Language Development Through Professional Development

Kathleen Arnold

Reach Institute for School Leadership

Language Development Through a Cycle of Inquiry

Abstract

The English language learner population in the United States and more importantly in California is a fast-growing population. Currently, we, as professional educators, are not equipped or prepared to meet the needs of this diverse group of students. The responsibility is placed on the school district or individual schools to train all teachers, not just novice teachers, to be able to skillfully, appropriately meet the needs of these students to accelerate learning and thrive while meeting the demands of the CCSS, (Common Core State Standard) NGSS, (New Generation Science Standards) and ELD (English Language Development) standards. A literature review revealed that to change teacher practice and improve student outcomes, a comprehensive approach to PD (Professional Development) must be implemented to achieve this goal. Language learners need access to high quality, rigorous curriculum and plenty of time to engage in academic discourse. The goal of this action research project was to increase teacher knowledge on best practices for teaching English Language Learners as to consistently use effective language development strategies that allow students to fully access the curriculum and be able to perform at the high levels of demand that are outlined in all standards. To achieve this goal a comprehensive plan was created to be implemented over a six-week period. The new input for the teachers was around the deconstructing sentences strategy. The findings of this action research project indicate that comprehensive PD can change teacher practice in a positive manner while increasing teacher knowledge of how to effectively meet the needs of English Language Learners.

Keywords: (Professional Development, English Language Learners)

Language Development Though a Cycle of Inquiry]

Hope Elementary is a one-way Spanish dual language school located in deep East Oakland. Hope is located in deep East Oakland and we became a small school in 2006 when our unified school district was in state receivership. The vision and mission of Hope is:

Vision

Students engage in rigorous, high quality, biliterate academics which prepare them for college and career. Hope students and families take responsibility for their learning which allows them to be academically strong in two languages. With a growth mindset, they are unique individuals, who critically think and are determined to succeed. Students show respect for themselves, others and the environment.

Mission

Through, PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) teachers are able to plan for mindful and purposeful instruction. Teachers collaborate to implement rigorous instruction, that meets the needs of all students. Teachers engage in peer observations to receive and give constructive feedback. Teachers use data to drive instruction and make clear plans for corrective instruction. We engage the family and community in quarterly meetings to review growth and set goals.

The vast majority of our 352 students are Latino at 98.8%. 5.9% of our students report English as their home language, while 2% of our students speak Mam. Hope became a newcomer hub 3 years ago increasing our newcomer population. A newcomer student is identified as being in the U.S. for three years or less. Most of our newcomer students come from Mexico and Central America. Our reclassification rate

for the school year 2015-2016 was 15.3 while for the school year 2016-1017 it was 14.3%, both years exceeding the district average. We aspire to have all of our 5th graders leaving for middle school having been reclassified. Currently more than 50% of 5th graders leave Hope having reclassified. There are 3, 5th grade students classified as long-term English Language Learners. We currently have 28.1% of our students who have not made progress for the past 2 years as monitored by The California English Language Development Test (CELDT) meaning these students are at risk of becoming EL-LTEL, meaning long-term English learners. In the 2015-2016 school year 23% of students performed at, met, or exceeded in ELA and 21% performed as met or exceeded in math. In the school year 2016-2017 20% of students performed at met or exceeding in ELA while 29% of students performed met or exceeding in math. We had a slight decrease out of met/exceeded in ELA which is concerning. As a Spanish dual language immersion school with the vast majority of our students being English Language Learners it is clear to see that language development in both English and Spanish is a priority.

Hope has recently redeveloped its theory of action to include best practices of one-way simultaneous dual language instruction. Studies of effective schools consistently and conclusively demonstrate that high-quality programs exist when schools have: a cohesive, school-wide shared vision; goals that define their expectations for achievement; an instructional focus and commitment to achieve high expectations that are shared by students, parents, teachers and administrators (Corallo & McDonald, 2001; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Gandara, 1995; Levine & Lezotte, 1995; Marzano, 2003; Montecel & Cortez, 2002; Reyes et al., 1999; Slavin et

al., 2001; Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000; WestEd, 2000). Further, in dual language programs, successful outcomes result from a program model that is grounded in sound theory and best practices associated with an enriched-not remedial-instructional model (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Levine & Lezotte, 1995; Montecel & Cortez, 2002). Hope is a one-way 50/50 simultaneous model of dual language immersion from TK-5th grade. Being a one-way school refers to the Spanish speaking students we have and the lack of English speakers. Being a simultaneous model means we teach Spanish and English side by side, or simultaneously, versus teaching Spanish literacy and waiting until 3rd grade to teach English literacy.

We use a balanced literacy approach to teaching Reading and Writing as students learn Spanish and English sequentially. We base our literacy allocation on a student lens, meaning that a student will only have one reading workshop and one writing workshop a day in either English or Spanish versus have reading and writing workshop everyday in both English and Spanish in an effort to provide daily instruction with all the components of balanced literacy, Math, Science and Social Studies. As a balanced literacy school, students will receive all components of a balanced literacy program each day in either English or Spanish. In Tk-2nd grade we teach Mathematics in Spanish while in 3rd through 5th grade we teach Math in English. We do this to continue the foundational literacy development in their home language in the younger grades. As a part of our balanced literacy program we use Lucy Calkins Reader's and Writer's Workshop for 2nd through 5th grade. This school year we adopted a language arts program for kindergarten and 1st grade that is designed for dual language programs which integrates the content of science and social studies into a language arts

curriculum. We integrate science instruction with Spanish language arts while we integrate social studies instruction with English language arts. We strive to give all students opportunities to engage in complex text, academic discussions and engage in productive struggle.

As we strive to achieve all we have redesigned in our theory of action, we also have a clear and cohesive annual site plan, which outlines our annual foci for the year. For the 2017-2018 school year, we have a focus on language and literacy, small group instruction the 8 mathematical practices and building a more caring school community. To accomplish our ambitious goals we keep the Hope vision and mission at the core of our work. As an ILT (Instructional Lead Team), we meet twice a month to plan PD in 6 weeks cycles of inquiry. We engage in grade level PLCs that focus on the current cycle of inquiry while we provide coaching related to the cycle of inquiry.

While we have a collaborative school culture with clear policies and procedures in place, we are not accelerating achievement at a rate one would expect. We do pay attention to who is and is not at grade level but we set student goals around growth. We should be accelerating all students academic growth at a faster rate than we are currently. We have 58.6% of our ELL (English Language Learner) students showing growth on the CELDT examine from one year to the next, which is higher than the district average, but there are 30.5% of students remaining flat and 11% of students backsliding. Last year we had 30% of students at or above benchmark in EDL (Spanish Reading Record). As a dual language school with a focus on literacy in both Spanish and English we would hope to see higher proficiency rates than we currently do.

Digging deeper into a wider variety of data such as teacher years of experience

became an interesting data point. We have a rather large discrepancy within our teaching staff regarding years of teaching service. Currently, 50% of our teachers have 3 or less years of experience teaching in the United States, meaning 3 teachers have come from another country with teaching experience, but not in our school system. The dilemma has become how to build new teacher capacity while moving our veteran teachers forward. We have recently made school wide movement with teachers facilitating academic discourse and lifting up language for content lessons. What has been noted through walkthroughs and observations is that teachers were lesson planning to ensure independent practice time, but because they continued to do the heavy lifting, talking and thinking for the students, they were often left with very little or no time for students to practice with a team, partner or independently. Students were not left with adequate time to engage in the heavy lifting of the lesson and engage in meaningful, sustained academic discourse even though we know language learners need time to practice the newly acquired language. Outside of the classroom observations and walkthroughs, our literacy scores reflect the need for students to be able to access the lesson more fully and do the heavy lifting of the task at hand. Our good-intentioned teachers, in an effort to make sure students will be successful, were holding our students back by not giving them the opportunity to go from dependent learners to independent learners. Furthermore, culturally responsive pedagogy and brain research suggest it imperative for students to interact with one another (Hammond, 2015).

What we see at Hope often times is few opportunities for students to respond, while teachers are doing the majority of the talking and provide few pair-share

opportunities and opportunities for students to make meaning on their own. With the demands of the CCSS, NGSS, and ELD standards we are asking much more of both teachers and students alike. We are asking teachers to attend to language in a manner in which is more specific than in the past and that they have not been prepared to do. Looking at a text to identify forms and functions is something new for most teachers. We are asking teachers to write content and language objectives for each lesson without the appropriate skills in which to do so. Even though we have spent time in district PD as well as onsite PD in an effort to build teachers' muscles around writing content language objective, teachers were not writing them. When the opportunities were provided to have a thought partner and a coach help write content language objectives, it became clear teachers were unable to identify the form and function of the text. We began to backwards plan from the student expected outcome to then identify the language needed to complete the task. While this helped slightly, it did not help teachers enough to be able to write content language objectives consistently and rigorously. We therefore are experiencing challenges with writing content-language objectives due to the lack of understanding of forms and functions. The questions then become: How do you move forward as a staff with such a large difference in teaching experience? And, how do you make change that is sustainable?

Even amongst the veteran staff there is inconsistent, systematic ELD instruction taking place. While it is our intention to lift up language with each lesson, we are falling short. There are a few possible causes for this occurrence. Teacher preparations programs are not looking at language this closely and preparing teachers to be able to identify forms and functions needed to comprehend a text. Looking at a

text through the lens of language demands can be challenging for even our veteran teachers. Grammar instruction has been a nonexistent part of many teachers' personal schooling career. (Fillmore & Snow, 2000; Gartland & Smolkin, 2016). Teachers need to consistently implement ELD strategies that include plenty of time for talk using academic discourse and independent practice with a focus on forms and functions of language. To ensure this shift in practice, teachers will need to be provided with PD focused on ELL best practices to ensure teachers can in fact understand the needs of our ELL students and engage in rigorous, language focus instruction.

Through the analysis of test scores, particularly going back to the CELDT data, I have observed that students tend to plateau at an intermediate level in English. Through observation of instruction, I have noticed a pattern of teacher talk that is significantly more than student talk. Instruction often is centered around the teacher, with little opportunity for student-centered production of academic discourse. Academic language production demands engagement and making meaning of content and the language necessary to understand and represent understanding. In our bilingual school, this meaning making must occur both in Spanish and in English. With a high population of students labeled as English Language Learners, we believe that by giving time to planning around ELD or SLD (Spanish Language Development) standards and putting language in the forefront, students will increase language production while having the opportunity to engage in high-quality rigorous CCSS-aligned tasks.

Literature Review

In the 2016–2017 school year, there were 1,332,405 English Language Learners in California public schools which constitutes 21.4% of the total enrollment in California public schools. The CA Department of Education (2017) reports, "The majority of those English Language Learners, 72%, are enrolled in elementary grades, kindergarten through 6th grade, while this number represents 42.6% of the state's public school enrollment" (https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/cefelfacts.asp). English Language Learners make up a large portion of our student population in California particularly in elementary schools. Furthermore, the graduation rates of English Language Learners differ greatly from state to state, while in California, the state with the largest population on English Language Learners, the graduation rate after 4 years of high school is only 65% (Education Week, November 27, 2017). The purpose of the present literature review is to identify how to improve elementary school teacher practice regarding language learners, which in turn will improve the outcomes for the English and Spanish Language Learners at Hope. In this literature review I will examine the preservice teacher preparation programs that leave us with a need for quality inservice professional development for teachers, to ensure all English Language Learners make yearly adequate progress through the examination of principal leadership and language learning in both English and Spanish. Research indicates that RFEP, (Reclassified Fluent English Proficient) students can not only outperform EL (English Learner) students, but often do as well as native English speakers when it comes to measures of academic outcomes, when looking at

standardized tests and at grade level performance (Hill, Weston, & Hayes, 2014). Research further indicates that the effectiveness of a teacher is a forceful predictor of student positive outcomes and achievement (Childress, 2014; Goldhaber & Anthony, 2007; Hanushek, 2011; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005).

I will argue that there is a great need to provide quality inservice training for teachers to ensure teacher effectiveness and positive academic outcomes for our language learners. If teachers are provided quality professional development in conjunction with focused PLC time, coaching support and classroom modeling, teachers will be able to effectively implement keystone language development practices to ensure accelerated growth for all language learner students.

Preservice Teacher Preparation

There are many educators and researchers alike who agree that preservice teacher preparation programs are inadequately preparing our teachers to be effective practitioners of language learning and language learners of all types (Castagna, Moir, & Warren, 2005; Johnson & Wells, 2017; Olsen, 2010; Samson & Collins, 2012; Fillmore & Snow, 2000). While the English language learner population is growing rapidly throughout the United States, particularly in California, unfortunately, we see the population growth is not matched by adequate teacher growth in understanding how to best educate and instruct our English language learner population (Samson & Collins, 2012). The research available does make specific recommendations in which the direction should switch to a clear focus on academics as well as attending to an English learners social and emotional needs with particular attention to cultural responsiveness (Hammond 2015). For the

purpose of this literature review, I will focus on the academic needs of our students through the lens of culturally responsive pedagogy.

California is one a few states that specifically calls attention to some of the needs of English Language Learners. In an effort to attend to these needs and prepare preservice teachers the state of California teacher candidates are required to pass CTEL (California Teacher of English Learners Test) courses or exam. Unfortunately, this effort falls dramatically short of fully preparing teachers for the diverse learners that they will serve. The achievement gap for English Language Learners is still a pervasive problem in the United States, especially California, and certainly Oakland. (Samson & Collins, 2012; Johnson & Wells, 2017; Hakuta et al., 2000; Olsen 2010; Hammond 2015) While the 4-year cohort graduation rate in Oakland has increased from 60.8% to 64.2%, the overall reclassification rate has slightly dropped from 11.4% to 11.2% (OUSD data). Once preservice teachers make it into the classroom they and veteran teachers alike indicated they are unprepared for the literacy demands of the Common Core State Standards (Johnson & Wells, 2017).

There are a variety of different recommendations being made to improve the preparedness of the preservice teacher. Fillmore and Snow (2000) recommend course work that teachers need to take, which include; language and linguistics, language and cultural diversity, sociolinguistics for educators in a linguistically diverse society, language development, second language learning and teaching, the language of academic discourse, and text analysis and language understanding in educational settings. Samson & Collins (2012) maintain that teachers of ELL students must

understand the critically important role that oral language development plays regarding academic achievement. They maintain that teachers must have proficient ability to attend to academic language use across content and tasks. Additionally, teachers must adopt a culturally relevant pedagogy to classroom instruction when addressing the needs of the wide range of English Language Learners in our classrooms. This is to say that teachers must be prepared in both academic language and cultural diversity and inclusivity. Johnson and Wells (2017) recommend targeted policy changes in preservice preparation to include an abundance of fieldwork with English Language Learners. Olsen (2010) maintains there are fundamental policy issues leading to poor performance of English Language Learners and one of those issues is a general shortage of teachers who are adequately prepared with the knowledge and skills needed to teach English Language Learners and not allow students to become stuck as LTELLs, (Long-Term English Language Learners). The preservice preparation programs offered are not preparing teachers to skillfully attend to the academic needs of English Language Learners, thus making the need for inservice professional development an imperative approach to meeting the needs of English Language Learners in an effort to ensure our English Language Learners do not become LTELLS and that they actually thrive in college and career. Until there are major changes to teacher preparation certification, the capacity-building of teachers of English Language Learners falls to the school district and school site.

Leadership as a Lever for School Improvement

While it is widely understood that high quality classroom teachers have the most

impact related directly to student achievement, leadership in the way of principals play a critical role in sustaining the success of the school (Kadji-Beltrana, Zachariou, & Stevenson, 2013; Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). There are many theories and theorists that speak to effective leadership. There are many different models to what effective, successful leadership models must contain. One of the elements commonly found in the myriad of different theories is trust and relationship building (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Kadji-Beltran et al,. 2012; Fullan 2010; Lencioni, 2002).

Fullan (2010) looks at the moral imperative as a strategy with 6 key elements: making a personal commitment, build relationships, focus on implementation, develop the collaborative, connect to the outside, be relentless. Building relationships is specifically called out as 1 of the 6 strategies of realizing a moral imperative. Marzano, McNulty and Waters, point out in, *School Leadership that Works, "*transformational leadership is the favored style of leadership given that it is assumed to produce results beyond expectations" (p. 14) The four elements of transformational leadership are individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and idealized influence. Individual consideration is further described as, " giving personal attention to members who seemed neglected," (p. 15) which in turn is building trusting relationships with the marginalized members of staff who have been neglected or overlooked. Patrick Lencioni (2002) argues that the absence of trust is a fundamental problem in the success of a team. He further argues to build trust a leader must show vulnerability which inevitably demonstrates courage and risk taking which as leaders we should

model for staff as we engage in the work of building trusting relationships. Cotton (2003) performed an extensive literature review in which she generated a list of 25 categories of principal leadership which can positively affect student outcomes as well as positively affect teacher attitudes. Most notably Cotton (2003) includes: vision and goals focused on high levels of student learning, positive and supportive climate, collaboration, classroom observation and feedback, professional development opportunities and resources and support for teacher autonomy. She further noted that while a principal can affect outcomes for students, however, it is indirect via teachers and other staff. Marzano, McNulty, and Waters (2005) conducted a meta-analysis research study that utilized quantitative techniques to synthesize recent studies on school leadership, particularly the leadership practiced by the school principal. Through the meta-analysis the researchers were able to conclude that principals, "can have a profound effect on the achievement of students in their school." (p. xx) They also outlined 21 leadership responsibilities which are imperative to effective implementation of school leadership. The leadership responsibilities were outlined with their correlation to student academic achievement.

While similar to the research of Cotton (2003), the indicators listed in the research of Marzano, McNulty and Waters (2005) included a correlation in relationship to student academic achievement. Notable in the list is communication with a correlation of .23, culture with a correlation of .25, focus with a correlation of .24 monitoring/evaluating with a correlation of .27, relationships with a correlation of .18 and resources with a correlation of .25. Of this list, many of the indicators must include

a solid relationship with a foundation of trust. While each of the researchers has their own list and characteristics of effective leadership, to be able to implement any one of the research-based frameworks, a leader must build relationships with a foundation of trust to effectively implement any one of the theories just outlined.

An additional key characteristic that a school leader must possess according to Bennis (2003) and Umphrey (2009) it is imperative for principals to possess the ability to lead staff through the development and creation of a shared vision. I would maintain that to engage in the work of the creation of a shared vision in which all staff members are invested and demonstrate buy-in to the vision the vision must be created with all stakeholders present. To create and realize a student-centered vision focused on achievement, there must be a foundation amongst leadership and staff of a relationship characterized by trust.

There are many benefits of the presence of trust within a school house. When there is collective decision making, leadership will benefit from a broader range of teacher buy-in. With this trust, leadership will also benefit from the reform taking root with in the school as well as teachers feeling comfortable to try new things and take risks (Bryk & Schneider 2003). In an effort to build positive, trusting relationships during the intervention at Hope, the ILT will build the cycle of inquiry that will contain the intervention plan. In the coconstruction of the cycle of inquiry plan, we will incorporate teacher feedback from previous cycles of inquiry. The plan will then be shared with the entire staff as a roadmap and anchor for the upcoming learning. The cycle of inquiry roadmap will include the content of the PD sessions, PLC content and

topics, coaching schedule and classroom demonstration schedule.

Professional Development as a Lever to Build Teacher Capacity

When defining professional development and the key elements of effective professional development, there are many different definitions to consider. For the purposes of this literature review, when speaking of PD, I will be referring to the input portion of a complete cycle of inquiry in which PD sits. A cycle of inquiry includes teaching and assessing, analyzing evidence, reflecting, planning and modifying, with an inquiry focus at the center (Zwiers O'Hara & Pritchard, 2014). A cycle of inquiry contains a wide variety of the elements to ensure its effectiveness. The intervention that will take place at Hope will include a cycle of inquiry with the elements of PD as input, grade-level PLC time, in-class demonstrations, and coaching. During grade-level PLC time, the group of teachers will participate in PLC time with consideration of the big ideas as outline by Dufour (2004): (1) ensuring that students learn, (2) a culture of collaboration, (3) a focus on results (Dufour 2004,). This is to say teachers will plan, analyze, reflect and revise during the provided grade level PLC time.

As a dual-language school, not only is there a need to attend to the best practices of professional development, but we must also attend to the language needs of our students as well as implement culturally responsive pedagogy in an effort to ensure a caring school community and environment that will allow for the process of learning to take place (Howard, Sugarman, Chritian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rodgers, 2007: Gibbons, 2015: Hammond 2015). Unfortunately, both Calderon, Slavin & Sanchez (2011) and Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner (2017) have shown that PD

can oftentimes be an ineffective approach to building teacher capacity, in the form of change to teacher practice (Calderon, Slavin, Sanchez, & Darling-Hammond (2017); Hyler, Gardner & Gulamhussein (xxxx)). One major barrier is the classroom time needed to implement the newly acquired skill while having to continue the pacing of an adopted curriculum (Darling-Hammond et al. 2017). For the purposes of this literature review, I will focus on the research completed on identifying the successful PD practices and elements of PD while paying particular attention to best practices for school wide professional development with an emphasis on dual language programming. I will work from the definition of effective PD offered by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), which is "structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practice and improvements in student learning" (p. v). If it is understood that pre-service programs are not preparing teachers to meet the needs of English Language Learners then we must engage in high quality inservice professional development and professional learning practices in an effort to build teacher capacity around language development while attending to the increasingly rigorous demands of the Common Core, NGSS standardss and ELD standards.

As research has shown, teachers play the most significant role in ensuring student achievement, principals play the most significant role in ensuring successful teacher practice (Childress, 2014; Goldhaber & Anthony, 2007; Hanushek, 2011; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005). For this reason, it is extremely important that school leaders have the capacity to deliver effective PD, which includes a variety of different elements to ensure success. Although, sit and get style of PD has been researched to

be ineffective this PD design is still the most common form of PD provided for teachers. (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, Gulamhussein 2013) Researchers and educators have noted a variety of different elements, such as sustained amount of time on a topic, coaching, in class demonstrations, working in collaboration and reflection time should take place in conjunction with PD to ensure changing teacher practice in the form of improving instruction and student learning (Darling-Hammond et al, 2017; Gulamhussein 2013; Spelman, Bell, Thomas, & Briody, 2016).

As a dual-language school, when embarking on school improvement we must begin with the considerations that are necessary for a dual-language program. According to The Guiding Principles of Dual Language Education, there must be an alignment of the professional development to the goals and strategies of the dual language program (Corallo & McDonald, 2002; Elmore, 2000). Professional development should also be delivered in the partner language of the program to help teachers develop teacher capacity to ensure the development of higher order thinking for their students (Guerrero & Sloan 2001). It has long been known that the stronger home- or first-language is, the higher likelihood of successful English language learning will have in a second language. (Cummins 2000). In a dual language program, while the students are building up their home language they will also be able to learn English more effectively.

Recent research on effective professional development conducted by Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) reviewed 35 methodologically rigorous studies that have demonstrated a positive link between teacher professional development,

teaching practices and student outcomes. As a result of the research conducted, the researchers were able to identify key components of effective professional learning. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) was conducted using the definition of effective professional development, "as structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes," (p. v). The action research project and intervention I will engage in attends to improvements in teacher practice through professional learning, however it is out of the scope of this project to identify if there will be improvements in student outcomes. It is the intention of the intervention to both improve teacher practice and improve student outcomes.

The team of researchers, Darling-Hammond et al., conducted an extensive literature review of effective professional learning literature from the past three decades. They were able to identify seven common elements of effective professional development. Such professional development includes: focused content, includes active learning, incorporates collaboration, provides models of effective teacher practice, incorporates coaching in the form of expert support, and the duration of topic or content is sustained. A content focused professional learning cycle will focus on strategies and domain and discipline content specific to the teacher classroom practice. To include active learning in a professional learning cycle one must include time to design and practice the teaching strategy. Throughout the professional learning cycle effective, high quality professional learning includes focused collaboration time in which teachers create a positive teaching community and culture to improve practice of their entire grade level. Professional learning must provide

models of best practice of instructional strategies which should include the time to engage in lesson planning, observer peers or watch video models, and look at student work. The next components of effective professional learning include coaching and providing feedback with reflection time. If our goal is to support teachers to shift practice, a positive mentor-mentee relationship must be present (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Bloom, Castagna, Moir, & Warren, 2005) To further ensure effective professional learning the content learning must be of a sustained duration, time enough for teachers to learn, practice and reflect on the new strategy. This is to say one would not change the professional learning topic from one week to another. It is also clear through the research that the sit and get style of professional learning is not an effective model.

As the Common Core State Standards, as well as the CA ELD standards, demand more rigorous instruction in the classroom, we must also be able to deliver more rigorous professional learning opportunities in an effort to properly prepare teachers to meet these new demands. Sit and get PD has been determined to be ineffective while it is becoming known that there needs to be a more comprehensive manner in which to deliver professional learning, as stated in the previous research conducted by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017).

Language Development as a Lever to Accelerate Student Outcomes

California English Language Development Standards ch4 Theoretical Foundations and the Research base of the California English language development Standards focuses on how students should and need to interact in meaningful and in

intellectually challenging ways, how to develop academic English, and the importance of grammatical and discourse level understanding. The deconstructing sentences protocol, a strategy outlined in the standards document, can attend to all of these important components of rigorous instruction for English Language Learners. Chapter 5 of the CA ELD standards, Learning how English Works, focuses on the difference of everyday English versus Academic English. To support English Language Learners to move from everyday English to more academic registers there must be an emphasis on understanding how English works at the level of whole text, sentences, clauses, phrases and word level. Deconstructing sentences is one of the strategies outlined in the CA ELD standards. This strategy will attend to text level understanding, as well as sentence level, phrase level, clauses and words. Furthermore, this strategy will increase the use of complex text within classroom instruction, integrate content and language development learning, give the tools to students to be able to engage in complex text as well as become more analytical when reading densely packed text. The students will work closely with the teacher who will provide comprehensible input (Krashens 1982) through a model, and think aloud to demonstrate the new language form and allow for students to work with partners and teams to generate comprehensible output (Swain 2000, 2005) According to Gibbons (2015), "Children need to have opportunities to talk more in extended ways, so that, for the benefit of their listeners, they begin to focus not only on what they are saying but how they are saying it" (p. 25). While working with the deconstructing sentences protocol students will have a variety of opportunities to

engage in this type of talk. During what is described as phase one, students will break down the sentence into short simple sentences. This will allow the students to talk with a partner or team to negotiate for meaning of the complex sentence and break it down into simple sentences while attending to all the complexities of the sentences. During phase two, the teacher will support the students with the new language form with comprehensible input. The teacher will use pictures, diagrams or graphic outlines, build on to background knowledge, and or use familiar language to help students make connections (Gibbons 2015).

Intervention

If we believe in what the research points to, that preservice programs are not fully preparing teachers to meet the needs of diverse learners, there needs to be an overhaul of teacher preparation courses, teachers have the most direct impact on student achievement, teachers must be provided with a comprehensive, robust professional learning environment then we are left will having to fulfill this charge at the school site. The planned intervention that will take place at Hope will attend to all of the aforementioned areas of need. We will engage in a cycle of professional learning that will be based on a CA ELD framework strategy of deconstructing sentences. This strategy will allow for teachers to engage students with complex text to understand and make meaning at a sentence level, phrase level and word level, which is the recommendation from the CA ELD standards. Through the cycle of professional learning, in an effort to change and push teacher practice we will learn the new language development strategy, have time for planning, refining and reflecting,

participate in coaching and feedback and receive an in class demo with their own students, which as the research states are best practices for professional development. While the Common Core State Standards, NGSS standards and ELD standards are explicit, there still are decisions teachers need to make when delivering standards-based instruction. This intervention will provide teachers with an opportunity to engage with the standards and refine instructional practices that align with the rigor and language demands.

Conclusion

Teachers are entering the education field inadequately prepared to work with the great diverse population of English Language Learners that commonly are found throughout California classrooms. For this reason, districts and school sites themselves are left with the task of building teacher capacity regarding working with English Language Learners. This is no small feat as changing teacher practice to accelerate student achievement requires a comprehensive professional learning environment.

Based on my review of literature, an effective approach to professional learning must include a robust, comprehensive plan. This comprehensive plan should include PD provided around a best practice, class demonstrations or modeling, coaching and feedback, professional learning communities to attend to planning, analyzing student work, reflecting and refining, while the professional learning should take place over a sustained amount of time to ensure teachers enough time to engage with the topic and be able to incorporate the strategy into the classroom.

Language Development Through a Cycle of Inquiry

      As we consider the achievement gap for our English language learner population we must also reconsider the way in which we teach within our classrooms. The Common Core and CA ELD standards include a much more rigorous emphasize on the core components of instruction within the domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students must be provided with opportunities to engage in complex text, but unfortunately with English Language Learners we often see textbooks and other books rewritten in a remedial manner. If teachers know how to identify complex text, they are often reluctant to incorporate them into their instruction as they believe students will not be able to access the text (as noted at Hope with current teachers). As well, we often see teachers of English Language Learners unprepared to use complex texts in their classrooms in a meaningful manner. Without access to complex text, English Language Learners will surely continue to underperform or have the ability to perform at their potential. It is the intention of this action research project to deliver effective professional learning to increase teacher capacity and increase student outcomes, while teaching teachers how to identify a complex text, use complex text regularly in the classroom, and engage in the strategy of deconstructing sentences. Deconstructing sentences will have teachers attend to language in a manner in which there is a focus on forms and functions which our English Language Learners need. This strategy will increase student awareness of forms and functions of language in both Spanish and English as well as increase academic discourse in the way of meaning making. The students will gradually move from dependence on the teacher to increasing independence over their own meaning making.

Language Development Through a Cycle of Inquiry

Considering the more rigorous speaking standards in the Common Core State Standards it is unfortunate that many classrooms are dominated with teacher talk. Students must be presented with the opportunity to engage in meaningful talk across content areas. If we expect our students to engage in complex language we must provide them opportunities to engage in complex text and rich academic conversations related to content across all subject areas. We need to release our dependent learners from our grasp and begin to create independent scholars. This project is designed to help teachers develop an awareness of the needs of English Language Learners and how to begin to deliver content related designated ELD, focused on student discourse while attending to forms and functions of language, through a comprehensive approach to professional learning.

Theory of Action

Problem of Practice	Teachers need to consistently implement ELD strategies that include plenty of time for talk using academic discourse and independent practice with a focus on forms and functions of language.
Theory of Action	If we engage in cycles of inquiry to include PD, PLC time, coaching and grade level demo lessons around specific language development strategies that include attention to grammatical forms and functions and student discourse then teachers will build their capacity around language development instruction and students will accelerate their language development according to reclassification rates and CELDT growth.

Language Development Through a Cycle of Inquiry

Problem of Practice	Literature Review	Intervention	Expected Outcome
Preservice teachers are not completely prepared to meet the demands of their diverse learners. Teachers need to consistently implement ELD strategies that include plenty of time for talk using academic discourse and independent practice with a focus on forms and functions of language.	Teachers are not prepared to effectively instruct English Language Learners. Teachers need to be provided opportunities to engage in PD that incorporates a comprehensive approach to professional learning in an effort to change teacher practice and increase student outcomes. English Language Learners need to focus on how English works, engage in complex text and have ample time to engage in academic discourse.	PD cycle of inquiry to include PD input, PLC planning time reflecting and refining, grade level in class demo lessons, observations and feedback through coaching Content: deconstructin g sentences	Through comprehensive PD teachers will incorporate using complex text to deconstruct sentences strategy weekly into their designated ELD block. Teachers will build their capacity around language development instruction and students will accelerate their language development according to reclassification rates and CELDT growth.

Hypothesis

The cycle of inquiry in which a comprehensive professional development learning environment is provided and includes input on a language development practice from the ELD standards, PLC time to include planning, reflecting and refining, in class demonstrations and coaching through observation and feedback will increase teacher knowledge of language forms and functions. The comprehensive professional development plan with all of the components will affect teacher practice in the form of increasing both teacher efficacy as well as skill of instruction. This change to practice and implementation of a strategy that attends to forms and functions and allows for authentic student talk to negotiate for meaning will become a part of the teachers' weekly instruction permanently.

Intervention action plan

Professional Development Session	Teacher/leadership actions between PD sessions/PLC Session Work	Data Cycle of inquiry Deconstructing sentences strategy	Type of Data Process Vs. Impact	Data question to be answered
Wk 1 Designated ELD PD Understand the importance, relevance and implications of ELD. Review the difference between Strategies for Designated and Use a talk structure every day including Structured Language Practice (SLP) or academic discussion connected to science or social studies	Teachers will continue to use structured language practices (SLP) demonstrated during in PD. Grade level PLC SESSION: Teacher will plan a close read of a complex text using the authentic literacy template	**PRE survey of language development** **Exit ticket:** How did today's session help you to be prepared to work with students using a structured language practice?	Impact data Process data	How prepared do teachers feel to attend to the specific needs of English Language Learners regarding forms and functions and student discourse? How does PLC planning time for a new strategy affect the likelihood of the strategy to be used?

| Wk 2 | I can identify complex and compelling text.
Designated ELD PD
Close reading of Complex text
Reading options
Common Core appendix A
Text complexity appendix additions text complexity
What makes this text
What makes this text | Teachers will continue to use structured language practices (SLP) demonstrated during in PD.

Grade level PLC SESSION: Evaluating text for text complexity and select a time in the instructional day to use the complex text (i.e. interactive read aloud, shared reading, or content authentic literacy template.) | **Exit ticket**: How do you know if a text is complex? | Process

data | |

Wk 3	Designated ELD pd Understand the relationship between designated and integrated ELD (Using vignettes) designated and integrated ELD Add Juicy Sentences Framework practice (First Grade Vinette) Juicy Sentences 1 Learn how to deconstruct a juicy sentence	Teachers will continue to use structured language practices (SLP) demonstrated during in PD. Grade level PLC session: Analyze text complexity and plan Coaches will complete in class grade level demonstrations of a co-planned deconstruction sentences			How does PLC planning time for a new strategy affect the likelihood of the strategy to be used? How does an in class demonstration of a new strategy affect teacher efficacy?
Wk 4	Designated ELD PD Vertical teams share juicy sentence Share the text, explain why it is complex using the previously read guidelines for identifying a complex text, share the sentence share if you taught the lesson whole group or small group and why, how does this sentence fit with the essential	Teachers will continue to use structured language practices (SLP) demonstrated during in PD. Grade level PLC session: Grade Levels will write a sentence unpacking lesson and use it before the next PD	**Entry ticket:** Teachers will read two texts side by side and decide which text is more complex and why?	Impact data	

	worked and what would you do differently Plan for a second Juicy Sentences lesson	deconstruction sentences lesson.			
Wk 5	Designated ELD Use of the pictorial input chart w/ color coding and/or Interactive Word	Teachers will continue to use structured language practices (SLP) demonstrated during PD. Grade level PLC session: Bring a complex text, one for each grade level. Grade level will select one of the complex text. Grade Levels will write a sentence unpacking lesson and use it before the next PD. Teachers will be observed and provided feedback on their deconstructing sentences lesson.	Teachers share a juicy sentence and identify the "mortar" words	Impact data	How does coaching and feedback around a specific strategy increase teacher efficacy to feel competent to implement a new strategy and continue to implement the strategy?

| Wk 6 | Designated ELD PD
Ghost walks

Share out learning | Teachers will continue to use structured language practices (SLP) demonstrated during in PD.

Grade level PLC session: Sketch, design, revise the pictorial input chart and/or Interactive word wall
Teachers will be observed and provided feedback on their deconstructing sentences lesson. | Language development POST survey

End of the cycle survey

Teachers share a juicy sentence and identify the "mortar" words | Process

data

Impact data | |

The intervention began with making the case of the importance of language development instruction that meets the rigorous demands of the CCSS, NGSS and ELD standards by reading *Reparable Harm* by Laurie Olsen. Before professional development could begin around the deconstructing sentences strategy, we needed to understand how to identify complex text. The exit ticket after the professional development session indicated that some teachers still were not quite sure what makes a text complex and how to identify a complex text. The following day, during grade level PLC time, this was confirmed as many teachers brought text to try and identify a sentence to use for their classroom instruction that was not complex. The importance of providing an additional session on how to identify complex text was imperative. The intervention cycle was changed to accommodate this need. As with classroom instruction, when something does not work in the way it was intended you cannot just "reteach" using the same method as originally used. You must design a corrective instruction action plan so as to provide the opportunity to engage with the same material in a different manner. For this, we brought in a new rubric that indicates if a text is a simple text, on the lower end of the rubric, to very complex text, on the higher end of the rubric. We provided a demonstration during PD, using a complex test to show how to use the rubric to measure the complexity of a text.

In addition, we needed to make adjustments to the end of the cycle as we used one of the sessions to go deeper on how to identify a complex text. We replaced the week of interactive word walls with the second session on identifying complex text. As we worked through the six-week cycle we slightly changed our closing session from walking through classrooms to observe evidence of the cycle to a cross grade level share out of the work

that took place inside of the classrooms. Each teacher brought in artifacts from their teaching. They shared the sentence they used to deconstructed and walked the cross grade level group members through how they deconstructed the sentence in the classroom. They also discussed the language form or function that was used while deconstructing and discussed why that form or function was chosen. During this time many teachers either referred to the ELD standards or a need they saw students how while conducting formative assessments throughout the day.

Participants

While all of the teachers at Hope participating in the cycle of inquiry, only the six teachers, teaching third through fifth grade were whom I collected and analyzed data from. Of the teachers, two of them, teacher A and teacher C, are fully credentialed and hold a BCLAD. Teacher B is in his third year of teaching and working toward his clear credential but holds a BCLAD. Teacher E just this year completed her credential program and has 2 years of experience with classroom teaching. Teacher E holds a provisional internship credential. Teacher F holds a provisional internship credential and will begin a credential program this upcoming fall. Teacher D is a visiting teacher from Spain and while she has teaching experience this is her first year teaching in the United States, which by her and many other visiting teachers' insight, is extremely different from what they are used to in Spain. Teacher D holds an emergency credential. Four out of the six teachers are defined as novice teachers when considering their teaching experience in the United States and using the working definition outlined by Reynolds & Storm, which is being a practitioner who has graduated from a teacher education program and been working in the field for four years or fewer (Reynolds & Storm 1990). The teachers have a wide range of skill but all

poses a high will to improve their practice in an effort to accelerate student achievement.

Methodology

I collected multiple data points throughout the six-week intervention. As discovered through the literature review a multifaceted professional learning experience is necessary to change teacher practice with the end goal of improving student outcomes. Our school showed to have inconsistent designated ELD instruction that effectively improved the outcomes for students. This was due to a variety of factors one being teacher preparation, followed by a lack of understanding of language forms and functions, and understanding the importance of academic discourse for language learners.

A language development strategy that is outlined in the ELD standards was identified to provide professional development on. To address the lack of focus on forms and functions of language, the deconstructing sentences strategy was chosen to both increase teacher awareness of forms and functions as well as attend to the specific language needs of our language learners. A pre and post survey was administered to identify if after the six-week intervention cycle an increase of awareness of forms and functions as well as an understanding of the importance of student talk had increased within the teachers.

Language Development Survey

To begin the intervention, a language development survey that would be administered pre and post intervention with the intention to monitor teacher growth and development of the intended outcomes was given before the intervention began. The language development survey identified how often teachers engaged in the deconstructing sentences strategy, teacher knowledge of identifying forms and functions of language, and the ratio of

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teacher to student talk. Once the survey was administered, after the completion of the intervention, I was able to analyze the impact the intervention had on teacher practice. This data was used to answer the research question of how prepared teachers are to attend to forms and functions of language within their instruction and engage language learner students in meaningful academic discourse.

Exit tickets

A variety of exit and entry tickets were administered in an effort to understand the impact each professional development session was having on the participants. Questions were formulated to attend to the specific content of the day's PD and to make sure the participants were fully understanding the day's content. After each PD session, the exit tickets were analyzed to determine if the session met the goals and outcomes for the session participants. This process data was used to make slight changes throughout the professional learning cycle.

Post survey

A post intervention cycle survey was administered to understand the impact the professional development cycle had on teachers knowledge and comfortability with the deconstructing sentences strategy. The survey also attempted to flesh out which components of the PD were the most impactful for the teacher. The post survey allowed teachers to self-identify which components of the PD were considered high leverage and which were not. The post survey also allowed me to determine what additional supports might be needed for individual teachers so as to be able to incorporate the deconstructing sentences strategy into their weekly designated language development block.

Interviews

A post interview was conducted two months after the intervention of the six-week professional development cycle concluded. This aimed to identify if teachers continued to use the deconstructing sentences strategy. The post interview also attempted to identify if teachers were still able to identify complex text, if complex text were being identified were they using more complex text with their classroom instruction than they had been using prior to the intervention? I also wanted to know if the ability to identify complex text meant they were including different text to their units or using the same text that may or may not be complex. In short, my goal with the interviews were to identify the more long-term impact the intervention had on the teachers.

Analysis and Findings

Through classroom observations, instructional rounds as well as analyzing school wide data, it became clear that we needed to achieve better outcomes for our English Language Learners. As the principal, I needed to engage teachers in professional learning that changes teacher practice to garner increased student achievement outcomes. The question then became how can we administer professional development to achieve this goal of increasing student achievement outcomes and what English language learner best practice would we focus on? I sought to identify how best to implement professional development to ensure teacher growth and development around language learning instruction to meet the needs of language learners as well as accelerate student growth.

I analyzed the survey results, exit tickets, and interview data that was collected to determine if the data showed a clear conclusion of changing teacher practice through the comprehensive professional development that was provided. I analyzed the pre and post survey to determine if the intervention had the desired impact on teacher practice. The end

of the intervention survey allowed me to determine if the intervention had the long-term impact it was intended to have while the end of the year interview allowed teachers to share the the positive results as well as challenges of the new strategy in weekly use. The data sets allowed me to draw conclusions around the research questions of teacher preparedness for teaching language learners using forms and functions of language as well as engage in more student led academic discourse throughout the day. The analysis also allowed me to draw conclusions around the effectiveness of the professional learning and draw conclusions around which components were the most impactful as noted by the teachers.

The process data collected in the way of exit tickets allowed for me to monitor the intervention as it was in progress. The exit tickets allowed for a determination to be made such as move forward as planned or stay on a topic for additional time. The end of the PD session exit ticket on complex text showed that some teachers were still not clear on how to identify a complex text. Additionally, the next day, after the PD session on complex text, some teachers came to the PLC session with a text that was not complex. Therefore, the intervention cycle was slightly adjusted to add an additional PD session on identifying complex text. This allowed us to be sure that complex text were able to be identified as you must have a complex text to identify a complex sentence for the deconstructing sentences strategy.

The overall goal of the intervention was to impact teacher practice to engage more consistently in language development strategies that meet the needs of our language learners. The intention was to increase teacher knowledge of language learner best practices which specifically attend to language forms and functions and allow for an increase

of student discourse time. Due to the short-term timeline of the intervention, the impact on student achievement will be fully measured with the results of ELPAC and SBAC coming out in the Fall of 2018-2019. However, at the mid-year point we had reclassified a larger percent of students than from last year. We also have 28 students contingently reclassified pending ELPAC results.

Intervention Process Data

The focus for the action research was to increase teacher knowledge and language development so as to include more consistent language development strategies in their daily instruction. Attending to forms and functions of language and increasing student talk time were goals of the action research. The first question I sought to answer through the intervention cycle was how to best provide professional development to ensure a change to teacher practice.

A comprehensive professional development plan was created using the research-based practices from Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017), where they define effective professional development as, "structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes." (p. v) Further, they assert that PD must be content focused, incorporates active learning, supports collaboration, uses models of effective practice, provides coaching and expert support, offers feedback and reflection, and is of sustained duration. All of these components were interwoven into the Hope intervention cycle of professional learning. To determine the effectiveness of the PD teachers completed a survey to determine if the intervention cycle was effective and to determine which components were the most powerful according to the teachers.

End of Cycle Survey Results

The summary results of the end of the cycle teacher survey are noted in charts A-E.

The in class demonstration and coaching components of the professional learning are the

highest rated for being an effective element of the intervention cycle.

Chart A

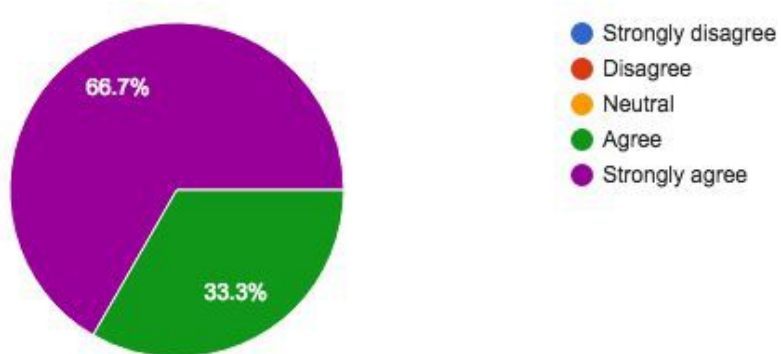The in class demo was an effective element of the PD cycle.
6 responses

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

66.7%

33.3%

Chart B

The coaching and feedback was an effective element of the PD cycle.

6 responses

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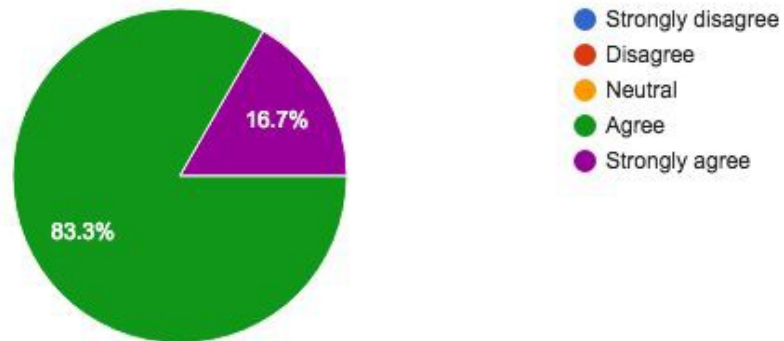- ● Disagree
- ● Neutral
- ● Agree
- ● Strongly agree

Chart C

The PD input was an effective element of the PD cycle.

6 responses

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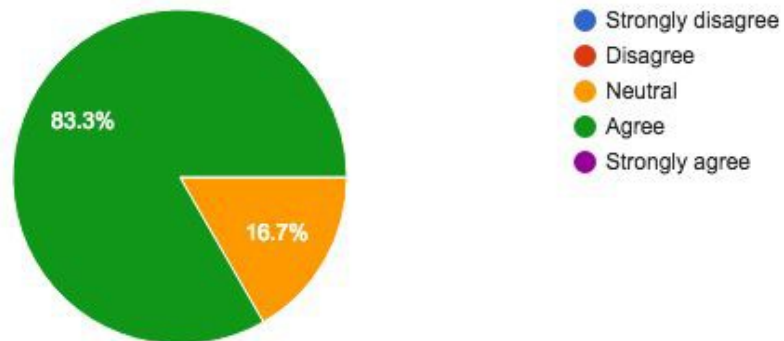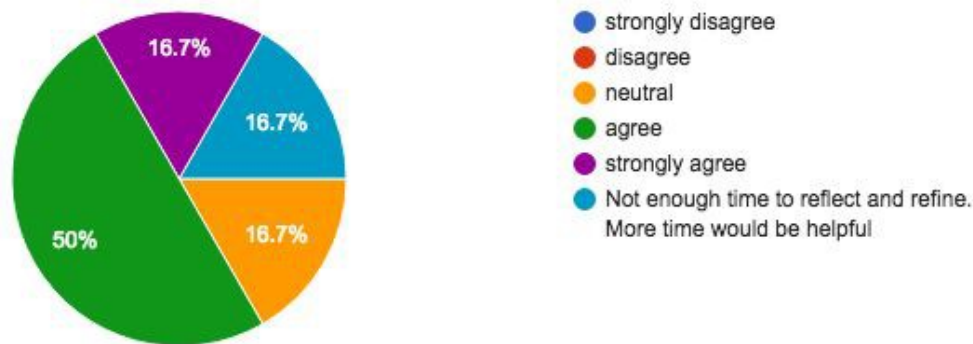- ● Disagree
- ● Neutral
- ● Agree
- ● Strongly agree

Chart D and E
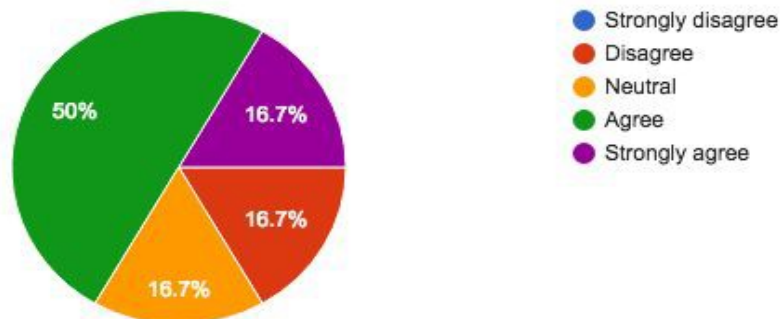
The time to reflect and refine the use of the deconstructing sentences strategy was an effective element of the PD cycle.

6 responses

- strongly disagree
- disagree
- neutral
- agree
- strongly agree
- Not enough time to reflect and refine. More time would be helpful

16.7% 16.7% 16.7% 50% 16.7%

The grade level PLC time was an effective element of the PD cycle.

6 responses

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

50% 16.7% 16.7% 16.7%

The additional components of the intervention cycle were still rated as effective. One respondent disagreed to the PLC time as being effective. There was quite a bit more positive feedback for the end of the cycle survey than growth areas. Throughout the intervention cycle we gathered process data in the form of exit tickets. This allowed us to determine what was working well and what might need to be adjusted. The third PD session began with a reading to help understand how to identify complex text and a demonstration on how to analyze a text for

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complexity. The session's exit ticket asked teachers to name the three ways, according to the reading completed during the PD, how to identify if a text is complex. A few teachers used the text to list the three ways in which the article stated to identify complex text while others wrote more of a narrative that indicated their uncertainty. One teacher wrote a list of six things that would indicate if the text was complex, which included, "how many words are in the sentence, leading sentences with prepositional phrases, new vocabulary words, metaphors, descriptive language and data rich." As we proceeded through the PD, and PLC components of the intervention it became clear that some teachers were struggling with understanding how to identify a complex text as evidenced by the exit ticket from the PLC session. Further evidence of the lack of understanding of how to identify a complex text came on the following day during PLC time. Teachers were asked to bring a complex text to begin to identify and plan for a deconstructing sentences lesson in which one must identify a complex sentence. While the text would have been challenging to our English learners they were not complex enough for the majority of teachers to identify a complex sentence from the text. The research of Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) indicate that professional development must be responsive to the needs of the teachers while creating the conditions for effective professional development. Considering this and understanding that the ability to identify a complex text was imperative to successful implementation with the deconstructing sentences strategy, the intervention cycle was then modified to accommodate the process data and allow for an additional PD session to identify complex text.

    I was able to draw a conclusion from the process data that indicates that the intervention cycle of learning was in general successful and met the needs of the teachers. According to the teachers, the most impactful portion of the intervention were the in class demonstrations and coaching with feedback around the new strategy. This is not to say the other components were not impactful, but

rather the above named 2 components were identified by the teachers as having an impact on their practice/ability to engage with and implement the new strategy in their classrooms. Only one component of the cycle, PD input, by one participant, was scored as not effective.

Impact Data

The desired outcome of the intervention was to change teacher practice so as to consistently implement the deconstructing sentences strategy weekly within a content area. When analyzing the results from the pre and post survey there was a positive increase in the respondents responses regarding the goals of the intervention cycle in terms of student talk, comfortability with identifying forms and functions of a text, and the use of the deconstructing sentences strategy.

The desired outcome of most professional development, and certainly in this intervention, was to bring about a sustained change in teacher practice. As stated, outcome for our intervention was that teachers would begin to use deconstructing sentences strategy once a week for their designated English language or Spanish language arts block. This would also mean that teachers would begin to consistently use language development best practices in order to better meet the needs of our language learners and increase student achievement outcomes.

In answering the question, "What was your biggest take away from this cycle?" the response was varied but indicated very important takeaways. One teacher claimed, "We should not water down our texts but rather give them scaffolds and strategies to be able to access the material." Another teacher indicated, "My biggest take away from this cycle was administering day one and day two of the juicy sentences, as well as, identifying complex texts that are appropriate for my students' grade level." When answering the question, "What is the likelihood that you will incorporate deconstructing sentences into your designated ELD/SLD block? Please explain," one teacher answered that they had already begun to incorporate the juicy sentences deconstruction into their

core block as well as the designated ELD block.

When answering the question, "How did the PD/PLC time spent on complex texts impact your teacher practice?" One teacher noted, "Through PD time I was able to implement juicy sentences into my ELD block and learn it well enough to feel comfortable planning it on my own." The ultimate goal is that all teachers feel comfortable enough with the strategy to be able to plan for implementation on their own. This is not to say support will not or should not be provided, but rather that being able to plan independently indicates the likelihood of the strategy being used as a regular practice is highly likely. Another

teacher wrote, "the cycle has helped me be more aware of what text my students are being exposed to. It has helped scaffold more for students to better understand the complex text instead of choosing a completely new text."

When we read "Reparable Harm" during the first professional learning input session there was a collective "AH HA" moment when we read and discussed from the article, "Several factors seem to contribute to becoming a Long-term English Learner: receiving no language development program at all; being given elementary school curricula and materials that weren't designed to meet English Learner needs; enrollment in weak language development program models and poorly implemented English Learner

programs; histories of inconsistent programs; provision of narrowed curricula and only partial access to the full curriculum; social segregation and linguistic isolation…." (p. 2) Making sure that all students have access to the full curriculum and access to the CCSS, NGSS, and the ELD standards became a collective understanding with the shared understanding that we can achieve this through ensuring access to complex text and rigorous language development strategies. Teachers need to know their students and engage in careful analysis of the language demands of the content they are teaching, as

well as possess skills in implementing appropriate instructional strategies.

According to the self reported responses to the intervention cycle pre and post survey, there was significant improvement across all teachers with regards to increasing student talk time and therefore decreasing teacher talk time, as noted in figure 1. As self reported, all teachers except the one teacher who was already using the deconstructing sentences strategy increased the amount of times they used the newly learned strategy, as noted in figure 2. Lastly, all but one teacher who was already at a level four out of five reported an increase to their comfort ability with identifying forms and functions of a text.
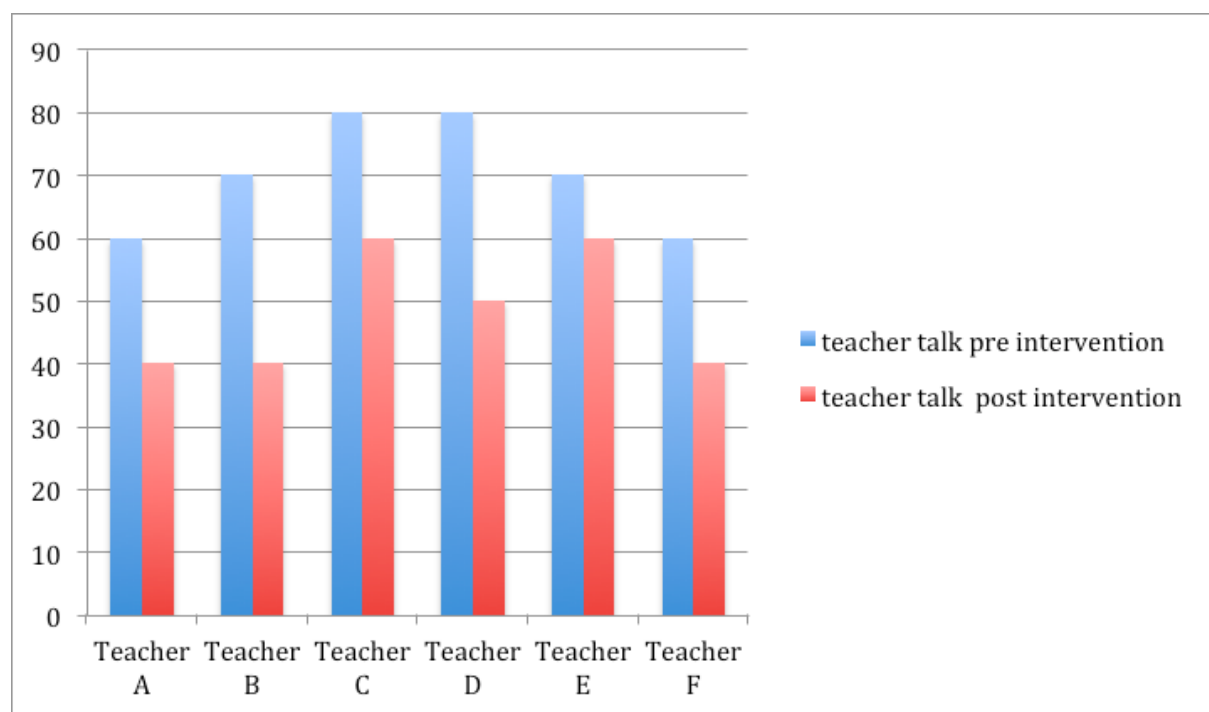

Figure 1: Percent of Teacher Talk Time During the School Day

As we can see in the above chart there was a decrease in teacher talk time throughout the school day which in turns means there was an increase in student talk time. Throughout the intervention cycle there was a focus on increasing student academic discourse throughout the day while the deconstructing sentences strategy was just one way to achieve this goal.
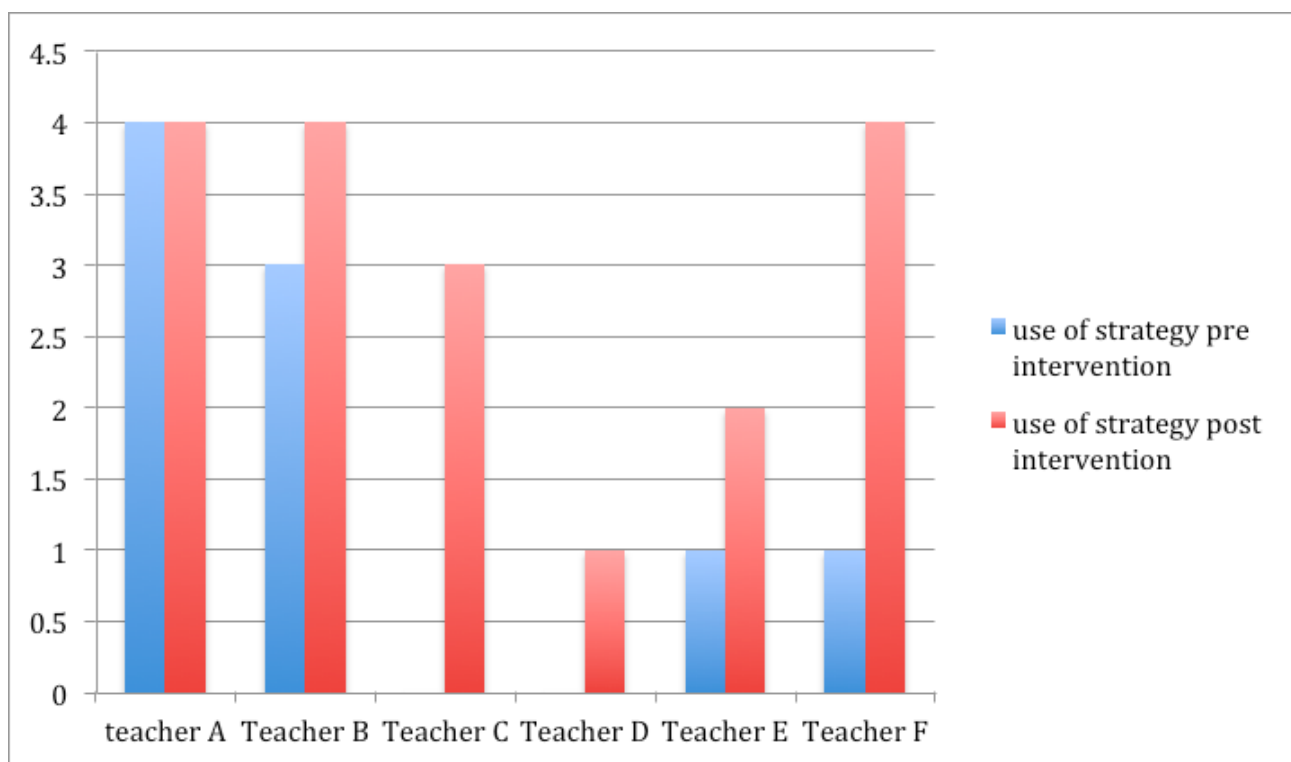
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Figure 2: Strategy use Pre and Post Intervention

There was a dramatic increase to the self reported survey data regarding the strategy use before the intervention cycle and at the conclusion of the intervention cycle. Teachers reported through the surveys, exit tickets and interviews that they did feel prepared to plan and implement a deconstructing sentences lesson.

An additional goal of the intervention cycle was to increase the confidence, knowledge and efficacy around the use of forms and functions in language development lessons. There was an increase, as self reported by teachers, in their increased confidence with being able to identify and use forms and functions of language when attending to the language of the text and lesson as noted by figure 3.
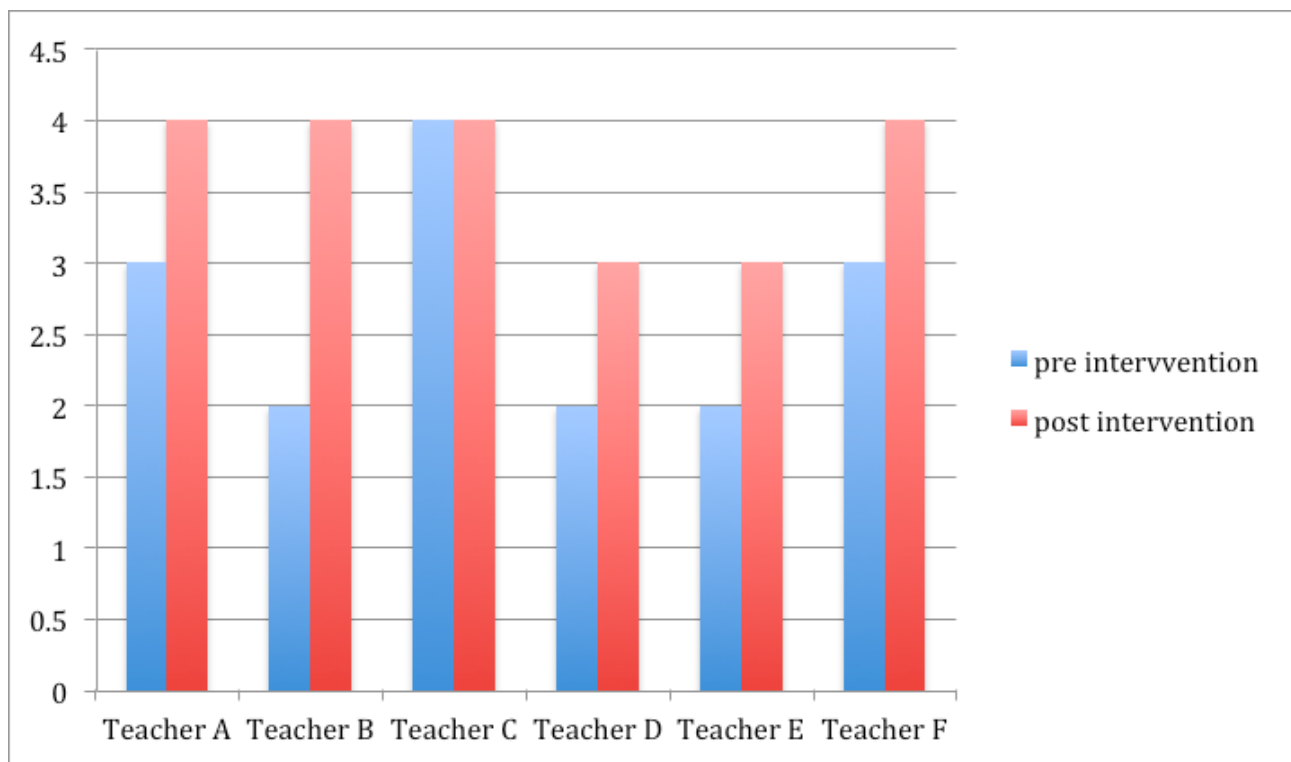
Figure 3: Explicit Instruction on Forms and Functions

The end of the school year interview did, however, show that there was not quite the intended outcome of using the deconstructing strategies weekly and not even at the frequency which was self reported to be used on the post cycle survey. Teacher E reported that she used the new strategy monthly during the end of the cycle survey, but during the end of the school year interview had only used the strategy one more time. Teacher D reported to use the strategy once a trimester on the end of the cycle survey, but in actuality did not use the strategy at all once the cycle had ended. When I inquired to what the barrier was, Teacher D responded that there were many time conflicts that prevented her from continuing to use the strategy. She stated SBAC prep, assemblies and other special activities that prevented her from continuing to use the strategy.

Both Teachers D and E are Spanish teachers at our school. They both are also new teachers, Teacher E being her second year while Teacher D being her first year teaching in the United States. Firstly, time management is a challenge for even veteran teachers, so I believe that this is an additional element for these two teachers not using the strategy as they themselves

reported to have used during the end of the cycle survey. Secondly, these two teachers are Spanish teachers and they may not have had the same sense of urgency around attending to forms and functions for two reasons. One reason is that for almost every student in our school Spanish is their first language and the teachers may believe

that is unnecessary to attend to specific forms and functions of their first language. Secondly, the deconstructing sentences strategy came for the ELD framework and these two teachers might not have completely buy into the strategy as being an effective strategy when teaching in the Spanish language.

Significance, Implications and Conclusions

To meet the challenges of preparing teachers to meet adequately the needs of English Language Learners while meeting the demands of the CCSS, NGSS and ELD standards professional development in most schools and districts must change. As the research has made clear and by the findings of the action research conducted at Hope, teacher capacity and skill can be built through a robust, comprehensive approach to professional learning. Through the professional learning cycle at Hope teachers were able to change their practice to more adequately meet the needs of their English Language Learners. The majority of the teachers were able to more easily identify complex text, attend to forms and functions of language, as well as increase the amount of student talk time during class. Overall the intervention cycle showed promising results that can be duplicated for future cycles of inquiry.

According to the data from the teachers, all of the components scored high or valuable, as a way to ensure understanding and continued use of the new strategy and the shifts made to their teacher practice. EVIDENCE This is important to note as it means all of the components of the professional learning cycle are important enough to continue to implement when engaging in the

work of changing teacher practice in an effort to accelerate student achievement. At Hope we are fortunate enough to have content experts that were able to help plan and carry out the robust intervention cycle. We also have onsite coaches available to conduct in class demonstrations as well as provide coaching. At Hope we have a history of collaboration and working in PLCs with a significant amount of trust amongst colleagues. The question then becomes how can similar schools engage in a cycle of inquiry to include all of the effective components of PD when currently the trend is to cut funding for support of this type of work while also some schools face a lack of collaboration amongst staff?

Moving forward at Hope, in an effort to have an impact on student learning we will continue to implement all of the components of the intervention to ensure teacher efficacy regarding new learnings. These components include: PD input, planning time, reflecting & refining, in class demonstrations and coaching & feedback with a sustained focus over time. As we continue to implement professional learning in this manner with a continued emphasis on true professional learning communities that are focused on student outcomes, collaboration, and results. School districts as well as school sites need to look at their professional learning opportunities provided to novice and veteran teachers alike and begin to move away from the traditional sit and get PD and move toward a more comprehensive approach to teacher learning that is supportive and aimed toward the growth of the teacher which in turns directly impacts student achievement.

Limitations

This action research set out to determine an effective approach to professional learning that would improve teacher capacity and change teacher practice to increase student outcomes specifically for English Language Learners. The findings were positive in that the professional learning that was provided did increase teacher, self reported knowledge of language development, as well as there was a continued use of the new learning as the school year progressed. One major

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limitation is that it has not yet been determined if the outcomes for our English Language Learners has increased. While the professional learning focused on deconstructing sentences, there was not a measurement to determine effective implementation of the strategy. Further, there was not a comparison group to draw any conclusion from. This action research, however, may prove helpful for school leaders looking to increase teacher knowledge and teacher practice aimed at supporting all students. To implement this type of high quality, comprehensive professional

learning, the school leaders must have the knowledge and knowhow to design and implement professional learning for adults. Further, they must also have their own knowledge base of language acquisition and best practices for English Language Learners. Changing teacher practice is a challenging task for any school district or school site to take on, but it is possible when the necessary conditions are in place.

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Appendix A Authentic Literacy Template

Text: **Lesson:**   **Grade:**

Common Core Standard(s): Content Objective Language Objective
1. **Teach Vocabulary**
2. **Establish a Purpose for Reading (Text-dependent question)**
3. **Model Reading and Annotation**
4. **Guided Practice (and Formative Assessment)**
5. **Independent Practice**
6. **Discussion**
7. **Student Writing with Reference to Text**

Appendix B

Achieve the Core

What Makes This Read Aloud Complex (Grade K-2)?

1. Quantitative Measure

```
┌─────────────┐
│             │
│             │
│   _____  │
│             │
└─────────────┘
```
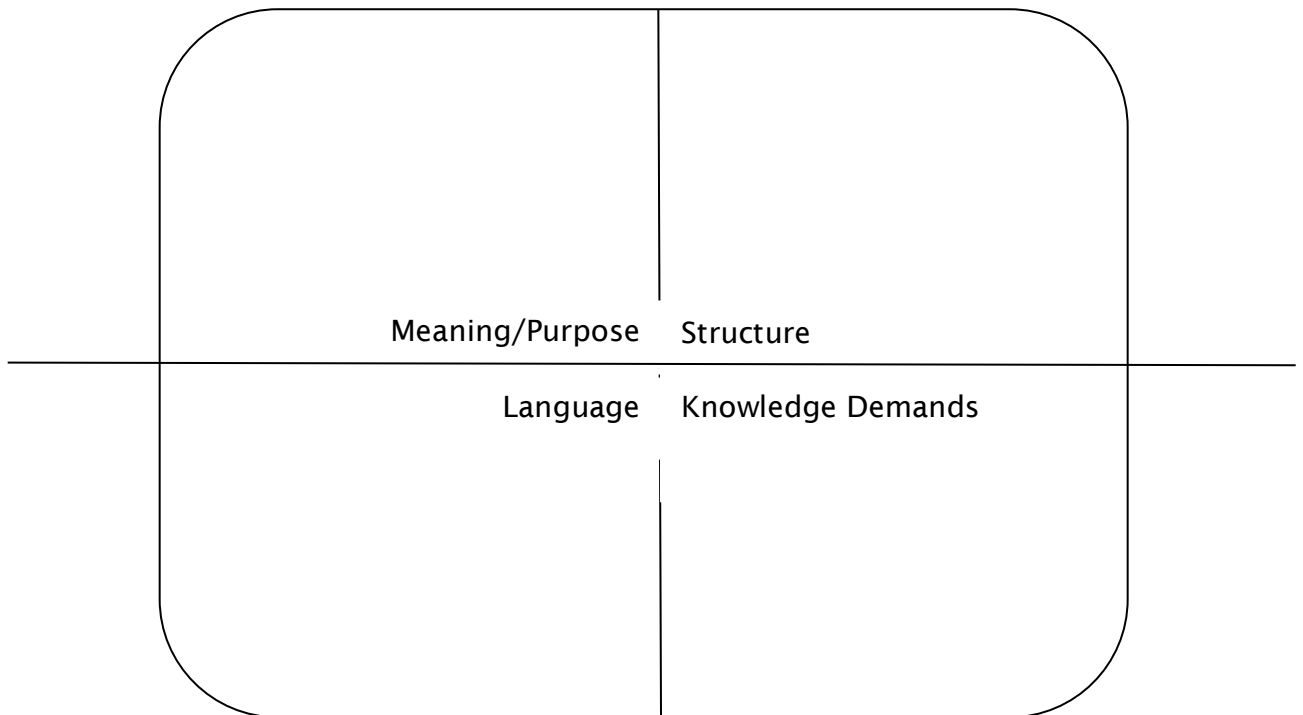
Most of the texts that we read aloud in K-2 should be in the 2-3 or 4-5 band, more complex than the students can read themselves.

2-3 band	420-820L
4-5 band	740-1010L

2. Qualitative Features

Meaning/Purpose   Structure

Language   Knowledge Demands

3. Reader and Task Considerations
What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?

How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?

Student Achievement Partners   achievethecore.org

Appendix C Juicy Sentence Protocol

OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT
Community Schools, Thriving Students

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER
AND MULTILINGUAL ACHIEVEMENT**

Juicy Sentence Protocol

Unpacking "Juicy Sentences" that tend to be long and densely packed with information helps students to understand the complex texts they encounter and gives them thinking strategies and language resources when writing their own academic texts.

Select a Juicy Sentence with sufficient text complexity:

● Do students have sufficient background knowledge connected to the concept/ theme/ topic?

● Is it a sophisticated single sentence with a self-contained idea?

● Is the text high quality, worth reading and elaborate?

5th Grade Sample: Sifting through observations from tens of thousands of distant stars, astronomers say they have discovered the first definitive Earth-size planet that orbits in a habitable zone where water could exist in liquid form — a necessary condition for life as we know it

. **Session 1 - Text & Sentence Level Determine Text Type:**

Description	**Signal Words:** such as, for instance, in addition, also, specifically **Ask yourself:** What specific person, place, thing, or idea is being described?
Problem /Solution	**Signal Words:** problem, issue, since, as a result, solution, idea, so, leads to, causes **Ask yourself:** what is the problem and what is the solution?
Compare & Contrast	**Signal Words** : Similar, the same, alike, as well as, opposed to, unlike, on the other hand,while, in contrast, instead **Ask yourself:** What is being compared?

Cause & Effect	**Signal Words** : since, because, due to, as a result, if, consequently, then, therefore **Ask yourself:** What happened and why did it happen?
Sequence	**Signal Words:** first, second, then, next, finally, following **Tips:** Is this event taking place over time?

Deconstruct the sentence using the following questions:

Who?	The first definitive Earth-size planet
What happens?	astronomers say they have discovered
What?	that orbits in a habitable zone where water could exist in liquid form
Why?	a necessary condition for life as we know it
Where or When?	Sifting through observations from tens of thousands of distant stars

Session 2 - Phrase Level & Unknown words

1.Modeled Read: Teacher reads and models natural language, shared reading.

2.Teacher Think Aloud: Teacher selects an unknown phrase from the sentence to model the thinking strategy with supporting frames:

What did the author think I already knew?	*Why did the author use this number/ word/ phrase/ structure?*	**What does this make me wonder about?**
I did not know...	I think the author used these number to show...	This make me wonder...
I am confused by...	I think the author used this word to show...	I might be able to find out...

The author thought I knew...	I think the author used this structure to show...	
The author assumed...		
This makes me wonder...		

3. Think-pair-share: Invite students to identify unknown phrases with a partner and try using the target thinking strategy. (Identifying phrases can be tricky. Consider having all student grapple with the same phrase.)

4. (If, then): If students are still struggling with individual words use the sample "Word Gaps" thinking strategies.

Sample Thinking: Word Gaps

- Does this look like a word that's only used in science?

- With this topic?

- Would I know this word in another place?

- Do I see any clues that might help me figure it out?

- What can I learn if I "look in" the word? (root words, affixes)

- What can I learn if I "look around" the word? (in front or behind)

Think-pair-share: Invite students to identify unknown words with a partner and try using the target thinking strategy to figure out the meaning of unknown words. Vocabulary Building: As a class, students identify the word in the sentence that they didn't understand and their thinking strategy.

Session 3: Unpacking

Small group unpacking of a juicy sentence based on proficiency levels if led by teacher or mixed proficiency levels if not teacher led. Show students how to unpack the meaning in the sentence by writing a list of simple sentences that, when combined, express the meaning of the sentence.
Sample Unpacking:

Sifting through observations from tens of thousands of distant stars, astronomers say they have discovered the first definitive Earth-size planet that orbits in a habitable zone w here water could exist in liquid form — a necessary condition for life as we know it.

- Astronomers looked at tens of thousands of stars.

- Astronomers say they found a planet the size of Earth.

- Astronomers say it has liquid water.

- Astronomers say we need liquid water for life.

- The Earth-sized planet is not too close or too far away from the star.

Appendix D Post Cycle Survey

Please rate the PD element in its effectiveness to your likelihood of continuing using deconstructing sentences weekly in your instruction.
* Required

Email address *

Your email

The grade level PLC time was an effective element of the PD cycle.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

The in class demo was an effective element of the PD cycle.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

The coaching and feedback was an effective element of the PD cycle.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

The time to reflect and refine the use of the deconstructing sentences strategy was an effective element of the

PD cycle.
strongly disagree
disagree
neutral
agree
strongly agree
Other:

The PD input was an effective element of the PD cycle.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

The time to reflect and refine using the deconstructing sentences strategy was an effective element of the PD

cycle.
Strongly disagree
disagree
neutral
agree
strongly agree
Other:

I am able to identify a complex text for my grade level.
1
2
3
4
5

I am able to identify a juicy sentence to use with the deconstructing sentences strategy.
1
2
3
4
5

How did the PD/PLC time spent on complex texts impact your teacher practice?
Your answer

What additional support might you need to be able to use the deconstructing sentences strategy in

your class weekly? This does not include time, but rather instructional support.
Your answer

What is the likelihood that you will incorporate deconstructing sentences into your designated

ELD/SLD block? Please explain.
Your answer

What was your biggest take away from this cycle?
Your answer

Appendix E: Pre and Post Cycle Survey

What is the ratio of teacher talk to student talk in your classroom on average? T:S

90:10

80:20

70:30

60:30

50:50

40:60

30:70

20:80

10:90

How often do you use the deconstructing sentences strategy?

(juicy-sentences)

daily

weekly

bimonthly monthly

once a trimester

never

How comfortable are you with identifying the forms and functions of a text?

0 1 2 3 4 5