:30 - 5:40 (10)	Closing	<p>Closing Reflection for the school community members: Make a prediction. What are you expecting to see in the Shadowing? What are hoping to learn?</p> <p>Process check</p> <p>Next steps</p>
5:40 – 5:50 (10)	Logistics (facilitator and principal only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ELL Shadowing Schedule

**Roles**

Facilitator:

Timekeeper:

Notetaker:

Process checker:

POST ELL SHADOWING DEBRIEF

- Honor confidentiality
- Assume positive intent and be solution oriented
- Share and appreciate divergent views
- Be guided by two habits of mind: “Conscious curiosity” and “purposeful uncertainty”

Outcomes:

- Reflect on the ELL Shadowing experience to identify themes and patterns across participants
- Tally responses from ELL Shadowing protocol forms to surface patterns and areas of need
- Use the data to explore theories of causation that will inform next steps
- Determine school wide implications and/or questions to explore for supporting Long Term English Learners at your site

Time	Topic	Process/ Notes
8:15 – 8:30	Opening & Check in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review norms, outcomes, agenda, roles ○ Logistics: Review the tool, pre-record times, important reminders, schedule ○ Getting to know your student (look at data and record on Shadowing tool)
8:30 – 10:30	ELL Shadowing	
10:30 – 10:40 (10)	Individual data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review your observation form ○ Add up your tallies ○ Review your qualitative notes and use coding where appropriate. Note trends on post-its.
10:40 – 10:45 (5)	One-word response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Write one adjective on a post-it that describes your focal student’s overall experience ○ Each group member say the word out loud and place in the middle of the table
10:45 – 10:55 (10)	ELL Data Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pair Share Data Talk about Focal Student: (5 min. each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Share your observation of your student’s learning experience. What stood out to you?</i> ○ <i>What additional information did the shadowing observation give you about your student? Can you identify possible reasons for the achievement progress—or lack of progress—from what you saw in the classroom?</i>



10:55 – 11:10 (15)	Tally Responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use ELL Shadowing protocol form to tally results in each category on chart paper <i>Academic Speaking (1-7), Academic Listening (1-4), Not Speaking or Listening (1-2)</i> and qualitative data notes ○ Whip to share reaction: noticings, surprises, confirmations
11:10 – 11:20 (10)	Exploring Root Causes	<p>Fishbowl of site members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What explanations or conclusions might we draw about why we see what we see? ○ What additional data sources might we explore to verify our explanations?
11:20 – 12:00 (40)	Implications and Planning Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Site members: Review the 3 Tiers on the document “Post-ELL Shadowing Actionable Next Steps”. Site team discuss where you might place yourself on the continuum and why (5) ○ Everyone reviews full document, focusing on the identified tier. Annotate the document for possible next steps, and add your own suggestions and questions for consideration. As you review, note any strategies that you identified as next steps from Rounds. (5) ○ Site members: Share any next steps that surfaced from Rounds that could be built upon to support LTELs. (5) ○ Fishbowl of guests: Considering where the site is on the continuum and what you’ve identified as some possible root causes of the data, identify some implications and possible next steps. Include both short-term and long-term possible actions. (15) ○ Site team: Respond to ideas. (10) ○ Stage 3: Next steps for instructional leaders, ILT, central partners
12:00 – 12:15 15 min.	Closing	Post-survey Appreciations

Post-ELL Shadowing Actionable Next Steps *Using the Results to Leverage Change*

Based on the outcomes from the ELL Shadowing Protocol, and your knowledge of where your site is in meeting the needs of its English language learners, identify which tier best describes your site’s current reality. Then review the suggested short-term and long-term next steps, and consider which ones may be appropriate for your site. Refer to other tiers to get additional ideas for next steps that may also be relevant.

Tier 1	Site is at the initial stages of thinking about the needs of its English language learners. There are few consistent school wide instructional strategies in place to support oral academic language development. ELLs are mostly passive, non-participants. Site has limited structures to support its ELLs (LTEL acceleration class, advisory class).
Tier 2	Site has identified at least one school wide instructional strategy to support its English language learners, including daily speaking practice. ELLs are mostly engaged in output over meaningful interaction, and academic language is used inconsistently. There are few structures in place to support ELLs at the site (advisory class with academic goal setting).
Tier 3	There is a school wide focus on the needs of English language learners, including consistent use of instructional strategies that support oral academic language development. There are frequent opportunities for ELLs to actively participate in sustained academic discussions. ELLs are supported in using academic vocabulary and academic language. Site has structures in place to meet the needs of its ELLs (LTEL acceleration class, advisory classes that emphasize academic goal setting, student-led conferences).

	Short Term Next Steps	Long Term Next Steps
Tier 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Build awareness of ELLs/LTEs and current status at site. Lead ILT in data dive (possible data sources: school dashboard, LTEL list, CELDT). Repeat similar process with whole staff. ○ Identify and implement 2 school wide signature strategies that support oral academic language development in all content areas. These signature strategies may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Think-Pair-Share (with graphic organizer from ELL Shadowing) ❖ Academic Discussions Placemat ❖ Academic Discussion Cards ○ Professional development for teachers on signature strategies and practices that support oral academic language development such as wait time, modeling and guided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revisit current Theory of Action and identify gaps related to support for English language learners ○ Revise Theory of Action to address specific needs of English language learners ○ Create focused, coherent, long-term professional development plan that builds teacher capacity to support oral academic language and literacy development of ELLs

	<p>practice, and strategic and equitable questioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Principal observation and feedback cycle to support teachers in implementing strategies and building school wide consistent practices. ○ Common scaffolds across school and/ or grade levels such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Anchor charts with sentence frames and word banks present in all classrooms to support use of academic language. ❖ Class set of discussion cards ❖ Common graphic organizers (i.e. Thinking Maps) 	
Tier 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Determine 2 academic discussion signature strategies to implement school wide or build further consistency. ○ Support teachers in sharing best practices in PD, peer observations, PLCs. ○ Principal and teacher walkthroughs to share and learn from best practices. ○ Professional development for teachers on output versus interaction, academic discussion structures, equitable questioning strategies. ○ Principal or instructional coach lead individual teachers through a process of self-assessment and goal setting using the OUSD Academic Discussion Continuum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create focused, coherent, long-term professional development plan that builds teacher capacity to support oral academic language and literacy development of ELLs. This includes focus on curriculum development that identifies ELL supports and language learning objectives across the content areas.
Tier 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expand toolbox of signature strategies that support oral language development and authentic academic discussion (Socratic Seminar). ○ Grade level or teaching teams participate in mini-ELL Shadowing protocol and reflect on instructional implications. ○ Principal and members of ILT conduct walkthroughs and provide school wide feedback to continue to highlight best practices related to oral academic language development and build consistency. ○ PLCs related to Long-term ELLs, academic oral language development, active listening strategies, differentiation, equitable questioning strategies etc. ○ Initiate discussions about how and when to remove existing scaffolds to support ELLs internalize and own the academic language they are expected to use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop a specialized LTEL class that focuses on accelerated oral academic language development and literacy. Frame class around Laurie Olsen’s 10 recommended practices for LTELs. ○ Develop a plan for routinely communicating with students and families about current academic progress and next steps towards reclassification.

ELL Shadowing Action Plan

Date _____

Problem(s) to Address:

Next Steps	Expected or Desired Outcome	Support Needed/From Whom	Timeline for Implementation	How will success be measured?

Pre-Survey: ELL Shadowing Facilitator Training

Your username (nicole.knight@ousd.k12.ca.us) will be recorded when you submit this form. Not [nicole.knight](#)? [Sign out](#)

* Required

I understand the characteristics of Long-term ELLs. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Please explain your response above. *

I understand the research-based practices that support Long-Term ELLs' academic success. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Please explain your response above. *

I understand the research-based instructional practices that ensure that LTELLs fully benefit from academic discussion. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Please explain your response above. *

I believe addressing the needs of Long-term ELLs should be a priority for OUSD. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Please explain your response above. *

I am confident in my ability to collect data to measure LTELL engagement and participation in academic discussion. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Please explain your response above. *

I am confident in my ability to identify actionable next steps that will benefit Long-term ELLs in the classroom *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Please explain your response above. *

I am confident in my ability to facilitate a data-based discussion that: ensures equity of voice; uncovers assumptions and interrupts defensiveness; and moves from a theory of causation to theory of action. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Please explain your response above. *

Send me a copy of my responses.

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ELL Shadowing Facilitation

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* Required

How many times did you attend ELL Shadowing at a pilot site? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

After attending the Facilitator Training and at least one pilot site's Shadowing event, I am confident in my ability to plan and facilitate an ELL Shadowing event at a site. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please provide an explanation for your response above. *

What additional training, practice, support would be helpful to prepare you to facilitate ELL Shadowing?

Optional: Use this space to note any other additional thoughts, comments, or questions.

Quick Write after ELL Shadowing Training Session #1

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* Required

Based on your experience today, what can ELL Shadowing tell you about LTELLs? What can it tell you about academic speaking and listening? What did you learn about how to gather data through shadowing? What do you need to better know and understand? *

Send me a copy of my response.

Submit

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Copy of Quick Write for Session #2

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* Required

What did you learn about: The characteristics and needs of LTELLs? About fostering academic discussions for ELLs? About using the ELL Shadowing observation tool to collect quantitative and qualitative data? *

Based on what you saw in the video and what you learned in the research, what actionable steps would you suggest? *

Send me a copy of my responses.

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Quick Write Session #3

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* Required

In what way does the triangulated data (LTEL data points + shadowing) tell a story of the student? What would be missing without the Shadowing data? What does the data not tell you? *

How can ELL Shadowing be used to impact school change? *

Please note any additional comments about the observation tool and data analysis process. What worked? What might be improved? *

Send me a copy of my responses.

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Pre-Survey: ELL Shadowing

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* Required

I can explain the characteristics of Long-term ELLs. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

I know how to observe for Long-term ELLs' engagement and participation in academic discussion. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

I can identify actionable next steps that benefit Long-term ELLs based on classroom observations. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

I believe addressing the needs of Long-term ELLs should be a priority for OUSD. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

What is one thing you hope to learn from this experience? *

Post-Survey: ELL Shadowing

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* Required

As I result of the ELL Shadowing experience, I can explain the characteristics of Long-term ELLs. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your response above: What new information do you have about Long-term ELLs? *

As a result of the ELL Shadowing experience, I am more prepared to observe for Long-term ELLs' engagement and participation in academic discussion. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your response above. *

As a result of the ELL Shadowing experience, I can identify actionable next steps that benefit Long-term ELLs based on classroom observations. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree

- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your response above. *

I believe addressing the needs of Long-term ELLs should be a priority for OUSD. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your response above. *

What is one action step you will take as a result of this experience? *

Please comment of the process and facilitation. What worked? What improvements do you suggest? *

Evaluation of Site Action Plan

Criteria	Rating 1-4*	Evidence
Responds to the data and theory of causation surfaced during the ELL Shadowing process (data dive and observations)		
Includes instructional practices that foster academic speaking and listening for LTELs		
Has clear outcomes and measures of success and a timeline		
Leadership team developed action plan with _____ support		

- 1- not evident / substantial support needed
- 2- little evidence / moderate support needed
- 3- moderate evidence / little support needed
- 4- substantial evidence / no support needed