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Best Practices And Culture Change In Two-Way Immersion Through The Use Of An Action Plan

Kimberly Johnson
Hamline University

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BEST PRACTICES AND CULTURE CHANGE IN TWO-WAY
IMMERSION THROUGH THE USE OF AN ACTION PLAN

by

Kim Johnson

A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching.

Hamline University

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Primary Advisor: Melissa Erickson

Content Expert: Jaime Morris

Peer Reviewers: Brandon Auge & Kaylee Highstrom

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction to the Capstone

Introduction

For many years I have been interested in language. The Spanish language has led me on a journey that has resulted in my choosing a profession that allows me to use the language daily. As a two-way Spanish immersion teacher I have the opportunity to work with students whose home language is Spanish as well as students who are English-dominant, all together in one classroom. This allows for a diverse and exciting environment, which is also not without its challenges. As a classroom teacher it can often be difficult to ensure that best practices are adhered to at all levels of programming. At this point in my career I find myself uniquely situated to assist in the development of a new two-way Spanish immersion program. This exciting endeavor has laid the groundwork for my Capstone project and has helped me frame my research question, which is: How does a planning committee create culture change using best practices to implement and sustain a two-way immersion program?

In this first chapter, context is provided for my research question. Throughout the first section I reflect on my firsthand experience with language immersion, which is the foundation for my research question. In the second section I delve into some of the necessary elements that must exist when creating an effective two-way immersion program, which supports the rationale for my project. Presented in the last section is the guiding question, which drives my project.

My Personal Experience With Immersion Education

At a very young age I had the good fortune of studying abroad. I lived in Mexico for eleven months when I was fourteen years old and through that experience I received a very authentic Spanish immersion education. I lived with a family who spoke Spanish and I attended a school where all subject areas were taught in Spanish to native Spanish-speaking students. Prior to living in Mexico, I had very little knowledge of the culture and the Spanish language. I grew up attending a K-12 public school in rural Wisconsin with no opportunity to take Spanish as a foreign language. My experience studying abroad shaped not only how I learned a second language, but also how I learned about a culture different than my own. Additionally, my ability to speak Spanish has provided me with opportunities that I would not have otherwise had.

Following the completion of my undergraduate degree I sought employment across a variety of different professions, all requiring Spanish-speaking skills. I was hired as a paralegal for a public defense law office, based on my ability to speak Spanish. During the course of my employment at the law office, I learned many things; most importantly I learned that I wanted to work with children, and based on my skill set, I decided that bilingual education was the path for me. I had previously obtained an undergraduate degree in Spanish and International Relations and I returned to school to pursue a master's degree in teaching. After completing my coursework I was assigned to student teach in a second grade classroom in a two-way immersion program in an urban setting. Following my student teaching assignment, a position became available. I interviewed for the position and was hired to teach second grade Spanish immersion. I remained a second grade Spanish immersion teacher for five years in that district when I

decided to pursue an opportunity at an elementary school in a suburban setting to help develop a brand new two-way immersion strand program. (Strand program refers to a program that exists within a school where there is also a general education program.) In this new role I attended a Summer Institute at the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition. I also helped review and decide on literacy curriculum for our kindergarten and first grade sections and assisted in determining appropriate assessment tools for the incoming students. Some of the assessment tools consisted of the standardized math and literacy assessments that would be used in Spanish as well as the assessments we would use to determine language proficiency levels for our students. These tasks were completed all while designing the classroom structure I would use to teach incoming kindergarten students in Spanish.

Throughout the past seven years as a Spanish immersion teacher, I've developed a research-based understanding of the types of classroom practices that help strengthen an immersion program. I am aware of the necessary scaffolding that must be in place in order to support students in their acquisition of a second language and assist them in building a strong foundation for the development of academic vocabulary. Because of my experiences learning a second language through immersion into another culture and teaching in immersion settings, I have a deep understanding of the challenges my students encounter as they work to acquire a second language and learn content through the language. My experience as a language learner differs in many ways from that of my students. In my acquisition of the Spanish language I did not participate in a one-way immersion program (learning a common second language in a classroom with other classmates doing the same) nor did I participate in a two-way immersion program

(acquiring a second language in a classroom with some classmates while other classmates learn in their home language). However, acquiring a second language through immersion, teaching in immersion programs, and taking advantage of professional development opportunities have helped me to identify that the two-way immersion model is the model I support for a classroom environment.

Best Practices In a Two-Way Immersion Setting

Through my experiences I've discovered important practices related to teaching and learning in two-way immersion settings. For example, it is critical to promote the target language, or language of instruction. This must be done in such a way that students see value in the target language and view it as being just as important as English.

Through this practice, students who are native speakers of the target language develop a sense of pride and respect for the language they have grown up using. This respect maintains a desire in the student to continue to speak the language. Students who are English-dominant begin to realize that English is not the only language, nor is it superior to other languages, and it helps them to develop a more diverse perspective of language.

Creating practices within a school community to show that the target language is valued can be done in a variety of ways.

- It is critical that students see signs written in the target language displayed throughout the school, as well as in English.
- Announcements over the intercom should also be made in both languages and students should see and hear teachers conversing in the target language.

- Within the classroom, instruction occurs in one language at a time. It is important to clearly designate times of the day during which the target language will be used. Separate times will be designated for English instruction. These designated times are necessary to avoid switching back and forth between the two languages, thus retaining the material instruction (Howard & Christian, 2002).
- Corrective feedback should be given in such a way that when the content of what a student is saying is correct, but the grammar or structure of the language is not, the teacher differentiates between meaning and form by stating: *That's a great idea. How could you say it a little differently?* (Fortune, 2000).
- Scaffolding to support the acquisition and use of specific content language must also be in place for each area of study.

The implementation of these practices will allow students to develop an understanding that learning and speaking in the target language is as useful and as important as using English to communicate. It is also important that students be encouraged to use the target language as often as is required by the program model in order to increase their language proficiency and to avoid the over-use of English within the classroom (Hamayan, Genesee, & Cloud, 2013).

The elementary school where I was employed as a second grade Spanish Immersion teacher for five years has maintained an immersion program that has been in existence for a number of years. However, the Spanish immersion program was just one of many programs within the school. Each grade level consisted of two Spanish

Immersion classrooms (which loosely followed the two-way immersion model) and two English-instructed classrooms. In the Fall of the 2013, the school added an Emotional Behavioral Disorder program and a Science-focused program in addition to the two-way Spanish immersion program. Due to the number of new initiatives simultaneously occurring within the school, it created an environment that lacked a clear, unified focus for the dual language program. Without proper guidance and a clear vision for the program, it became challenging to ensure common practices were in place throughout the program. Additionally, with regard to building signage, at that time, there were no visible signs on the exterior of the building to indicate that the school offered a two-way Spanish immersion program. Many of the signs throughout the interior of the building were in need of translation. Announcements over the intercom were often only provided in English. This was due in part to a lack of ability of some of the staff members to speak the language. It was also due to the fact that half of the school did not receive instruction in the target language of the program, therefore rendering the announcements in Spanish unnecessary for half of the school's student population. This tended to generate questions and concerns regarding the identity of the Spanish immersion program within the greater school community, as many best practices related to immersion education were not followed.

In transitioning away from my role as a second grade classroom teacher in a well-established, two-way Spanish immersion program to becoming a part of a team whose goal is to create and develop a brand new two-way immersion program, I have learned that there are many moving parts behind the scenes. In order for a two-way immersion program to meet the needs of all its learners, there have to be thoughtfully and

intentionally developed plans at each step of program implementation. Planning must include a variety of stakeholders, each with a specific role and responsibility to the program. Best practices for two-way immersion must remain at the forefront of planning and development in order to successfully move the program forward. Throughout this paper I will explore how to develop a strong, cohesive two-way immersion program that is rooted in best practices and lays out the responsibilities of district-level stakeholders as well as school community stakeholders.

During the 2018-2019 school year, we will add two sections of first grade to our two-way immersion program. The addition of two new team members will bring fresh perspectives and different experiences; it will also bring different teaching styles and classroom practices. In an effort to maintain the integrity of the program, specific practices integral to a two-way immersion model must be identified and upheld by stakeholders in order for the program to accomplish its mission. A sustainable and successful program requires multiple layers of support, including site-level support from principals and program leadership teams; administrative support from the district; and program buy-in from parents, other school staff and members from the community (Howard et al., 2018). To realize this goal, the formation of a diverse planning committee is necessary to provide oversight and accountability and to ensure that the program design and program goals remain at the forefront throughout the planning process (Sugarman & Howard, 2001).

Guiding Question

The purpose of this project is to find a possible solution to the guiding question:
How does a planning committee create culture change using best practices to implement

and sustain a two-way immersion program? During my tenure as a teacher I have had many opportunities to visit multiple immersion schools implementing different types of program models within a large metro area. I have witnessed varying degrees of effort put into making sure the target language of the program was visible and valued. I would like to create an environment in my school where, upon entrance to the school, the language immersion program is easily identifiable. It is important to me that students and parents can sense that the program is well-supported within the school community. While exploring this question I hope to gain additional insight with regard to how one might create a balance between the roles that the district, school administrators, teachers, and community members play in the development of a successful two-way immersion program. Through my research, I also hope to identify the practices that will allow for a visible, successful, two-way immersion program that operates in conjunction with the larger school community.

In the upcoming chapters the foundation for this project will be established. Presented in Chapter Two is the literature that will explain what two-way immersion is and the best practices, benefits, and challenges that coincide with the implementation of a two-way immersion program. Research will also be provided on the reasoning behind the use of action plans as a means to create positive change. Described in Chapter Three is the action plan that has been created to support the role each stakeholder plays in the development of the program using best practices. The rationale behind the need for the action plan is also explained in this chapter. Lastly, provided in Chapter Four are ideas for future research topics related to this topic, as well as suggestions for possible expansions to this specific project.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

The following literature review seeks to answer the question: How does a planning committee create culture change using best practices to implement and sustain a two-way immersion program? The researchers cited explore the ideas behind two-way immersion program designs within elementary school settings. They studied the important factors that contribute to effective two-way immersion models and the best practices that are currently used in two-way immersion programs. Also incorporated is information from experts describing the benefits and challenges of two-way immersion programs. Lastly, the literature reviewed at the end of this chapter looks at action plans as useful tools in the planning and creation of an effective two-way immersion program and how culture change occurs as a result of intentional planning.

The Concept of Two-Way Immersion

Dual immersion programs have existed for a number of years; however, their rise in popularity has become more prevalent in recent years due to the increase in the number of students in the United States who speak languages other than English (Lindholm-Leary, 2005). Paciotto and Delany-Barmann (2011) describe dual immersion programs as programs that include one-way immersion, two-way immersion, heritage language, and foreign language immersion models. Each of these four models provide students with language opportunities through enrichment bilingual education. In the following paragraphs I'll delve more deeply into the two-way immersion model.

Two-way immersion provides a setting where native English-speaking students and non-native English-speaking students, or students who speak the target language, work together to learn academics in two languages (Howard, Sugarman & Christian, 2003; Lindholm-Leary, 2005). In addition, two-way immersion models must observe the following four characteristics in order to be effective: instruction is provided in both languages and instruction occurs in the target language for a minimum of 50% of the day, languages are spoken separately (not mixing languages), work is completed in both languages and is balanced, and both groups of students (non-native English-speakers and native English-speakers) spend the majority of their content instruction time together (Lindholm-Leary, 2005). Within two-way immersion programs there exist two separate models of instruction: the 50:50 model and the 90:10 model (de Jong, 2014). The 50:50 model allows for balanced instruction in both languages throughout grade levels. The 90:10 model begins in early grades with 90% of instructional time occurring in the target language and 10% of instructional time occurring in English. The amount of English instruction gradually increases as students move up each grade level, until students reach a point where 50% of their instructional time occurs in English and 50% of their instructional time occurs in the target language. This 50-50 language balance typically occurs within upper elementary grade levels (Howard et al., 2003). Another important factor in the development of an effective two-way immersion program is that each immersion classroom consists of equal, or close to equal, numbers of English-dominant students and non-native English speakers, or native speakers of the target language (Mora, Wink, & Wink, 2001).

The overarching goal of two-way immersion is that students who are native speakers of the target language and students who are English dominant will become bilingual and biliterate and will gain positive cross-cultural attitudes (Howard, Sugarman, Perdomo, & Adger, 2005). In order to create change that will allow for successful implementation of the two-way program, a deep understanding of the program model is necessary. There are multiple factors that contribute to the achievement of the goals of two-way immersion programs and the next section will address some of these factors.

Important Factors for a Successful Two-Way Immersion Model

There are a number of factors that contribute to the effectiveness of a dual language program. Numerous studies exist from a range of researchers that help determine which of the factors are necessary in the implementation and maintenance of a successful dual immersion program.

In the beginning stages of program development, it is necessary to establish a planning committee (Sugarman & Howard, 2001). This committee should consist of a variety of stakeholders, which may include community members, teachers, administrators and parents. The purpose of the committee is to adopt, implement and oversee the goals of the program. Some of the initial responsibilities of committee members include: holding meetings, publicizing information regarding the program and having conversations with members of the school community as well as members of the community at large (Hamayan et al., 2013). Additionally, in the stages leading up to program implementation the committee is responsible for studying the area's demographics, researching topics related to immersion education, choosing a program

model and assessment instruments, establishing student admission criteria, and selecting staff and planning for staff development (Sugarman & Howard, 2001).

Once two-way immersion has been selected for the type of immersion program that will be implemented, there are additional factors that must be considered for successful implementation. Howard and Christian (2002) maintain that there are four critical pieces to the successful implementation of two-way immersion programs; these factors include: the development of a high level of proficiency in the students' first language, the development of a high level of proficiency in the students' second language, grade-level or higher academic performance, and lastly, positive attitudes and behaviors with regard to culture (pp. 2-3). In addition to these four factors, Lindholm-Leary (2001) stated that the following criteria were also paramount to the success of language programs: supportive administrators and parents, high-quality teachers with access to professional development, a school environment which is conducive to language learning, and a thoughtful design of the program and its instructional features (p. 75). It is equally important that the partners involved (i.e. administration, parents, students, and teachers) all view bilingualism as a positive attribute (Soderman, 2010).

Another area to consider when establishing a two-way immersion program is language allocation. This refers to the amount of instructional time devoted to a specific subject area in the target language as well as consideration for the amount of time for instruction in both languages (Hamayan et al., 2013). Decisions must be made and frequently revisited regarding the amount of time allocated to a content area in one language, and how often and when changes might occur. Hamayan et. al. recommend that one language be chosen to teach a content area for an entire year and that students receive

instruction in each of the two languages used within the program on a daily basis. The reasoning behind this approach is to ensure that the amount of time allocated for instruction in a specific language is aligned with the program model. The program must meet the required amount of instructional time in each language and it must ensure that students are developing language skills in both languages throughout all subject areas.

As previously referenced in this chapter, it is also of great importance that there exists within the two-way immersion classroom a near equal balance of students who are native speakers of the target language and those who are English dominant (Howard, Lindholm-Leary, Rogers, Olague, Medina, Kennedy, Sugarman, & Christian, 2018). This balance of students allows for equal amounts of language models for each language within the classroom and promotes interaction among all students. While an equal balance of English-dominant students and students who speak the target language is ideal, at the very least there should be a ratio of no fewer than one third of students who speak one language to two thirds of students who speak the other language (Howard & Christian, 2002; Howard et al., 2018).

These are extremely important factors to consider during the planning process for a two-way immersion program. In order for students to achieve academic success within this type of language program model, these building blocks for a successful program must be in place.

Best Practices for a Two-Way Immersion Model

In addition to important factors for success while planning for a two-way immersion program, there are also best practices for instruction and strategies specific to immersion education that teachers must consider (Howard et al., 2018). It has long been

thought that one way a teacher can promote best practices in a two-way immersion classroom is through the separation of languages—by supporting the development of a student’s language through the use of that language alone, rather than translation of the language (Howard et al., 2005). This was determined necessary in order for students to adequately develop their comprehension and use of both languages. Consistent periods of instruction in each language were to be provided to help students adequately progress in each language. Teachers would use a range of strategies in the target language to make it more comprehensible for second language learning. More recently, however, it has been debated that language compartmentalization—or the separation of languages—in two-way immersion programs may not be as useful an approach as once thought. Language separation was once used in an effort to avoid devaluing the target language, however “bridging” the two languages helps students with cross-linguistic transfer between languages and allows for deeper understanding. It is now seen as beneficial that bilingual students receive instruction surrounding the similarities of both languages in which they are learning (Beeman & Urow, 2013). In *Guiding Principles for Dual Language*, Howard et al. (2018) make clear that when two languages are used simultaneously, it is important that their use be strategic and geared toward students who already have some grasp of both languages, rather than students who are beginning language learners.

Howard & Christian (2000) examine the use of sheltered instruction, which was also recommended as an appropriate method of instruction for two-way immersion classrooms (as cited in Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000). Echevarria et al., defined sheltered instruction as comprised of many components designed to assist in the instruction of language learning students.

The methods include:

speaking at a rate and level of complexity appropriate to the proficiency level of the students; using visual aids, graphic organizers, and manipulatives; building on prior knowledge; providing frequent opportunities for interaction; modeling academic tasks; reviewing key content concepts and vocabulary; and other essential features. (p. 8)

Additionally, they suggest the use of Active or Discovery Learning and Cooperative Learning. Both methods promote language learning through the use of hands-on instruction and more interaction with students.

Another important practice in two-way immersion is the promotion of equality of languages, cultures, and groups of language learners. A key component to success in a two-way immersion program is creating an environment of equality among the status of the two languages used in the program, as well as the cultures of all groups of students. Students must view both languages as equally respected and celebrated and when this standard exists the program is strengthened (Howard & Christian, 2002).

When implemented properly, the aforementioned instructional practices can lead to positive outcomes for two-way immersion students. The next section will review the benefits that two-way immersion programs offer students.

Benefits of Two-Way Immersion

Benefits to students have been documented to support the type of high-quality education a student can receive when enrolled in effective two-way immersion programs. Specifically as it relates to the two-way model of language immersion, students are more likely to become bilingual through this approach (Alanís & Rodriguez, 2008). It is noted

that this type of immersion model allows students who speak the target language to maintain their native-language while learning a second language, as opposed to losing one language while acquiring another.

In terms of students who are English Language Learners (ELLs), or native speakers of the target language, they receive the benefit of instruction in their primary language, rather than receiving 100% of their instruction in English. When these students are provided with instruction in their native language they tend to do better academically than they might in a classroom where English is the only language of instruction (Goldenberg, 2008).

Collier and Thomas (2004) state that the benefits of dual language programs extend beyond the advantages that students receive from the programs and can include additional benefits to parents, administrator and teachers involved in the language programs, as well. Collier and Thomas suggested that two-way immersion creates a positive setting in which those involved experience a respectful environment where cultural heritage is valued (pp. 11-12). Moreover, in a study conducted by Lindholm-Leary (2001), students in two-way immersion programs exhibited positive attitudes toward language in terms of its correlation with helping them attain better jobs, helping them do better in school, making them feel smarter, and getting better grades (p. 280). This speaks to the benefits that students themselves can identify in two-way immersion programs. Furthermore, an advantage that exists for native English-speaking students enrolled in a two-way immersion program is that they often become orally proficient and literate in the target language while maintaining academic achievement in their primary language (Howard et al., 2003).

There are many advantages for both non-native English speakers and native English speakers in two-way immersion programs. However, what are the consequences when the key components of successful two-way immersion programs are not supported school-wide? The next section takes a closer look at the challenges that can arise in two-way immersion.

The Challenges of Two-Way Immersion Programs

While there are many examples of benefits related to student achievement and academic well-being in two-way immersion programs, there are also challenges. In this section, research is examined with regard to challenges that can occur in two-way immersion programs.

Dominance of the English language within this society can sometimes conflict with adherence to best practices in two-way immersion settings (de Jong, 2011). This can sometimes occur in upper elementary grades when instructional time in the target language is replaced with English instruction for the purpose of testing preparation and test taking. Standardized testing is conducted in English and both the preparation and testing process do not necessarily align with best practices regarding target language use in immersion programs (de Jong, 2011). Teachers may feel pressure to spend additional instructional time in English rather than the target language in order to prepare students for standardized tests. This practice does not always align with the program model, as instructional time that is allotted for the target language is overshadowed with English instruction.

An awareness of the challenges that exist within two-way immersion programs is important so that they may be addressed and remedied by the planning committee

throughout the planning process. Palmer (2007) conducted a study in California with regard to dual language education in the context of a strand program. In this particular case, a two-way immersion program in California struggled to meet their goal of creating a bilingual and biliterate environment due to the fact that the program was a strand in a larger English-dominant school. Many of the practices that must be implemented to ensure a successful two-way immersion education were not present school-wide. For instance, exterior building signage was only in English, bulletin boards were often posted in English only and outside of the immersion classrooms the use of English dominated the overall school environment. The program hadn't taken appropriate measures to equalize the status of the target language, which proved detrimental to the success of the program. Consequently, there was less of an appreciation for the language and culture of minority language students in the two-way immersion program. Therefore, it must be understood that when implementing a two-way immersion program that is a strand within an English-dominant school, these types of problems can occur. It is helpful for planning committees to be aware of these challenges and have steps in place to remedy them if they arise. The next section focuses on the action plan as an important instrument in the development of a two-way immersion program.

Action Planning as a Tool to Create Change

A number of tools exist for the purpose of providing a framework and guiding an organization through the process of change. An action plan can be used as such a tool in this type of endeavor. In this section, the role of an action plan in program development and implementation is examined. Later in this section, the change that can occur in an

organization as a result of programmatic planning is reviewed in the context of this project.

Action Planning. Creating an action plan is a key component of action research. The purpose of action research in education is to create positive change within an organization. Action research is comprised of a number of stages which include: identifying an initial problem; collecting data with regard to the problem; analyzing the data and providing feedback; action planning; implementing the action plan; and, finally, assessing the action plan and providing for additional follow-up (Tomal, 2010). The action plan itself is a part of this collaborative effort and is developed during later stages of the action research process. It serves as a tool that a committee might use to guide them in the decision-making process with regard to ongoing work within an organization.

According to The Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas (2017), an action plan should be developed for the following reasons: to promote the credibility of an organization, to ensure all details of the work are accounted for, to determine what is attainable and what is not attainable for the organization, and to ensure efficiency and accountability. It is important that the action plan identify five main areas at each step of the process. These include: the exact action that will occur, the parties responsible for implementing the action, when the action will occur and for what length of time, the resources that will be needed for the action to occur, and what type of communication will be provided surrounding the action. For the purpose of this project, the action plan is the framework used to provide direction for the planning process. The creation and use of the action plan is to assist in achieving the goal

of creating change within a school. This leads to additional factors that should be considered when working towards change within a school.

Culture Change. In terms of developing a two-way immersion program that will coexist with a separate program under one roof, change is a necessary and inevitable part of the process. Reculturing is one component of redesigning a school and it refers to changing a school culture to allow for collaboration among teachers in a professional learning community (Fullan, 1996). There is a fair amount of reculturing that must take place within a school when working towards developing a successful new program. Reculturing begins to occur when teachers are able to work together in professional learning communities on something they are skilled at and value. They focus on student learning and performance in an effort to improve student outcomes. Reculturing is a result of school redesign and it is a part of the work that must occur among staff within the school community while coordination of a new program is underway.

Additionally, when it comes to designing and implementing a new program model within a school, there are other factors to consider from a leadership perspective with regard to culture change. Three important elements that assist leaders in creating change at the school and at systems levels include: human capital, social capital, and decisional capital. These three elements comprise what is coined *professional capital* (Fullan, 2016). Human capital refers to the quality of skills and talents the individual teacher possesses. Social capital deals with the collaborative efforts among people in the school, and the quality and quantity of interactions these individuals have with one another. Decisional capital refers to decision-making that occurs among many individuals or within groups, for the benefit of the school and its community. Human, social, and decisional capital

work collaboratively as three prongs of the *professional capital* tool. This tool assists school leaders in achieving the goals of the school; applying this type of collaborative method could prove beneficial when working toward implementation of a new school program. Fullan (1996, 2016) offers research on the background of how to implement change on the broader level. The action plan offers a way to organize for change. How is it that the action plan ties professional capital into this specific planning process for implementing a two-way immersion program? Professional capital, as it relates to the work of a two-way immersion planning committee, can be achieved through the components that are built in to the action plan itself. Human capital is gained through ongoing professional development for teachers in the two-way immersion setting. Social capital is realized through collaborative planning, which takes place at both the committee and teacher preparation levels. Decisional capital is achieved through research-based decisions that are made by the committee members and by the leadership team for the two-way immersion program.

Within the action plan, the aforementioned components, when combined, move the committee members, the program, and inevitably the school at large toward culture change. These action items will be discussed in further detail in the project description in Chapter Three.

The reasoning behind providing information on school culture change in addition to action planning is because practitioners and planning committee members must have an understanding that a shift in school culture is necessary in order for the program to succeed, particularly when working with the implementation of a strand program. The purpose of this project, in part, is to begin the process of culture change within the school

where the two-way immersion program currently exists. The action plan is the catalyst that propels the culture change forward. Within this planning process, the action plan itself does not create the culture change, but it helps to ensure that culture change is a part of the process and that it is understood.

Conclusion

The focus of this chapter centered on two-way immersion programs: how they are defined and the essential building blocks required for the foundation of a successful program. Best practices to ensure program success were addressed as well as challenges that exist within two-way immersion programs. Finally, the reasoning behind the use of an action plan for implementing positive change and the need for an understanding of culture change were addressed.

In the following chapter I will describe my project, which focuses on the development of an action plan that serves to address the question: How does a planning committee create culture change using best practices to implement and sustain a two-way immersion program? The design framework for the project is outlined within the chapter as well as the rationale behind developing the action plan. The components of the action plan are summarized and a description of the setting and participants for the project is provided.

CHAPTER THREE

Project Description

Introduction

Thus far, the components of effective two-way immersion programs have been examined and their successes and challenges have been identified through the review of current literature related to the topic. The objective of this project is to provide a response to the following research question: How does a planning committee create culture change using best practices to implement and sustain a two-way immersion program?

Within Chapter Three a thorough description of the project is provided. This chapter contains five sections, in which the context for the project is outlined. Described within the first section of this chapter is the action plan, which was the design framework chosen to best accommodate this type of the project. The rationale behind the need for this type of work is described in the next section. Provided in the following section is a clear description of the project and its components. A description of the setting and the participants for the project is provided in the subsequent section in order to clarify when and where the presentation of the project will occur, who the intended audience is, as well as information regarding the students that this work will affect. The timeline that was implemented for project creation and completion is identified in the final section of this chapter.

Design Framework

The framework that was used for this project is an action plan. This medium was chosen based on the perceived needs of the developing two-way immersion program. It

was also chosen as a means to guide members of the planning committee through the decision-making process, regardless of their prior knowledge concerning 90:10 two-way immersion models. As noted in Chapter Two, an effective action plan clearly delineates roles and responsibilities with timelines for completion. It holds members accountable for their work and it promotes the credibility of the goals of organization. In the case of program development at its infancy, an action plan is a valuable tool to assist in guiding the committee toward positive change for the program. This action plan will help to provide insight to stakeholders with ties to brand new two-way immersion models regarding the successful development of an effective program. It lays the groundwork for implementation of key programmatic components and strategies that are well regarded within the two-way immersion arena.

This project adds to the larger conversation surrounding two-way immersion and how to best serve the needs of all populations of students within the two-way immersion setting. Often, the needs of white students are inadvertently prioritized over the needs of other students within this type of program (Cervantes-Soon, Dorner, Palmer, Heiman, Schwerdtfeger Jinmyung Choi, 2017). This project ensures that the planning committee of a new, two-way immersion program is informed of best practices, as well as key program factors in two-way immersion models. Armed with this information, and research to support it, committee members will be better able to advocate for the program and the needs of all students within two-way immersion classrooms.

Rationale

The rationale for this project encompasses three main areas. Primarily, it is important to have a framework that identifies best practices within two-way immersion

programs, outlines how to implement them, and serves as a guide for the planning process. This helps not only in determining common classroom practices that teachers will put into place, but also in determining building objectives for the program and what must happen on a wider scale in order for the program to thrive within the district.

Additionally, at the planning committee level, it is crucial that members have a shared understanding of the practices that are necessary to support this type of language program and that decisions are being made based on best practices. When working collaboratively with a group of individuals to design a program that is new to a school district, it can quickly become difficult to ensure that all of the pieces are in place to move forward with program development. There are often many barriers to progress including a lack of knowledge with regard to the program model, a lack of vision for the program, other district priorities that take precedent over the needs of the program, a lack of time for group members, and a lack of resources for program development, to name a few. Without a clear vision for the program, and without a set delegation of responsibilities for those involved with planning, it is easy for items to fall through the cracks and for the program to fail to deliver on its promises to stakeholders. For these reasons, it is crucial to create a working document, such as an action plan, which allows committee members to collaborate in the design of a program based on best practices related to the specific program model, holding committee members accountable for the work they are doing to advance the program.

Finally, it is essential that this work be driven by a desire to create the best possible learning environment for all students within the program. In order for students to achieve success, committee members involved in developing the program must have a

thorough understanding of how different practices and components of two-way immersion can impact student learning. Decisions for the program are always research-based and are made in the best interest of its learners.

This section described the rationale of creating an action plan to help in the development of a new two-way immersion program. It also provided insight with regard to the benefits of the project to students and stakeholders alike. The next sections will describe the details of the projects and discuss the setting and the participants that will be involved in the process.

Project Description

The culminating action plan is a working document designed to help guide a team of committee members as they develop a new two-way immersion program at an elementary school over the course of five years. The planning will continue beyond five years, following the first cohort of immersion students into middle school and later, high school. The timeframe for this initial action plan is one year, with the idea that the action plan will remain in a continual process of development. Every year with the addition of each new grade level and new staff, the action plan will be updated and transformed based on the needs of the program at that time. Initially, the action plan will be provided to a planning committee for the purpose of creating a better understanding among committee members of what two-way immersion is and how to take action to meet the needs of the program. Identified in the action plan are the procedures necessary to create an effective two-way immersion program as well as determine who is responsible for implementation and follow-through of best practices as they relate to the program model. Outlined in the document itself are seven main areas: program development, program

visibility within the school, classroom teacher practices, all-staff practices, parent information/resources, district-level communication, and curriculum/assessment materials. These areas were chosen as they currently encompass themes that require substantial room for improvement within the program. Within these sections, specific program needs are defined. The layout of each section of the action plan is specified in the following paragraphs.

Program development. The focus of this section is on programmatic needs that can often go beyond individual classroom needs. In this section, agenda items include: the creation of a mission statement, the formation of a diverse planning committee that includes a variety of stakeholders, a commitment to offer transportation to students, intervention support in the target language, professional development for teachers and staff relating to best practices within two-way immersion, establishing networking opportunities with other two-way immersion programs, and strong leadership for the program.

Program visibility within the school. This section includes a list of items to be addressed which contain: signage in Spanish on the exterior of the building, additional needs for signage in Spanish on the interior of the building wherever signs in English are present, school-wide announcements be conducted in Spanish in addition to English on every occasion, and school-wide assemblies be conducted in both English and Spanish. These items must be addressed in order to promote linguistic equity within the program.

Classroom teacher practices. Considered in this section are a variety of components that classroom teachers must implement, which include: the percentage of instruction that will occur in the target language and the percentage of instruction that

will occur in English and how and when these language considerations must occur, the use of tools designed to assess the best practices that are being utilized within the classroom setting and which areas need improvement, and the incorporation of cultural components within the classroom curriculum.

All-staff practices. This section specifically relates to two-way immersion strand programs, or programs that operate within a larger school community. Highlighted are areas in which staff from all sectors of the school must be informed and they must adhere to best practices for two-way immersion programs.

Parent information/resources. This section is compiled of information and items that are necessary for parents and guardians whose students attend the program. This section includes: development of a resource list for parents/guardians related to what two-way immersion is in the context of this program, providing a pamphlet regarding language acquisition related to two-way immersion education, development of a resource list as it relates to supporting your student in two-way immersion, and access to all of this information in both the target language in addition to English.

District-level communication. This area relates specifically to any type of communications initiated by the district. There must be a mechanism in place that provides for translations and/or interpretations of all district communications to families of the program.

Curriculum/assessment materials. The focus of this final section of the action plan is on the types of assessments that must be agreed upon and used for determining the language proficiency of students in the target language. Additional decisions related to appropriate curriculum choices for a two-way immersion program are also contemplated.

Within each of the seven previously identified sections of the action plan, there also exist six subsections, which serve to guide committee members in their decision-making process. The first subsection identifies the program component the committee must consider, the second subsection identifies the research that supports implementation of the program component, the third subsection identifies the action item the committee will implement, the fourth subsection outlines the timeline required for implementation of the action item, the fifth subsection identifies the party responsible for implementation of the component, and the last subsection identifies a second party responsible for monitoring the fidelity of the implementation process. Identified in this part of the action plan are who, where, why, what, when, and how. It is within this realm that real action and implementation start to take shape. It should also be noted that the last two subsections of the plan—which allow for selection of the parties who will implement the action items and monitor the implementation process—will not be determined until the committee meets. Therefore, these areas within the action plan are left blank.

In no way is this an exhaustive list of items necessary for a successful two-way immersion program. However, it is meant to provide some basic guidance for elements of the program that have gone unaddressed or that have been inadequately addressed within the first year of implementation of the program. As previously mentioned, the action plan is a working document, intended to be updated and modified as the needs of the program change and grow and are able to be addressed.

Setting and Participants

Setting. The elementary school for which this project was created is a suburban public school, located in the Midwest. The school serves students in pre-kindergarten

classrooms through fifth grade. The student population consists of 594 students, of which, 30.3% are identified as students of lower socioeconomic status or those who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. The demographic composition of the student population for the 2018 school year consists of 13.8% Hispanic/Latino students, 8.1% Black/African American students, 7.9% Asian American students, 64.1% White students, 0.3% American Indian/Alaska Native students, and .2% students of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander heritage. Within the school, 14.1% of the student population is identified as having limited English Proficiency (LEP) and 13.6% of the student population qualify for special education services (Minnesota Department of Education, 2018).

Within a smaller section of the school community, students who will be most affected by this project are those who attend the two-way immersion strand program at the elementary school. These students currently make up four classrooms within the school, two kindergarten and two first grade classes, consisting of approximately 90 students. Students within the program consist of a combination of English-dominant students and students' whose home language is Spanish. As discussed in Chapter Two, starting in early grades, the two-way immersion program uses a 90:10 model, which requires instruction in the target language for 90% of the day and English for 10% of the day. Students receive the required 10% of English instruction during their specialist time (Music, Physical Education, Art and Media) each day. English instruction is gradually increased throughout each subsequent grade level until approximately fourth grade, when students receive 50% of their instruction in English and 50% of their instruction in the target language.

The specific setting for the distribution and presentation of the two-way immersion action plan will likely be the conference room located within the suburban public school where the two-way immersion program is offered. This will occur prior to the commencement of the 2018-2019 school year.

Participants. The participants for this project are members of the two-way immersion planning committee for the district. The original committee members who first convened to discuss the possibilities of an immersion program within the district, consisted of three elementary school teachers, two middle school teachers and one high school teacher. The committee also included one parent from the district and two district-level representatives. The composition of the committee is changing to include two teachers who currently teach in the program, two teachers who will begin teaching in the program in the upcoming year, a different administrator, and a different district-level representative. The participants have varying degrees of involvement and experience in two-way immersion education. In order to ensure alignment with best practices in two-way immersion, the current committee will work to expand its group of representatives in order to include parents who currently have students in the program, as well as other individuals who have ties to the community and an interest in two-way immersion. As previously referenced in Chapter Two, it is important that the planning committee is comprised of many different stakeholders responsible for overseeing the goals of the program. Therefore, as outlined in the action plan, the committee must work to expand membership by recruiting additional stakeholders.

Committee members are also responsible for overseeing the development of the program and making decisions based on best practices that will affect the direction of the

program. Ideally, the participants will consist of both native English-speaking and native Spanish-speaking professionals. This particular audience was chosen due to the fact that they play a crucial role in decision-making for the program. The action plan was created for their use and to help guide them in their work. For this reason, the two-way immersion planning committee was selected as the audience for the action plan.

Outlined in this section was the setting for which the project was developed as well as the intended audience for the action plan. Identification of the setting and participants helps to frame where the work is being done and whom it is intended to benefit. Defined in the following section is the timeline in which the project will be completed.

Project Timeline

Creation of the two-way immersion action plan document occurred over the course of five weeks. Throughout this timeframe, a list of research related to best practices in two-way immersion was compiled. This is coupled with information collected from interviews with leaders and practitioners who have experience in two-way immersion settings. The compilation of two-way immersion research allowed for the collection of multiple perspectives with regard to program components. It provided a collection of practical viewpoints from current practitioners as they pertain to the challenges and successes that encompass two-way immersion programs. A series of pre-written interview questions (see Appendix A to review the interview questions) were used in conducting interviews.

A compilation of best practices research was included within the action plan document that will be shared with the program planning committee. An overview of the

action plan will be presented to committee members and will accompany distribution of the action plan document. During the overview, the rationale behind the creation of the action plan and how to use the document will be explained to committee members. The meeting to review the action plan with committee members will be scheduled shortly after the five-week action plan development period has ended, prior to the beginning of the school year. It will occur during a regularly scheduled committee planning meeting at the elementary school and it will initiate the habit of formally connecting best practices for two-way immersion education into the discussions and the decision-making process for the program.

Following the distribution of the action plan document and the presentation, committee members will be required to provide feedback related to clarity of the content provided within the action plan. This will allow for additional discussion around key components of two-way immersion programming, why the components are important, and how to ensure they are upheld. It will also provide an opportunity to address any additional concerns or questions that committee members may have.

Summary

Provided in this chapter was a synopsis of the action plan document that was created to incorporate research-based best practices for two-way immersion planning committees to follow. The project description outlined each section included in the action plan, the rationale behind the creation of the document, and its importance in informing committee members of key program components. Also presented in this chapter was an overview of the design framework used and why it was chosen for the project. Additionally, the setting and the participants of the project were defined, as well as the

proposed timeline for completion of the project.

Highlighted in the following chapter is the knowledge that was acquired throughout the research and project development process. Outlined in this following chapter are potential implications of the work that was completed during the project timeline, as well as some of the limitations of the project and additional possibilities for further development of the action plan.

CHAPTER FOUR

Project Reflection

Introduction

Throughout this capstone, the research question that has guided this project is: How does a planning committee create culture change using best practices to implement and sustain a two-way immersion program? In the final chapter of the capstone, I reflect on the action plan document project as a whole. Reviewed in this chapter are the major learning outcomes of the research, writing, and learning process. The literature review is also revisited in order to pinpoint some of the research that proved most relevant to the development of the action plan. Additionally, possible implications and some of the limitations of the project are considered. Finally, the potential for future research related to the project, how the results of the project will be used, and how the project is a benefit to the profession is contemplated in this chapter.

Major Learning Outcomes

The process of creating this project began with a slight shift in topics, away from the use of best practices in a classroom and toward the implementation of key program components and the use of best practices in the development of a two-way immersion program. This shift resulted in an investigation of how to plan and make decisions when establishing an effective two-way immersion program, wherein I learned many things about researching and writing. I also learned a great deal about best practices within the two-way immersion arena and the process one must go through when aiming to turn ideas into action to create a cultural shift within the school community. As a Spanish

immersion teacher with a strong belief in the two-way immersion model, this capstone has allowed me to delve into research surrounding vital program components. I have been able to create a project that will benefit my own practice as a teacher. The project will also serve to guide the group of individuals who will be making decisions on behalf of the program. It has provided me the opportunity to create a framework that will be used by a committee within weeks of its completion. I have created what I hope will be a useful document for the program that I am helping to develop and for future committees striving to implement successful programs of their own.

During the literature review of this thesis I learned a lot about citing sources. I really had to work hard to make sure that the points I made with regard to two-way immersion practices were all supported by research and were properly cited. There are numerous practices that are foundational in creating an effective immersion learning experience for students. As a teacher in immersion education, I have become very familiar with many of the best practices and they seem like second nature to me. It was easy for me to recall many of these practices and to include them among my research. It was helpful to receive feedback from colleagues reminding me to always include citations, even when the practices I was describing seemed like common knowledge.

Another area of my learning that evolved during this process relates to writing style. It was challenging to ensure that my writing remained clear and concise. I have a tendency to write long, general sentences. This can make it difficult for the reader to clearly understand the concept that I have written about or the point I am trying to make. There were many, many revisions to my chapters during the writing process. While this was very time consuming, the process helped me develop as a writer and it helped me

review my own writing with a very critical eye, weeding through unnecessary, lengthy wording and breaking it down into clear, comprehensible thoughts.

As a learner in this process, I discovered the invaluable importance of surrounding oneself with a team whose purpose is to support the writer in their work and push them to do better. The team I chose helped me clarify my ideas, to seek more answers, and to generally improve my practice as a researcher, writer, and lifelong learner. It was extremely useful to utilize the expertise of individuals who share knowledge and passion with regard to the content area that I explored and the writing process in general. My peer review group truly helped me to recognize the value of being able to rely on others for their diverse perspectives and insight.

This section discussed some of the main takeaways that I gained as a researcher, writer, and learner. The next section will revisit some of the key literature that was most beneficial to the creation of my action plan document.

Revisiting the Literature Review

My culminating project is an action plan document, which was designed for utilization by planning committees who are working toward establishing and sustaining a successful two-way immersion program. The basis for the action plan is to ensure that committees are using research-based best practices to guide their decision-making. The research that proved to be most important to the capstone was that which centered on key components and best practices within two-way immersion. Much of the literature reviewed in Chapter Two provided specific examples of components necessary for the success of a two-way immersion program. I incorporated these components into the action plan as action items along with direct quotes from the literature to support why the

components are important. In the following paragraphs I provide specific examples of the literature that as the most impactful to my project.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, one example of an important factor for a successful two-way immersion program is to ensure that programs seek out high-quality teachers who have access to professional development (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). Due to the fact that professional development is critical for program success, I was able to include a section within my action plan that incorporates teacher professional development as an action item. The plan recommends that the committee decide on two to three professional development needs for two-way immersion teachers and that the professional development opportunities be provided within the school year, based on the identified needs. The action plan also cites additional sources that strongly recommend the implementation of staff development related to the philosophy and theory of two-way immersion education; specific professional development with regard to the language model of the program; and professional development specific to each grade level that can be modified throughout the year, depending on the needs of the staff (Hamayan et al., 2013; Howard et al., 2018; Sugarman & Howard, 2001).

Furthermore, the literature review uncovered that a successful two-way immersion program requires equality among the statuses of the two languages being taught in the program (Howard & Christian, 2002). I was able incorporate action items within the action plan that provided steps to promote the equalization of the target language with the dominant language. These items included: posting signage throughout the building in Spanish, allowing for all-school announcements to be provided in Spanish (in addition to English), and requiring that school assemblies be conducted in Spanish (in

addition to English). Within the action plan document, I provided the committee with additional sources and quotes regarding equalizing the status of the target language. For example, the use of the target language should be structured to counter the strong presence of English; specific plans should be put into place from the very beginning of the program in order to raise the status of the target language school-wide; and, in the early stages of the program it is important that the target language receives more focus to counter the dominance of the mainstream language (de Jong, 2011; Hamayan et al., 2013; Howard et al., 2018).

While research related to two-way immersion components and best practices proved most beneficial to my culminating project, learning about culture change and the factors that must be intentionally incorporated in order for change to be successful within a school community provided me with another perspective relating to program implementation (Fullan, 1996). Although I had a basic understanding that culture change was a part of the process of implementing a new program, I hadn't explored the possibilities of what it might look like through a leadership lens. Learning about the collaborative aspects that must occur among school staff members as a part of reculturing and school redesign opened up a new line of inquiry for me. I began to consider how one might foster collaborative, school-wide opportunities between the teachers of a two-way immersion strand program and the teachers of general education classrooms within a school. This possibility lends itself to recommendations for future research and will be discussed further in that section. In the next section I reflect on the implications of the project.

Implications of the Project

The most relevant implication of this project is its use in the program I am currently involved in developing. In my experience, planning for a program without a clear vision, timeline, or a means to identify and hold parties accountable for implementation of action items does not allow for effective planning. The action plan I created accounts for all of these factors. Additionally, the research, which is embedded into the document, provides context to the committee members for supporting implementation of each action item listed. While there is considerable research concerning best practices in two-way immersion, and research pertaining to the steps one must take to implement these practices, I have not yet encountered a document that combines the research with the action plan for the use of a planning committee. The goal is to create a strong foundation of support in order for members of the planning committee to confidently make research-based decisions.

Should this action plan be implemented in my district as a tool for two-way immersion planning, it would set the planning committee on the path to create a successful two-way immersion program that would benefit all students. It would also set in motion the beginning steps for culture change within the school. On a wider scale, if the use of the action plan is proven effective within our suburban district, the plan itself could be reproduced and adapted for use in other districts, which could lead to broader use of the plan within the larger two-way immersion arena.

In addition to positive implications of the project, there are also limitations with regard to how others can utilize the action plan. The following section will look at some of the limitations of the project.

Limitations of the Project

Above all, the action plan that was compiled is specific to the needs of a two-way immersion program that is currently in the development stages following the completion of its first year. The action plan is comprised of key two-way immersion components that are either missing from the program design or have not been adequately addressed. The list of components is not exhaustive and therefore does not cover every possible action item that might arise during the implementation process of a new program. Therefore, in order for other practitioners to make use of the action plan, they would have to tailor it to the specific needs of their program, which would require additional work and research.

Another potential limitation of the action plan is that it only covers one year of the planning process. Developing a new program requires multiple years of planning and constant reflection and revision. The action plan I developed is only a snapshot of what planning during year two of the program might look like. Due to the brevity of the plan, other practitioners might have to invest more time into further developing the document to include additional preparation for subsequent years of a program.

An additional limitation to the project is the timeline that was developed within the document. The current timeline for the completion of key program components consists of amounts of time that I arbitrarily chose based on my own perspective for when I would like to see the projects completed. Ideally, when deciding on a timeframe for project completion, consultation with the other members of the planning committee is warranted. Multiple perspectives from those involved with the planning process would allow for a more accurate assessment of when items on the list can be accomplished.

Also, as mentioned in Chapter Two, action plans are typically a part of a group

process. They are developed by a group, for the use of that group to enact positive change. In this case, I developed the action plan on my own for the use of a group. One of the drawbacks in the development of my plan as it currently stands, is that it only accounts for the perspective of one person. There may be many other ideas that members of the planning committee have, but because one person alone developed the action plan, the ideas of the other members may not be represented within the document.

There are a variety of limitations that exist within this project. However, the limitations also provide opportunity for growth and further exploration of the topic. Due to the fluid nature of the action plan document, it lends itself to additional modifications based on the needs of other potential practitioners and is therefore an easy document to continue shaping. The following section will provide additional recommendations for further research projects in related areas.

Recommendations for future research

There are many different directions one could take for future research on this topic. As emphasized throughout this thesis, the components covered within the action plan document relate to one year of planning and are specific to the needs of one program. Although many two-way immersion components are covered within the action plan, there are specific areas that require additional research and consideration. One recommendation is that the document be expanded to include additional action items (coupled with research to support the items) for each year of program planning. The project in its current state allows for one year of planning. If expanded, the action plan could provide a framework for program planning throughout all elementary level grades and potentially grow to include planning for middle school program alignment and

beyond.

A different approach to add to the development of this project might be to reformat the document so that it is specific to each grade level. The idea is that at the end of each year, as a new grade level is integrated into the program, specific grade-level components of two-way immersion would be identified and researched. Newly hired teachers would have a chance to provide feedback related to their two-way immersion teaching experience within that grade-level context. The components would be incorporated into a new grade-level action plan for the committee and the new team members to review and consider.

Another area of potential project expansion could include further research regarding teacher and staff recruitment to the program. This could be incorporated into the existing document as an additional two-way immersion key component, which would fall under the area of program development. As is the case with all of the components included in the action plan, it must be supported with supplementary research that reinforces the reasoning behind the necessity of the component to the program.

As previously stated in this chapter, the research I found related to creating a culture change within a school triggered a thought process connected to school-wide, collaborative opportunities between two-way immersion teachers and general education teachers. This topic provides an opportunity for practitioners and planning committee members to add to the project by focusing on the section of the action plan that relates to all-staff practices and creating two cohesive programs within a school. Within the action plan there is already research to highlight the importance of a cohesive community as it relates to strand programs within a larger school community. Additional action items

could be included within the action plan for the specific purpose of cultivating positive culture change within the school community. These action items would be supported by research, which establishes methods and practices used to create change from a leadership perspective. This would incorporate the literature by Fullan (1996), which integrates a collaborative process between teachers in an effort to change the culture of a school.

The ideas for future related research within this section are just a few of the potential possibilities that exist to further develop the current action plan or to take the project in a new direction. The action plan as it is currently laid out, works as a catalyst for planning committees to use the research and then reshape and develop the document to meet the needs of their program. In the following section I will review how the project will be used to benefit the current program that I am helping to develop. I will also examine how this project is a benefit to the profession at large.

Use of Project Results and How the Project Benefits the Profession

The end result of this capstone journey is the action plan document that will guide the planning committee in their endeavor to make research-based decisions in the best interest of the two-way immersion program. Following the completion of the capstone project, I will meet with the current planning committee members to discuss the research I have studied for the project, the document I have created, and the implications of this project for our program. In our initial meeting we will discuss the guiding question and how it relates to our work as a planning committee. We will review the document and the research included within each section of the document to ground ourselves in the work and clarify our purpose and commitment to the program. If the action plan is well

received, the expectation for our planning committee will be to conduct routine meetings throughout the year where the action plan will remain at the forefront of our program planning, guiding our decision making and providing a structure for our accountability to the program. I anticipate that at the end of the year we will review the action items embedded within the plan, reassess the work that will have been accomplished at that point, and continue to develop the plan for its use during the following school year. If implemented and used with fidelity, this action plan will have positive implications for our program, as no other guide has been created to outline our specific program needs and provide us with a clear understanding regarding why the components are essential to the program.

This project will also benefit the two-way immersion community at large. The action plan provides a framework with which to explore the rationale behind the inclusion of program components. It also provides multiple layers of accountability in the form of the timeline and the identification of the parties responsible for implementation of the program components. As previously stated, the action plan is a working, adaptable document that can be molded to meet the needs of the program for the benefit of the students it serves. For these reasons, the plan is a benefit to both the specific program for which it was created, as well as the larger two-way immersion community.

Conclusion

This final chapter concludes my work for this capstone project. In this chapter I reflected on the process that encompassed the creation of the capstone project. The content reviewed in this chapter included major learning outcomes of the research, writing, and learning process. Within this chapter I also revisited the literature review

from Chapter Two and I identified research that proved to be most relevant to the project. I reflected on implications and limitations of the project, and future research related to the project. Finally, I considered how the results of the project might be used and how the project is a benefit to the profession overall.

Ultimately, this process led me to the creation of a research-based action plan to answer my question: How does a planning committee create culture change using best practices to implement and sustain a two-way immersion program? It is my hope that throughout my work as a Spanish immersion teacher and a member of a two-way immersion planning committee, I will continue to learn and to help educate other practitioners and planning committee members on the components that are vital to the success of two-way immersion programs. I also hope that the action plan will be used with fidelity not only among the planning committee members with whom I will be working, but also among other practitioners and program developers working to create a successful program for language learners in their communities.

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Appendix A

1. What is the mission of the dual immersion program?
2. How do you see the mission as guiding instruction in the classroom?
3. What are some of the practices you have implemented in the classroom or have seen implemented in the classroom to support two-way immersion?
4. What are some of the school-wide practices you have seen implemented to support two-way immersion?
5. What do you see as some of the successes of and some of the challenges to the two-way immersion program in this setting?
6. What effect, if any, does the immersion program have on the rest of the school, and vice versa, what effect, if any does the school have on the immersion program?
7. What benefits and/or disadvantages have you witnessed to students enrolled in the immersion program?
8. What is one practice you would propose be implemented to strengthen the program?