

CREATING AN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM MODEL THAT
CATERS TO JUNIOR HIGH STUDENTS WITH LIMITED OR INTERRUPTED FORMAL
EDUCATION

by

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Project Description

The purpose of this project is to create a space to synthesize the research behind Student with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) programming in order to create a program model in our district that is better aligned to our Junior High SLIFE needs. DeCapua and Marshall (2015) defined Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) as not having the opportunity to participate in formal education previously or have experienced significant time gaps in schooling due to being unable to attend, they are also generally two grade levels below their peers in content knowledge, have low or no literacy or numeracy skills and are (with some exceptions) members of collectivist cultures. This project was made to answer the question *How can schools create an English as a Second Language program model that will best support Junior High Students with Limited and or Interrupted Schooling?*, and goes on to propose a model/schedule that would work best for SLIFE to ensure an equitable education for them.

This project was put into a website platform in order to be functional, accessible, and long lasting. Due to research by Garret et al. (2018) on website design I decided that the utmost importance should be placed on the website's functionality, readability, and user friendliness. This project's aim is to help schools build a more equitable program for SLIFE students as their needs differ from those of other English Learners. This website is designed to be used by our administrators, EL coordinator, other EL teachers and myself in order to evaluate and create programs that are effective. My hope is that other districts could also utilize this website in order to create their own SLIFE programming.

The research focused on major findings from DeCapua (2016), DeCapua and Marshall (2010), Zacarian and Haynes (2012), Short and Boyson (2012) as well as the guidelines provided by the Minnesota Department of Education and their information governing EL services (n.d). Based on the research I found I created a website with a drop down menu and tabs that include: an about me section; a description of SLIFE; a list of frequently asked questions (what guidelines does Minnesota have for EL Programs, how does SLIFE programming differ from that of other Newcomers, what does research say about effective programs for SLIFE); a visual of both the current program model and proposed models with explanations; a discussion of the scope and curriculum focused on; further educational links; and a section for comments and questions.

Rationale

As an EL teacher in rural Minnesota we have seen a growing population of EL students particularly in the growth of our SLIFE population, currently the EL population for the district sits at about 8%, but in the elementary/middle school I work in it is about 19%. At this school, we have 2 ESL teachers, and 1.5 paras to service 100 students. This website will specifically target the junior high/middle school as it has the highest population of EL's and SLIFE (approximately 28 students with 7 of these being SLIFE).

The Junior High model thus far has been effective for our other EL's and newcomers, but SLIFE are falling through the cracks and not receiving all of the skills they need in only 60 minutes a day. I reflected on how we could better serve SLIFE to ensure they are getting the equitable education they deserve instead of trying to fit them in a model that does not work for

them. I then decided to look into research that discussed best practices for SLIFE program models, and used that to develop a model/schedule that would work for our students.

I chose to put this into a website format so that I could share the information and research with my administrators and coordinator (as well as other staff) easily and we could discuss (in person or virtually) how I came to this proposed program model. The website design also made sense to me because it was a format that would not be lost, or forgotten with time, like a powerpoint or verbal presentation could be. It is also a place where people wanting more information on SLIFE and SLIFE programming could go to look at synthesized research and resources.

Links to Project

I am including a link to my project below, it was created using Google Sites, as that is a website design platform I have been trained on. The use of Google sites was also chosen due to the fact that I can update it often to continue to grow the site and add new research and information as it becomes available. The website also includes a Google form that users are encouraged to use to discuss the overall appearance of the website as well as any comments or questions they may have. These responses will then be sent to a google sheet that I will be maintaining.

<https://sites.google.com/hamline.edu/slifeprogrammodel/home?authuser=2>

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