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## Effective methods of parent-teacher communication for teachers of english language learners

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EFFECTIVE METHODS OF PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION FOR  
TEACHERS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

by

LUZEANA E. ALFONZO-REYES

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Honors in the Major Program in Elementary Education  
in the College of Education  
and in The Burnett's Honors College  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

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Thesis Chair: Elizabeth S. Hoffman, Ph. D.

## **ABSTRACT**

Families from all over the world come to the United States for a new beginning. More often than not, these families speak little or no English. A challenge that teachers face every day is trying to communicate with children and their families who speak little or no English. Following a review of the various forms of communication and types of parental involvement, a survey was created. This survey was completed by elementary teachers in a local lower socioeconomic area elementary school with a high mobility rates and high levels of English Language Learner (ELL) students.

The results of this study will offer the most effective ways teachers can openly communicate with families who speak little or no English. The results suggest that although vital, communication between the parents of ELL students and the teacher varies from teacher to teacher. Additionally, having resources available to teachers at the school and using the resources available allows parents and teachers to communicate effectively.

## DEDICATION

To my mother, oh my amazing mother; where do I begin? I cannot write this without crying. Since I was a little girl, no matter what crazy adventure I wanted to conquer, you have always supported me and told me I can do it, even when that meant moving more than 300 miles away to pursue my dreams. There are no words to say how grateful I am to have you as my mother.

Thank you for everything and I love you!

To my family; you have never expected anything but greatness from me. Your constant support and love has made me who I am today. As I end one journey in my life and begin another, I cannot express how happy I am to know you all will be by my side supporting me. I love you all so much!

To all the teachers in my family who have dedicated their lives to others; you have inspired me to change as many lives as you did through teaching.

To my friends, especially Mahassan Harb and Nicole Yello; your motivation and ideas have changed my life forever. We have laughed, cried, and learned together. I have no doubt in my mind we will all achieve what we want in life; to change the lives of others.

To my professors; your knowledge and stories have inspired me. You all have motivated me in one way or another and I truly now believe this is right profession for me. Thank you!

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I am highly appreciative for having Dr. Sherron Roberts as a part of my committee. I know I always made you crazy with all my questions but you never let it show. You always responded with kindness, cheerfulness, and never let me give up. For that I thank you!

I would like to thank Dr. Edwidge Crevecoeur-Bryant for being a part of my committee. If I ever had a question or was confused about anything, you were always there to answer. Thank you for the abundance of knowledge I needed to make this thesis possible.

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's world, diversity in elementary classrooms is more often the rule than the exception. When children come from another country to the United States, the opportunities for them to become successful and make a career for themselves are endless. Most immigrant children come speaking their native language. Their parents may speak little or no English. How does a teacher communicate with a parent who speaks little or no English? "Many classroom teachers across the United States feel unprepared to work with students and families who speak limited or no English" (Chen, Kyle, & McIntyre, 2008, p. 7).

"The increasing number of English Language Learners (ELLs) in public schools has created a need for teacher educators to prepare preservice teachers to be able to work with families who have limited English" (Hooks, 2008, p. 97). The challenge of trying to communicate with students and parents of another language can make teachers feel overwhelmed. I have personal knowledge of this challenge as I was an ELL student until third grade. Trying to communicate with my teachers was frustrating enough for me; I can only imagine what they were going through and how they were feeling. Thankfully, my mother spoke English and participated constantly in school events. Unfortunately, this is not the case for all ELLs, and we should not assume that parents are not interested in their child's learning. Some parents may be scared, cannot make time, or do not feel welcomed in the classroom (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

"The importance of parental involvement was accentuated by the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which holds our nation's schools accountable for academic achievement for all students" (Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005, p. 77). "The law requires school districts who receive

federal funds to inform parents how they can be involved in their children's schools and requires school districts to disseminate an annual district report card to parents" (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009, p.34). Teachers can communicate with ELL parents to keep them involved by using print and/or technology. No doubt, parent-teacher communication is vital to a child's success in elementary school (Balli, 1996; Comer, 1984; Lareau, 1987). This thesis sought to determine effective methods of parent-teacher communication for teachers of ELL students.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND BACKGROUND**

“Communication needs to be clear, consistent, and positive, and parents need to believe that they play an important role in their children’s learning” (Musti-Rao & Cartledge, 2004, p. 16). “Communication can take several forms: (1) verbal communication, (2) written notification, (3) use of technology, and (4) community action strategies” (Columna, Senne, & Lytle, 2009, p. 49). Verbal communication occurs through face-to-face interaction including, telephone conversations. Written notification is a type of communication that can take the form of a letter, newsletter, message or brochure. The use of technology is communication that occurs through the use of technology to communicate with another person, such as, internet, e-mail, chat rooms embedded in classroom websites, cellular phone, or video chat (*i.e.*, Skype). Communication action strategies include school-sponsored events that are held on the school grounds (*i.e.*, Math or Reading Nights, Fall Festivals, fundraising events, etc.).

The advantages of using verbal communication include the teacher hearing the voice inflections and tone of the parent, it is more personable, and if it is face-to-face, the teacher can read the parent’s body language and facial expressions. Unfortunately, not all teachers are bilingual and having face-to-face meetings is time consuming. Face-to-face meetings can be time consuming because the teacher may spend multiple hours planning for the meeting as well as finding a reasonable time to meet with the parents. These disadvantages can make it difficult for a teacher to communicate with a parent of an English Language Learner (ELL) so the teacher must come up with other creative ways to communicate with the parent. One way the teacher can solve this problem is by having a translator who speaks the native language of the ELL’s family to come to the meeting to help communicate (Columna, Senne, & Lytle, 2009).

The advantages of written communication are the letters, newsletter, messages, or brochure can be detailed and translated to another language, if necessary. Many parents who speak little or no English can benefit greatly from this form of communication. If the teachers are willing to take the time, this form of communication will be one way they can communicate with parents of ELL students throughout the year (Columna, Senne, & Lytle, 2009). As wonderful as that sounds, the disadvantages of written communication are that it does take additional time for the translation, the translation given may not be accurate, and it may require hours of planning.

One of the most recent and effective ways teachers are communicating with parents is through the use of technology (*i.e.*, computers, video chat, e-mail, text messaging, etc.). The advantages of using technology as a form of communication include the speed and ease of use for many people and teachers can post information regularly for parents to access anytime, at their own convenience. But if a parent does not have access to a computer or they have no experience using a computer, it can make this type of communication with the parent challenging (Columna, Senne, & Lytle, 2009). These disadvantages are often seen in lower socioeconomic area schools with a high population of ELL students and their families. An alternative to the use technology is the use of community action strategies to get parents involved and communicating with teachers.

As mentioned earlier, community action strategies include activities, information sessions, and festivals held at the school. Math and Reading Nights are two activities some schools employ to get parents involved. Information sessions can be presented on a large variety of topics, such as, eating healthy, how to become more involved, or other issues the school feels will be essential to the parents. Some of the advantages of communicating through community

action strategies are that it allows parent-to-parent interaction as well as parent-to-teacher communication. Community action strategies are also very personable, and they give parents the opportunity to share in cultural activities. However, planning for these events can take weeks and some parents may have difficulty obtaining transportation or getting off work, thereby, preventing them from attending the school events (Columna, Senne, & Lytle, 2009).

“The value of parental participation is widely accepted, but participation is difficult to promote and maintain” (Darling, Kleiman, & LaRocque, 2011, p. 116). Teachers may also have concerns about the parental involvement of ELL students. Some of the “[r]ealistic concerns by teachers are the inconvenience or lack of transportation, the parents’ working schedules, the limited time a teacher possesses, the language barrier when translators are not available, and schools with a lack of or minimal support for family involvement.... These concerns must be addressed if schools intend to involve the many families who want to be supportive but find it difficult, especially the families of English language learners” (Chen, Kyle, & McIntyre, 2008, p. 17). While there are many concerns about parental involvement, parent involvement can occur at various levels.

“Research indicates that three categories or types of parental involvement that exist: (1) *home-based involvement*, (2) *school-based involvement*, and (3) *academic socialization*” (Hill & Tyson, 2009, p. 742). *Home-based involvement* involves the parents helping with homework and taking children to educational settings such as museums and libraries (Hartlep & Ellis, 2010). *School-based involvement* refers to parental involvement in school events such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings and school open houses (Hartlep & Ellis, 2010). “*Academic socialization* involves parents being concerned with their child’s acculturation into disciplinary

and subject-based discourse[d] and genres” (Lea & Street, 2006, p.368). The ideal classroom setting includes involved parents actively participating in school events, communicating with the teacher on a regular basis and helping their children with their homework or class projects on a daily basis. Unfortunately, this is not always the case.

The non-involvement of parents of ELL students occurs for multiple reasons. Some of the common reasons for lack of involvement on the parents part are that they may not speak enough English to communicate with school personnel, they may not know that they are expected to be involved in their child’s education, they may not be literate in their native language and/or English, and may not be able to read notices sent home, even when translated into the home language. Additionally, some cultures believe the teacher is a higher authority figure and the parents may not want to interfere with the teacher’s authority. Some parents may work several jobs and simply not have the time to be involved. Finally, some families may not have transportation or the ability for childcare in order to visit the school (Ariza, 2000).

Other barriers to parental involvement may include specific cultures prohibiting the mother from leaving the house because of traditional gender roles. In other cases, some parents may fear contact with authority figures due to immigration status. Sometimes children are used as interpreters and the parents may feel uncomfortable with the child acting in this capacity. Regrettably, some parents may not realize they are, or should be, the decision makers when it comes to their child’s education, therefore they may have never made an attempt to become involved (Ariza, 2000).

Demographics may also affect involvement and communication with parents. “Demographic factors such as poverty, racial and ethnic identity, family composition, and

educational level of parents affect educational performance of children” (Musti-Rao & Cartledge, 2004, p. 15). Parents lacking education may be intimidated by the school setting. If parents do not believe they play an important role in their child’s education, they may not be willing to go above and beyond to get involved. In fact, the parents may shy away from any involvement or communication with the teacher which may negatively affect their student. If the students feel the parents do not care, they may also not care about their own education.

## METHODOLOGY

Effective parent-teacher communication is important to English Language Learners' success in elementary school. Effective communication involves both the sending and receiving of information. As stated previously, this thesis sought to determine effective methods of parent-teacher communication for teachers of ELLs. Therefore, for the purpose of this survey, I decided to survey teachers in order to help determine the answer to this important question: What is the effective means of parent-teacher communication of teachers with ELL students. "Today—more than ever—the perception is the reality. What people think is what they believe...and know...for a fact!" (Banach, 2001, p.1) The survey was an effective way to find out what the participants in my study were thinking.

The online survey I developed (See Appendix A for a screenshot of the questions included in the survey) closely follows Banach's (2001) work on developing effective surveys. As noted by Banach (2001) the essential steps to making a survey include, but are not limited to the following steps: outline the content areas, design questionnaire, tabulate the data, analyze the results, and then report the new knowledge. The survey consisted of 16 questions; 5 scaled, 3 short answers, 3 multiple choice, 3 yes or no, 1 true or false and 1 optional question. The target audience for the survey was elementary teachers at a local lower socioeconomic area elementary school with high mobility rates and high levels of ELL students.

The school houses 847 students compared to last year when the school housed over 1000 students. Of these students, 67.5% are identified as Hispanic, 13.3% are Black, and 13.1% are White, while the remaining 6.1% are students of various ethnicities (*i.e.*, Asian, American Indian, etc.). Out of the whole student body, 73.9% of the students are on the schools free or

reduced lunch program, 42.2% are in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, and 8.5% receive Exceptional Student Educational (ESE) services. As of today, the school is classified as a Title 1 school, in which the school receives funding because the majority of the school population is categorized as low income families.

The information gathered from the online survey determined what teachers in today's classrooms have found to be the most effective ways to communicate with parents of ELL students, the challenges teachers face, and the resources available for teachers. The survey was accessible by <http://www.kwiksurveys.com/>. The survey was approved by the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) as well as the local school district. (See Appendix B for the Letter of Approval from IRB and Appendix C for the School District Approved Research Request Form).

This survey captured all the ideas of the participants and gathered the data as to the most effective ways teachers can communicate with parents of ELL students. The data collected from the survey will inform this research question and benefit teachers as well as future educators. The responses from the survey have led to more questions about parent-teacher communication and the effects on ongoing ELL elementary student success that will be addressed later in the conclusion.

## **RESULTS**

After conducting the survey, requesting 40 participants to respond, the results indicated how the 31 teachers felt about the importance of parent-teacher communication and the various methods of communication. The teachers stated which method of communication (*i.e.*, verbal communication, written notification, the use of technology, and community action strategies) they found to be the most effective and ineffective to use when communicating with families who speak little or no English. The survey asked the teachers what resources are available for them, if any, to communicate with families who speak little or no English by their school as well as to explain the most challenges part about communicating with parents of English Language Learners (ELLs). The last question of the survey was optional and asked the teachers to give advice to future educators about communicating with families who speak little or no English. Refer to Appendix D: Table of Summative Survey Results, for the summary of the survey results.

### **Importance of Parent-Teacher Communication**

As stated in the introduction, “The importance of parental involvement was accentuated by the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which holds our nation’s schools accountable for academic achievement for all students” (Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005, p. 77). “The law requires school districts who receive federal funds to inform parents how they can be involved in their children’s schools and requires school districts to disseminate an annual district report card to parents” (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009, p.34). The first question on the survey asked teachers to rate, on a scale from zero to five; zero being the lowest and five being the highest, how important

it is for them to communicate with parents of ELLs. See Appendix E: Survey Results, page 48, for the detailed results and comments from the survey.

Out of 31 responses, two (6.45%) of the teachers rated the importance of communicating with their ELLs parents a three; three signifying it is important; eight (25.80%) teachers rated the importance of communicating with their ELLs parents a four, signifying highly important; 21 (67.74%) of the teachers rated the importance of communicating with their ELLs parents a five, signifying extremely important. Based on these results, the teachers believe that communicating with the parents of ELLs is of importance to them. Six teachers provided comments as to why they believe it is important to communicate with parents of ELL students.

One teacher stated “It is very important to keep all your students’ parents up to date with how they are doing in the classroom so that they can reinforce learning at home.” Two other teachers wrote similar comments; “ELL students sometimes lack the support from home due to the language barrier. It is important to communicate with parents so they can understand what needs to be done at home to help their [children]” and “This is the key to success with these [ELL] students[.] [T]he more teacher/parent communication the better students can learn, since what is being taught in the classroom hopefully is being reinforced at home.” These teachers realize that in order for ELL students to be successful, they must continue their learning at home by practicing what they have learned at school. Most students check out as soon as the bell for dismissal rings. By keeping the lines of communication open between the parent and the teacher, the teachers hope that the parents will reinforce learning at home.

In order for the parents to reinforce the learning at home, “They [parents] must understand the expectations and the strategies we [teachers] use in order to accommodate the

ELL student's needs" as stated by one teacher. If the parents of ELL students are not communicating with the teachers, the[y] may not understand "...the difficulties the child might encounter through[ou]t the school year while learning a second language." I agree with one teacher who commented that "Even tho[ugh] it is easier to not meet with the parents, the students and parents will benefit more when there is open communication..." Taking the easy way out seems the most appealing but it is not what is best for the students. As so eloquently stated by one participant, "Communication is paramount in the success of our ELL students. We must get the parents onboard to help their child succeed..." and become successful in reaching their life goals.

### **Methods of Communication**

The methods of communication between a teacher and a parent can occur orally, in print and/or through the use of technology. Unfortunately, sometimes it is not only the students who do not speak English but their parents may speak little or no English as well. In order for teachers to communicate with parents successfully, "[c]ommunication needs to be clear, consistent, and positive, and parents need to believe that they play an important role in their children's learning" (Musti-Rao & Cartledge, 2004, p. 16). "Communication can take several forms: (1) verbal communication, (2) written notification, (3) use of technology, and (4) community action strategies" (Columna, Senne, & Lytle, 2009, p. 49).

Questions two through four asked participants about the methods they use in their classroom to communicate with the parents/guardians of English Language Learners (ELL); to identify which method of communication works best for them and which method of communication does not work for them when communicating with families who speak little or

no English (*i.e.*, verbal, written, or the use of technology). See Appendix E: Survey Results, pg. 48-49, for the complete results and comments from the survey.

The second question asked the teachers to identify the methods they use in their classroom to communicate with parents/guardians of ELL students (*i.e.*, email, phone call, etc.). After reviewing the responses, I discovered that many teachers use a variety of methods to communicate with the parents of ELLs, not just one specific method. First, I will review the responses for verbal communication. The verbal communication methods that were indicated by the teachers were phone calls and face-to-face parent conferences. Out of 31 responses, 18 (58.06%) teachers noted that they use phone calls home to communicate with the parents of ELL students, but one teacher noted that she uses this method only if the parents do not respond to their emails or letter home. Out of 31 responses, five (16.13%) teachers noted that they use face-to-face conferences to communicate with the parents of ELL students, and although 22 of the respondents speak only English, only one teacher specified that she uses a translator during her parent-teacher conferences.

The forms of written notifications that were used as indicated by the teachers were letters sent home, notes in student planner/agenda, newsletters, and weekly behavior reports. Out of 31 responses, 16 (51.61%) teachers responded they communicate with ELL parents by sending letters home. Fourteen (45.15%) of the 31 teachers noted they use notes in the student agenda/planner to communicate with the parents of ELLs. Out of 31 responses, five (16.13%) teachers stated they send out monthly and/or weekly newsletters but, interestingly, only one teacher specified that he/she sends out the newsletter in both English and Spanish. One teacher noted “I have a weekly newsletter that I send home with my students that explains what we are

doing in each subject for the week and any other information that is important such as field trips, PTA events, FCAT dates, etc...” Out of 31 responses, only two (6.45%) teachers indicated that they use weekly behavior reports as a way to communicate with parents of ELL students.

Over the years, technology, in my opinion has become a vital part of our society. The use of technology that was noted by the 31 teachers as a way to communicate with the parents of ELL students were emails, classroom/team website, and text messages. The most popular of them all is email. Out of 31 responses, 25 (80.65%) teachers noted they use email as a way to communicate with the parents of ELL students. Three (9.68%) teachers indicated that they send out weekly emails in both English and Spanish and one (3.23%) teacher specified that they send out their classroom newsletter via email.

Out of 31 responses, two (6.45%) teachers responded they use their classroom website and/or team website to communicate with the parents of ELL students. Out of 31 responses, only one (3.23%) teacher noted he/she uses text messaging as a way to communicate with the parents of ELL students. I found it interesting that only one (3.23%) teacher indicated they use text messaging. It seems as though today everywhere we look, everyone, even children, are on cellular phones talking, text messaging, or web searching. You might think this method would be more popular as a form of communication for teachers too.

The third question asked teachers, which method of communication works best for you when communicating with families who speak little or no English. Out of 31 responses, 18 (58.06%) teachers chose verbal communications as the method of communication that works best for them when communicating with families who speak little or no English. Out of 31 responses, five (16.13%) teachers chose written communication as the method of communication

that works best for them when communicating with families who speak little or no English. Out of 31 responses, eight (25.81%) teachers chose the use of technology as the method of communication that works best for them when communicating with families who speak little or no English. These results have proven that what works best varies from teacher to teacher.

The fourth question asked the teachers, which method of communication does not work best for you when communicating with families who speak little or no English. Out of 31 responses, ten (32.26%) teachers chose verbal communications as the method of communication that does not work best for them when communicating with families who speak little or no English. Out of 31 responses, nine (29.03%) teachers chose written communication as the method of communication that does not work best for them when communicating with families who speak little or no English. Out of 31 responses, twelve (38.71%) teachers chose the use of technology as the method of communication that does not work best for them when communicating with families who speak little or no English. These results show that among the 31 teachers who participated, the use of technology is the least preferred method of communication.

The following sections present what the teachers believe are the least and most effective methods of communication (verbal, written, and the use of technology) with parents of ELL students as well as the community action strategies provided by their school for parents to become involved.

### **VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

Verbal communication occurs through face-to-face interaction including telephone conversations. As stated earlier, effective communication involves both the sending and

receiving of information. If a teacher cannot understand what the parent is saying or the parent cannot understand what the teacher is saying because of a language barrier, effectively communication will be challenging, if not, impossible. The fifth question on the survey asked teachers to rate, on a scale from zero to five; zero being the least effective and five being the most effective, is verbal communication effective when communicating with families who speak little or no English. One teacher wrote, “Even if there is the language barrier it is important to see parents face to face. So that you can show them their students work and grades rather th[a]n trying to explain it.” See Appendix E: Survey Results, Question 5, on page 49, for the detailed results and comments from the survey.

Out of 31 responses, 11 (35.49%) teachers rated the effectiveness of verbal communication between a zero and two, meaning that they believe it is the least effective method of communicating with families who speak little to no English. A teacher noted, “It depends, if there is a translator, then yes. Otherwise, not really.” Five (16.13%) other teachers wrote similar responses. Other teachers indicated “It depends on the adult's comfort with English. Using the same strategies we use with the students (slower rate, less complex language, repetition, etc[.]) seems to help” and “Over the phone it is quite challenging.”

Out of 31 responses, 20 (64.52%) teachers rated the effectiveness of verbal communication between a three and five, meaning that they believe it is the most effective method of communicating with families who speak little or no English. One teacher noted, “Yes for me personally it is since I am bilingual myself I tend to communicate more with parents verbally so that they can understand me more. It also gives the parent a sense of security...” Other teachers stated “It is very important [to have] face to face communication when you have

parent who are limited in the second language because you may use visuals, gestures and even translators who can come into your classroom during meetings” and “...When you[‘]r[e] sending an email or written it is sometimes misunderstood.”

Essentially, most teachers agreed that verbal communication is the most effective method of communicating with families who speak little or no English but if you do not speak the language or there is no translator available, it is the least effective. Written notification is another method of communication in which teachers express how they feel about the effectiveness of written notification in the next section.

### **WRITTEN NOTIFICATION**

Written notification is a type of communication that takes the form of a letter, newsletter, message or brochure. As mentioned before, effective communication involves both the sending and receiving of information. If a teacher continues to send written notifications home but is receiving no responses, they are not effectively communicating with the parents. Or if the parents do not understand what they are reading or misinterpret what they have read, how can written notification be effective when communicating with parents of English Language Learners (ELL)? The sixth question on the survey asked teachers to rate, on a scale from zero to five; zero being the least effective and five being the most effective, is written notification effective when communicating with families who speak little or no English. See Appendix E: Survey Results, Question 6, on page 50, for the detailed results and comments from the survey.

Out of 31 responses, 19 (61.29%) teachers rated the effectiveness of written notification between a zero and two, meaning that they believe it is the least effective method of communicating with families who speak little or no English. “When something is written down

things can be lost in translation if they don't have someone to explain it for them. However if you are lucky enough to have someone to translate all your notes into the language of the family it works fine. Usually that is not an option outside of important documents. You also have the problem of the student losing the document” one teacher stated. Other teachers noted, “I find that often written communications can be more easily ignored or overlooked” and “I think it depends...Again all parents and situations are different.”

Out of 31 responses, 12 (38.71%) teachers rated the effectiveness of written notification between a three and five, meaning they believe it is the most effective method of communicating with families who speak little to no English. One teacher noted, “Most families have access to someone who can translate for them so written form is usually most effective.” Another teacher responded, “Usually I have more of a response from written because either the student or another family member can translate the message.” Three teachers indicated that if the letter is translated to their native language or if the parents have someone to translate it for them (often, the student), then written notification is effective.

Ultimately, most of the teachers agreed that written notification is the least effective method when communicating with families who speak little to no English due to misinterpretations that may occur and lack of translations. The next section offers how teachers feel about the effectiveness when using technology as a means of communication.

### **THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

The category “use of technology” is defined as a type of communication that occurs through the use of technology to communicate with another person, such as, internet, e-mail, chat rooms embedded in classroom websites, cellular phone, or video chat (*i.e.*, Skype). As stated

previously, effective communication involves both the sending and receiving of information. Technology has proven its benefits to the world but also the complications. With millions of people using technology, some things are bound to go wrong, such as, lost emails and/or the hacking of information. How have teachers been able to overlook these complications and use technology to their benefit when communicating with parents of English Language Learners (ELLs)?

The seventh question on the survey asked teachers to rate, on a scale from zero to five; zero being the least effective and five being the most effective, is the use of technology effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English. See Appendix E: Survey Results, Question 7, on page 50, for the exact results and comments from the survey.

Interestingly, the results of this question were almost evenly split. Out of 31 responses, 16 (51.61%) teachers rated the effectiveness of the use of technology between a zero and two, meaning they believe it is the least effective method of communicating with families who speak little to no English. One teacher responded, “Lack of [money] to have a computer at home. Usually...it will take more than a week to get a reply back from a parent.” Three (9.68%) other teachers agreed, if the family does not have a computer or access to the Internet, this method of communication is not effective.

Out of 31 responses, 15 (48.39%) teachers rated the effectiveness of the use of technology between a three and five, meaning they believe it is the most effective method of communicating with families who speak little or no English. One teacher noted, “The parents can translate the email online or have someone translate it for them. My ESOL parents ask for email updates.”

Two (6.45%) other teachers indicated similar comments, if the parents can get someone to translate or the email can be translated, this method of communication is effective.

After reviewing the results, the use of technology proves that what works for one teacher may not work for another. Community action strategies is a method of getting parents involved and the following section shares how teachers feel about community action strategies and what their school does to provide parents ample opportunities to become involved.

### **COMMUNITY ACTION STRATEGIES**

Communication action strategies include school-sponsored events that are held on the school grounds (*i.e.*, Math or Reading Nights, Fall Festivals, fundraising events, etc.) As discussed earlier, community action strategies are very personable and give parents the opportunity to share in cultural activities. If schools and teachers do not make the parents feel welcomed, they may not try to communicate with the teachers and/or may not want to become involved in their child's education. The survey asked the teachers about the effectiveness of community action strategies as a means of communication and if their school provides parents opportunities to get involved. See Appendix E: Survey Results, Question 8 and 15, on pages 51 & 55, for the complete results and comments from the survey.

The eighth question asked teachers to rate on a scale from zero to five, zero being the least effective and five being the most effective, is the use of community action strategies effective when communicating with families who speak little or no English. Additionally, the fifteenth question asked the teachers if their school provides ample opportunities for the parents to become involved and to explain the ways the school provides opportunities for the parents to become involved.

The eighth question asked the teachers to rate the effectiveness of community action strategies. Out of 31 responses, 8 (25.81%) teachers rated the effectiveness of community action strategies between a zero and two, meaning they believe it is the least effective way of communicating with parents who speak little or no English. One teacher noted, “If the parents come” it can be effective. Other teachers indicated, “It depends on the family's involvement and if there are people available to translate” and “Our parents are more than willing to attend such events, but do not participate on the planning and volunteering side of fundraising carnivals, etc. It requires many hours of work on the part of the teachers and administration.”

Out of 31 responses, 21 (67.75%) teachers rated the effectiveness of community action strategies between a three and five, meaning they believe it is an effective method for communicating with families who speak little or no English. “I feel that these events are important to everyone, but even more so to students and parents that speak little or no English. Events like this help everyone to feel involved in the community, which makes them want to try more to boost scores and help their children.” Another teacher shares, “The best way to communicate those type of things to the parents, is to have the students be excited and understanding what[']s going on. They are the ones that push their families to come to those types of things.” In order for the community action strategies to be effective, one teacher mentioned, “We offer some of these in Spanish and English...Many times parents won't come because they feel embarrassed.”

The fifteenth question asked the teachers if their school provides adequate opportunities for the parents of English Language Learners (ELL) to become involved and, if so, teachers were also asked to identify ways in which the school provides parents of ELL student's opportunities

to become involved. Out of 31 responses, overwhelmingly 30 (96.77%) teachers answered yes, their school does provide sufficient opportunities for the parents to become involved. Out of 31 responses, only one (3.23%) teacher answered no, their school does not provide sufficient opportunities for the parents to become involved.

After reviewing the responses, the school provides a variety of ways parents can become involved. Some of these included organizations the parents can join, family nights, volunteering, tutoring, and meet-and-greets. Out of 31 responses, 14 (45.15%) teachers noted the multiple organizations parents can join; Parent Teacher Association (PTA), School Advisory Council (SAC), and Parent Leadership Council (PLC). The PTA consists of the parents/guardians of the students and any member of the school (*i.e.*, teacher, cafeteria staff, custodians, etc.) in efforts to raise money for the school, create activities and events to get the community and parents actively involved, and volunteering. The SAC has monthly meetings (varies from school to school) where parents become involved in the decision making process of the school as well as the schools improvement plan for the following year. The PLC gets the parents to participate and involved in Language Enriched Pupil (LEP) programs and academic achievement initiatives.

Out of 31 responses, all teachers indicated at least one of the many family night events that occur at their school. These events include Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Night, Reading Night, Math Night, Science Night, Fall Festival, Movie Night, and Skate Night. FCAT Night consisted of a variety of teachers from third to fifth creating games involving FCAT questions, discussing what the children can expect on FCAT, and reviewing with the parents how their children can prepare for it. Math, Reading, and Science Night are events relating to those specific topics where students come with their parents, play games and discuss with a variety of

teachers their strengths and weaknesses as well as how can they improve in those subjects. Fall Festival, Skate Night, and Movie Night are events in which parents and students come to have fun and take a break from the stresses of school and FCAT.

Out of 31 responses, 19 (61.29%) teachers noted the many ways parents can become involved in the school by volunteering. The parents can volunteer in the classroom, on field trips, for family night events, and with administration, if needed. Out of 31 responses, three (9.68%) teachers shared that their school provides English tutoring sessions for the parents who speak little or no English. In my opinion, this is probably the most positive result. By helping the parents learn English, the teachers and administration are giving the parents a greater chance to become involved and keep open communication with the teachers.

Out of 31 responses, five (16.13%) teachers noted the about meet-and-greet events that take place, for example, Coffee with the Principal, Meet the Teacher Night, and Conference Night. Coffee with the Principal takes place in the morning before school starts and the parents are welcomed to come and ask questions while enjoying a cup of coffee and small snacks. Meet the Teacher Night is held in the beginning of the year (usually before school starts, depending on the school) where the parents are welcomed to come and meet the teachers. Conference Night takes place at least two times a year (varies from school to school) in which the parents come and have a face-to-face conference with the teachers.

Overall, as stated by one teacher, “The school sponsored events are definitely a link between the school and the community and it is an effective way to bring parents to [the] school to participate [in] their children activities.” There is no doubt this school provides effective community action strategies and an abundant of opportunities for the parents to become

involved. The following sections shares responses about the resources provided by the school in order for the teachers to communicate with parents who speak little or no English and the challenges the teacher face.

### **Resources Available to Teachers**

“The increasing number of English Language Learners (ELLs) in public schools has created a need for teacher educators to prepare pre[-]service teachers to be able to work with families who have limited English” (Hooks, 2008, p. 97). If a teacher cannot speak another language besides English, how can she/he communicate effectively with a parent who speaks little to no English? What resources are being used in school by teachers in order to effectively communicate with parents of ELL students?

The ninth question of the survey sought to answer the above questions and asked the teachers if their school provides resources for teachers to use to communicate with families who speak little or no English. If so, the teachers were asked to identify the resources provided by the school. The tenth question of the survey asked the teachers what resource(s) they use if they need a letter translated into another language. See Appendix D: Survey Results, Question 9 and 10, on page 52, for the detailed results and comments from the survey.

The ninth question asked the teachers if their school provides resources in order to communicate with families who speak little to no English and to identify the resources available. Out of 31 responses, 29 (93.54%) teachers answered yes, their school provides resources for them to use to communicate with families who speak little or no English. Surprisingly, one teacher noted “There is always a translator available” such as administration, bilingual teachers, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Curriculum Compliance Teacher (CCT).

Important letters sent home and/or phone calls made by the principal are translated to Spanish and sometimes in Haitian Creole.

Out of 31 responses, two (6.45%) teachers answered no, their school does not provide resources for them to communicate with families who speak little or no English. One teacher stated, “If it is Spanish, we have several people able to translate. If it is anything else, then we do not have a resource.” One other teacher also mentioned that it was harder to find resources to translate in languages other than Spanish. During my Senior Internship (which is at the school where the survey was conducted), I have seen multiple non-Spanish speaking teachers ask Spanish speaking teachers to translate notes and/or phone calls for them. It is inspiring to see how all the teachers, staff, and faculty work together and assist one another.

The tenth question asked the teachers to write the resource(s) they use if they need a letter translated into another language. The results showed the teachers use a variety of resources to translate letters, such as, school personnel, fellow teachers, online websites, and other resources. Out of 31 responses, 23 (74.20%) teachers use school personnel (*e.g.*, administration, secretary, etc.) to translate letters. Thirteen (41.84%) of the 23 teachers responded that they use other teachers on their team or in the school to translate letters.

Five (16.18%) teachers indicated “If it is a different language, I utilize a translation website” such as Babel Fish to translate letters. Other resources mentioned by two teachers were parents and dictionaries. The teacher noted, “I use the dictionaries sometimes that are provided in both languages to review some words that I might find confusing. But since I am proficient in Spanish I really don[’]t use much.”

The results show that the teachers who do not speak another language besides English have learned how to make a “sticky” situation into a good one. Instead of becoming overwhelmed and stressed about not being able to communicate with the parents of ELL students, they have learned how to use the resources surrounding them, for example, school personnel and online websites. It seems as though this data is contradictory; this is something that will be further investigated in future research to clarify. Teachers face challenges on a daily basis and in this next section it shares how the teachers feel about the challenges with communicating with families who speak another language, how much time the teachers plan in order to communicate with parents of ELL students, and the many challenges the teachers face while trying to communicate with families whose native language is different than their own.

### **Challenges**

As stated in the introduction, the challenges of trying to communicate with students and parents of another language can make teachers feel overwhelmed. Not speaking another language can be overwhelming for teachers especially if the majority of their students are English Language Learners (ELLs). Three of the questions on the survey addressed these issues. The eleventh question asked the teachers how much time they spend planning for a meeting with a parent of an ELL student. The twelfth question asked the teachers if it is extremely challenging for them to communicate with parents of their ELL students and to explain why or why not. The fourteenth question asked the teachers to explain the most challenging part about communicating with parents of ELL students. See Appendix E, Questions 11, 12, and 13 (on pages 52 & 53) for the complete results and comments from the survey.

The eleventh question asked the teachers to identify how many hours they spend planning for a meeting with a parent of an ELL student. Out of 31 responses, 30 (96.77%) teachers noted they spend at least 0-2 hours planning for a meeting, only one teacher specified they do not spend any time planning for a meeting with a parent of an ELL student. The twelfth question asked the teachers to classify if it is extremely challenging for them to communicate with parents of an ELL students and to explain why it is extremely challenging or why it is not. Out of 31 responses, six (19.35%) teachers chose true, it is extremely challenging for them to communicate with the parents of their ELL students. Out of 31 responses, 22 (70.97%) teachers chose false, it is not extremely challenging for them to communicate with the parents of their ELL students.

The teachers who responded that it was extremely challenging for them to communicate with parents of their ELL students gave reasons such as not speaking other languages and if there are no translators around, it would be extremely difficult. One teacher noted, "If the family does not speak English communication becomes non-existent." The teachers who chose the responses that it was not difficult to communicate with the parents of their ELL students, gave several reasons, such as, they speak another language, translator's available, online resources and resources provided by the school. One teacher stated, "I have the support of my team. If I did not it would be extremely challenging." Two (6.45%) teachers indicated that if there were not translator available, they would use the students or ask the parents to bring an adult with them to translate.

The fourteenth question asked the teachers to explain the most challenging part of communication with parents of their ELL students. The responses revealed the teachers felt the most challenging part(s) of communicating with parents of their ELL students are schedule

conflicts, getting in contact with the parents, language barriers, cultural differences, misunderstood messages, finding translators, etc. A few teachers stated similar challenges such as, “The most challenging sometimes is not being able to sometimes get in contact. As a lot of my parents work more than one job...Scheduling meetings have to be flexible as different things might come up” and “The language barrier and cultural differences can be a challenge at times, [e]specially the ones about being late not being important.” One teacher noted “Getting the family to come to a conference when they know very little English is a challenge” because the parents may feel embarrassed and decide to not show up.

One teacher explained, “It is sometimes difficult to determine how well the family really understands what I am trying to say. Sometimes, like our students, they will nod along because they are embarrassed to ask further questions or to indicate that they don't understand.” Another teacher stated “The most challenging part is clearing up any confusion about grades or assignments.” Not all families consider education their number one priority and to illustrate one teacher offered “[g]etting them [parents] to understand the importance of school” is the most challenging part. Other teachers indicated, “[h]aving them [parents] understand that you always do things to help their child even if the homework is repetition. The more practice the better” and “[g]etting on the same page is the most challenging aspect of these meetings.”

Every teacher faces different challenges in their career, but may not consider the language barrier or not being able to communicate with their student's parents until the day actually comes. The respondents in my project have dealt with this reality on a daily basis. Every teacher learns from one another and the next section offers the wise advice the teachers gave to

future educators through the use of this survey about communicating with families who speak little or no English.

### **Inspirational Advice**

The teachers, education professors, and fellow future educators that I have encountered in my life so far are always willing to share ideas with one another. In my opinion, the teaching profession is not meant for people to keep ideas to themselves; it is for people who want to continue learning their entire lives by not only their students but by their fellow teachers. The sixteenth question on my survey was optional. It asked the teachers what advice they could give to future educators about communicating with families who speak little or no English. The wise advices for future educators as shared by the teachers are:

- *“It would be to be forthcoming and to ask for help if you need translators. Parents are usually open to any advice you give as they want their children to succeed in school.”*
- *“Use translators whenever possible to avoid running into the language barrier. It is much easier to fix a miscommunication with a translator present! :)”*
- *“Be patient and use the resources you need.”*
- *“Do not be afraid to admit that you do not know their home language, but take the time to prepare an[d] alternate form of communication (translated notes, a translator present, etc.)”*
- *“Just breathe. Everyone is there for the benefit of the child. If you keep that in mind, you will realize that everyone is on the same side.”*
- *“Keep all avenues of communication open. You will find one works best, and each family is different.”*

- *“Be always very sensible to their culture and customs, B[e] attentive, make them feel welcome and comfortable when they come into your classroom for meetings, invite them to participate of school activities, try to use translators during meeting and send information home in their native language.”*
- *“Be prepared with other resources outside of your school. Also provide letters in multiple languages if possible. Encourage parents to talk the English classes that some schools offer for free to these parents. Know how to handle different cultures languages/gestures.”*
- *“Win them over. Be sure they know that you care about their child and their child's future. Help them to understand what you are looking for and what your expectations are for them as parents and for the student. Let them know that you are there to help and then be sure to be there when you are needed.”*
- *“Effective communication is essential to create strong school-home partnerships and to increase parental involvement...”*
- *“Use pictures, have a coworker translate or always have a translator when setting up a meeting.”*
- *“Use your resources!! Ask colleagues, use the internet, [and] ask other parents and students.”*
- *“Try getting someone to have school personnel to assist you when you are having a meeting. Look for letter translations so the parents can understand everything better. Be specific and reschedule appointments for the child[‘s] benefit.”*

When it comes to dedicating yourself to becoming a lifelong learner, any advice may help! These teachers provided an abundance of wise advice to guide future educators, such as myself, on the right path to communicating with families who speak little or no English. This study explains the most effective methods to communicate with parents of ELL students as well as brought more questions on communicating with parents of ELL students which will be specified in the following section.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study has proven that communicating with the parents of English Language Learners (ELL) is no simple or easy task. After carefully reviewing the results of the survey, I have concluded that identifying the most effective way to communicate with parents of ELL students varies from teacher to teacher. The first step to communicating effectively is finding the way that actually allows for communication to happen. The next step would be to follow through by using the method of communication that works, whether it is verbal communication, written notifications, the use of technology, or community action strategies. As mentioned before, communicating effectively involves both sending and receiving of information.

Each method of communication has its advantages and disadvantages. The teachers identify the advantages of verbal communication as giving the parents a sense of clarity and comfort. If the parents speak little or no English and no translator is available, that situation is a huge disadvantage. The advantages of written communication, as noted by the teachers of the survey, are that they have more responses from the parents when notes are written. Though a number of disadvantages about written notifications were also noted, such as, the message can be misconstrued and/or over looked or ignored.

The use of technology responses were almost evenly split between effective and ineffective. The noted advantage for the use of technology includes its quick speed and money saved on paper. The noted disadvantages include the lack of access parents have to computers or Internet and that those messages can too be misunderstood. When it comes to community action strategies, the advantages were endless. The school provided many opportunities for the parents to become involved and communicate with their children's teachers (*i.e.*, Meet the Teacher,

Coffee with the Principal, etc.). One of the disadvantages of community action strategies was getting the parents to come but by offering English tutoring classes to the parents, the school has opened the lines of communication.

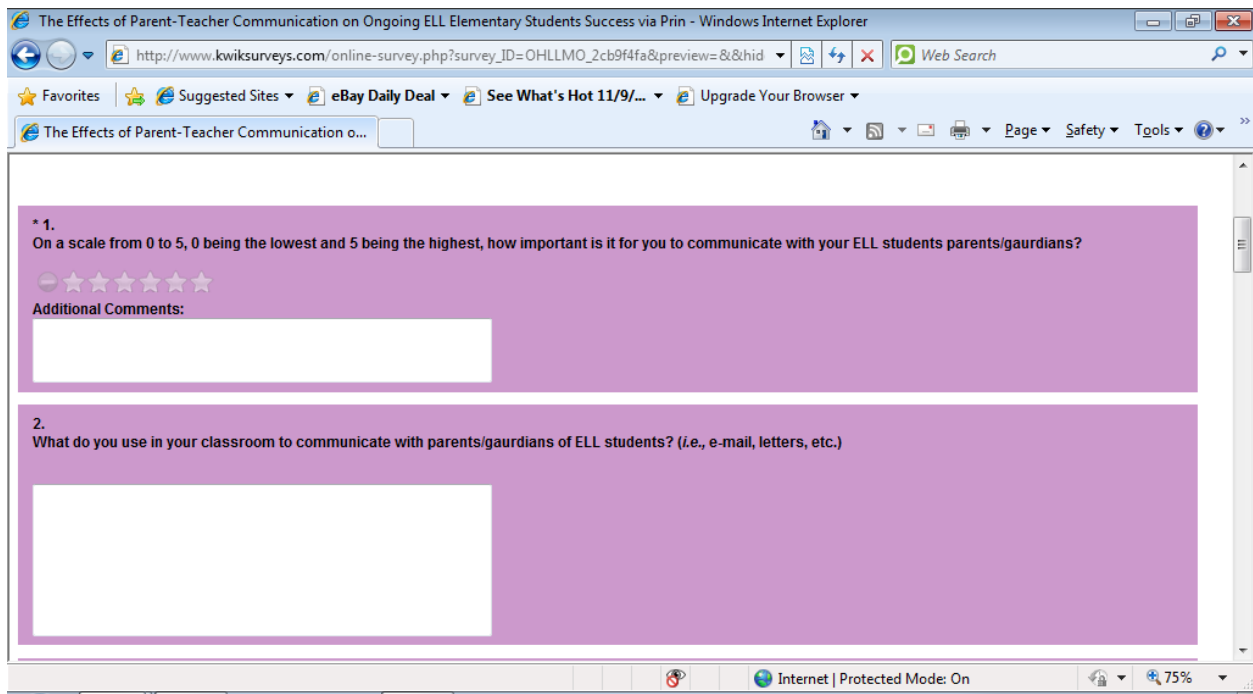
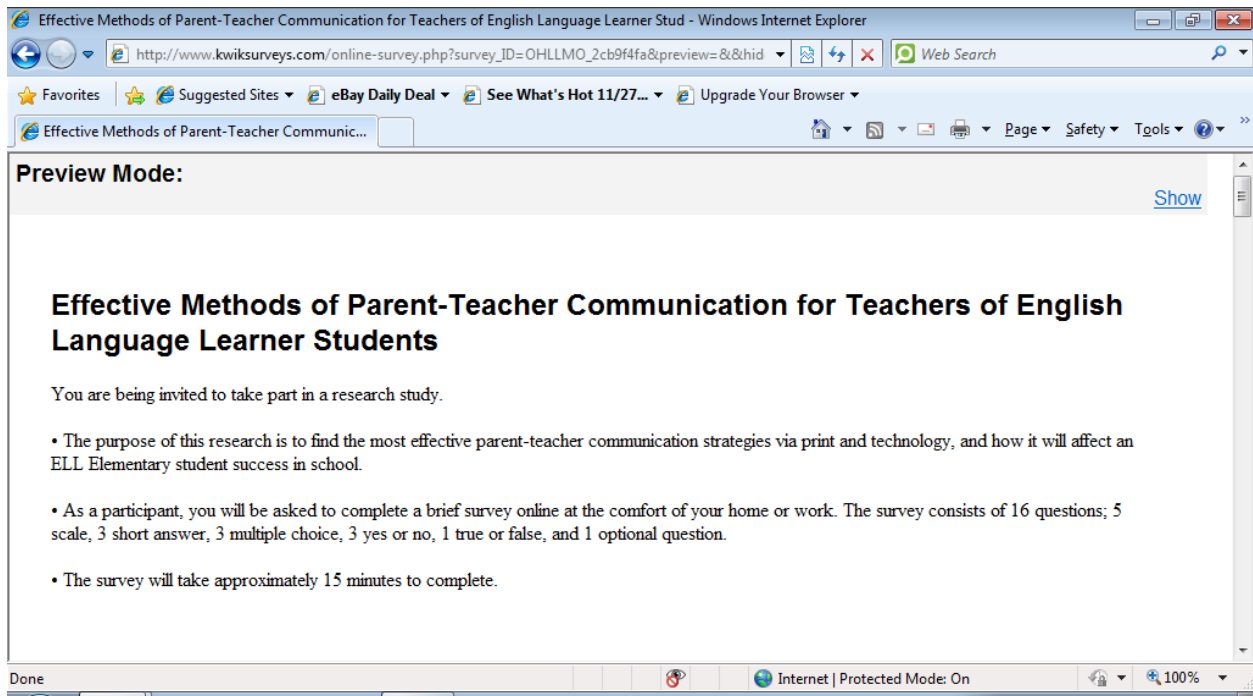
The information I learned from this study has only furthered my professional growth as a pre-service teacher. In my future classroom, I will be open to the use of multiple means of communication so I can effectively communicate with the parents of my ELL students. Yes, it may be harder, but it will be worth it. In the end, it is the students that benefit from their parents and teachers communicating. Multiple teachers in the survey stated, in order for their ELL students to continue their learning at home and practice, the parent and teacher must communicate effectively.

While this study provides valuable information about the effective methods of parent-teacher communication for teachers of ELLs, the results are limited to this population. This study has also brought multiple questions that I have yet to answer. How do the parents of ELL students feel about communicating? How do the ELL students feel about their parents and teachers communicating? What effects has parent-teacher communication had on ELL students? These are questions I plan to further investigate as I grow professional and enter graduate school.

“Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean.”

-Ryunosuke Satoro

## **APPENDIX A: SCREENSHOT OF SURVEY**



The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication on Ongoing ELL Elementary Students Success via Prin - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.kwiksurveys.com/online-survey.php?survey\_ID=OHLLMQ\_2cb9f4fa&preview=&&hid

Web Search

Favorites | Suggested Sites | eBay Daily Deal | See What's Hot 11/9/... | Upgrade Your Browser

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication o...

\* 3.  
In your classroom, which method of communication works best for you when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

- verbal communication
- written notification
- the use of technology

\* 4.  
In your classroom, which method of communication does not work when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

- verbal communication
- written notification
- the use of technology

\* 5.  
On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, is verbal communication effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Additional Comments:

Internet | Protected Mode: On | 75%

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication on Ongoing ELL Elementary Students Success via Prin - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.kwiksurveys.com/online-survey.php?survey\_ID=OHLLMQ\_2cb9f4fa&preview=&&hid

Web Search

Favorites | Suggested Sites | eBay Daily Deal | See What's Hot 11/9/... | Upgrade Your Browser

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication o...

\* 6.  
On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, is written notification effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Additional Comments:

\* 7.  
On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, is the use of technology effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Additional Comments:

Internet | Protected Mode: On | 75%

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication on Ongoing ELL Elementary Students Success via Prin - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.kwiksurveys.com/online-survey.php?survey\_ID=OHLLMQ\_2cb9f4fa&preview=&&hid

Web Search

Favorites | Suggested Sites | eBay Daily Deal | See What's Hot 11/9/... | Upgrade Your Browser

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication o...

8. On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, are community action strategies effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

Communication action strategies include school-sponsored events that are held on the school grounds (i.e., Math or Reading Nights, Fall Festivals, fundraising events, etc.).

0 1 2 3 4 5

Additional Comments:

9. Does your school provide resources for teachers to use to communicate with families who speak little or no English?

Yes

No

If so, what resource(s) are available:

Internet | Protected Mode: On 70%

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication on Ongoing ELL Elementary Students Success via Prin - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.kwiksurveys.com/online-survey.php?survey\_ID=OHLLMQ\_2cb9f4fa&preview=&&hid

Web Search

Favorites | Suggested Sites | eBay Daily Deal | See What's Hot 11/9/... | Upgrade Your Browser

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication o...

10. What resource(s) do you use if you need a letter translated to another language? (i.e., school personnel, online website, etc.)

11. How much time do you spend planning for a meeting with parents/gaurdians of ELL students?

0-2 hours

3-4 hours

5+ hours

I do not spend time planning for meetings

12. It is extremely challenging for me to communicate with families of ELL students.

True

False

Why or why not?

Internet | Protected Mode: On 68%

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication on Ongoing ELL Elementary Students Success via Prin - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.kwiksurveys.com/online-survey.php?survey\_ID=OHLLMQ\_2cb9f4fa&preview=&&hid

Web Search

Favorites | Suggested Sites | eBay Daily Deal | See What's Hot 11/9/... | Upgrade Your Browser

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication o...

\* 13.  
Do you speak another language?

☐ Yes  
☐ No

If yes, what language(s):

\* 14.  
Explain the most challenging part of communicating with families of ELL students.

Internet | Protected Mode: On 75%

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication on Ongoing ELL Elementary Students Success via Prin - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.kwiksurveys.com/online-survey.php?survey\_ID=OHLLMQ\_2cb9f4fa&preview=&&hid

Web Search

Favorites | Suggested Sites | eBay Daily Deal | See What's Hot 11/9/... | Upgrade Your Browser

The Effects of Parent-Teacher Communication o...

\* 15.  
Does your school provide ample opportunities for parents to become involved?

☐ Yes  
☐ No

If yes, please list a few ways below:

16.  
OPTIONAL: What advice would you give to future educators about communicating with families who speak little to no English?

< Finish Survey >

Kwik Surveys

Internet | Protected Mode: On 68%

## **APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL LETTER**



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
Office of Research & Commercialization  
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

### Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1**  
**FWA00000351, IRB00001138**

To: **Sherron E. Roberts and Co-PI: Luzeana Alfonso-Reyes**

Date: **March 05, 2012**

Dear Researcher:

On 3/5/2012, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination  
Project Title: Effective Methods of Parent-Teacher Communication for  
Teachers of English Language Learner Students  
Investigator: Sherron E Roberts  
IRB Number: SBE-12-08139  
Funding Agency:  
Grant Title:  
Research ID: n/a

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 03/05/2012 02:00:58 PM EST

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joanne Muratori".

IRB Coordinator

## **APPENDIX C: SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVAL**

Submit this form and a copy  
of your proposal to:  
Accountability, Research, and  
Assessment  
P.O. Box 1674

County Public Schools  
**RESEARCH REQUEST FORM**  
**RECEIVED DEC 15 2011**

Your research proposal should  
include: Project Title; Purpose  
and Research Problem;  
Instruments; Procedures and  
Proposed Data Analysis

Requester's Name Luzelana Alfonso-Reyes Date 12-10-11  
Address: Home [REDACTED] Davenport, FL 33836 Phone 407 462 [REDACTED]  
Business n/a Phone n/a  
Project Director or Advisor Elizabeth Hoffman Phone 407 582 [REDACTED]  
Address [REDACTED] Winter Garden, FL 34787

Degree Sought: (check one) ☐ Associate ☒ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ Specialist  
☐ Doctorate ☐ None

Project Title Effective Methods of Parent-Teacher Communication  
for Teachers of English Language Learners

**ESTIMATED INVOLVEMENT**

PERSONNEL/CENTERS	NUMBER	AMOUNT OF TIME (DAYS, HOURS, ETC.)	SPECIFY/DESCRIBE GRADES, SCHOOLS, SPECIAL NEEDS, ETC.
Students	<u>50</u>	<u>20 minutes</u>	<u>[REDACTED], K-5 grades</u>
Teachers	<u>50</u>		
Administrators	<u>50</u>		
Schools/Centers	<u>50</u>		
Others (specify)	<u>50</u>		

Specify possible benefits to  
students/school system: As the number of ELL students grows, my  
research will help teachers and future teachers effective  
ways to communicate with parents of another language

**ASSURANCE**

Using the proposed procedures and instrument, I hereby agree to conduct research in accordance with the policies of the Orange County Public Schools. Deviations from the approved procedures shall be cleared through the Senior Director of Accountability, Research, and Assessment. Reports and materials shall be supplied as specified.

Requester's Signature [Signature]

Approval Granted: ☒ Yes ☐ No Date: 1-3-12

Signature of the Senior Director  
for Accountability, Research, and Assessment [Signature]

NOTE TO REQUESTER: When seeking approval at the school level, a copy of this form, signed by the Senior Director, Accountability, Research, and Assessment, should be shown to the school principal.

Reference School Board Policy GCS, p. 249

## **APPENDIX D: TABLE OF SUMMATIVE SURVEY RESULTS**

Question	0 N/%	1 N/%	2 N/%	3 N/%	4 N/%	5 N/%	See comments in Appendix D
1. On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how important for you to communicate with your ELL students' parents/guardians?	0/0%	0/0%	0/0%	2/6.45%	8/25.8%	21/67.74%	Yes
2. What do you use in your classroom to communicate with parents/guardians of ELL students?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes
3. In your classroom, which method of communication works best for you when communicating with families who speak little to no English?	Verbal communication      18/58.06% Written notification        5/16.13% The use of technology       8/25.81%						No
4. In your classroom, which method of communication does not work when communicating with families who speak little to no English?	Verbal communication      10/32.26% Written notification        9/29.03% The use of technology       12/38.71%						No
5. On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, is verbal communication effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?	1/3.23%	3/9.68%	7/22.58%	2/6.45%	10/32.26%	8/25.81%	Yes

6. On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, is written notification effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?	1/3.23%	6/19.35%	12/38.71%	4/12.89%	4/12.89%	4/12.89%	Yes
7. On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, is written notification effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?	3/9.68%	5/16.13%	8/25.81%	3/9.68%	8/25.81%	4/12.89%	Yes
8. On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, are community action strategies effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?	1/3.23%	0/0%	7/22.58%	6/19.35%	9/29.03%	8/25.81%	Yes
9. Does your school provide resources for teachers to use to communicate with families who speak little or no English?	Yes            29/93.55% No             2/6.45%						Yes
10. What resource(s) do you use if you need a letter translated to another language? (i.e., school personnel, online website, etc.)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes

11. How much time do you spend planning for a meeting with parents/guardians of ELL students?	0 – 2 hours      30/96.77% 3 – 4 hours      0/0% 5+ hours      0/0% Do not spend time   1/3.23%						No
12. It is extremely challenging for me to communicate with families of ELL students.	True      6/19.35% False      25/80.65%						Yes
13. Do you speak another language?	Yes      9/29.03% No      22/70.97%						Yes
14. Explain the most challenging part of communicating with families of ELL students.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes
15. Does your school provide ample opportunities for parents to become involved?	Yes      30/96.77% No      1/3.23%						Yes
16. OPTIONAL: What advice would you give to future educators about communicating with families who speak little to no English?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes

## **APPENDIX E: SURVEY RESULTS**

Question 1\*

On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how important is it for you to communicate with your ELL students parents/gaurdians?

1	2	3	4	5	6	Responses	Total
0	0	0	2	8	21	31	174

ID	View Survey	Additional Comments:
11002481	<a href="#">View</a>	Test
11004096	<a href="#">View</a>	5
11004399	<a href="#">View</a>	It is very important to keep all your students' parents up to date with how they are doing in the class room so that they can reinforce learning at home.
11005622	<a href="#">View</a>	Even those it is easier to not meet with the parents, the students and parents will benefit more when there is open communication between parents and teacher.
11013919	<a href="#">View</a>	ELL students sometimes lack the support from home due to the language barrier. It is important to commuicate with parents so they can understand what needs to be done at home to help their student.
11071544	<a href="#">View</a>	I consider that our ELL parents need to understand about the difficulties the child might encounter throught the school year while learning a second language.
11071987	<a href="#">View</a>	This is the key for success with these students the more teacher/parent communication the better the students can learn, since what is being taught in the classroom hopefully is being reinforced at home.
11072575	<a href="#">View</a>	Communication is paramount in the success of our ELL students. We must get the parents onboard to help their child succeed, while making them feel comfortable.
11072620	<a href="#">View</a>	Very important! They must understand the expectations and the strategies that we will use in order to accomodate the ELL student's needs.

Question 2		
What do you use in your classroom to communicate with parents/gaurdians of ELL students? (i.e., e-mail, letters, etc.)		
ID	Text Answers (31)	View
11002481	Test	<a href="#">View</a>
11004096	I use weekly emails in both languages Spanish and English so that my parents can understand and be able to read what their child is doing in my class. I send letters and phone calls are also made.	<a href="#">View</a>
11004399	I use e-mail, notes sent home in the agenda, letters, and phone.	<a href="#">View</a>
11005512	Emails, newsletters, translation of newsletters, phone calls, etc....	<a href="#">View</a>
11005622	letters or email	<a href="#">View</a>
11005846	Agenda, e-mails, phone call, parent conferences	<a href="#">View</a>
11006162	E-mail, phone conferences, face to face conferences with translators, notes/ letters home	<a href="#">View</a>
11006613	I send out a monthly newsletter via email. I write notes or other items of importance in the students agenda.	<a href="#">View</a>
11008097	I have a weekly newsletter that I send home with my students that explains what we are doing in each subject for the week and any other information that is important such as field trips, <a href="#">PTA</a> events, <a href="#">FCAT</a> dates, etc. I also send emails with study guides for tests and important information.	<a href="#">View</a>
11008763	Weekly Email, Monthly Newsletter, Classroom website	<a href="#">View</a>
11013130	letters, phone calls, face-to-face conversations	<a href="#">View</a>
11013919	I do a weekly e-mail to my whole class. I also use e-mail to communicate with individual parents. The planner is also a way I communicate. I also use letters and phone calls.	<a href="#">View</a>
11024169	Weekly reports and email	<a href="#">View</a>
11030571	e-mail, notes home, phone call	<a href="#">View</a>
11044379	Email, notes in agenda or on paper, conferences	<a href="#">View</a>
11052977	Email	<a href="#">View</a>
11071014	Email, letters, agenda book.	<a href="#">View</a>
11071313	Emails newsletters phone calls	<a href="#">View</a>
11071544	I use: Agendas (notes) Emails Phone calls Letters	<a href="#">View</a>

11071599	email notes home	<a href="#">View</a>
11071735	letters, email, notes in agenda	<a href="#">View</a>
11071987	email, letters, phone call homes	<a href="#">View</a>
11072575	E-mail, letters, phone calls, notes in agenda are all used to communicate with parents.	<a href="#">View</a>
11072620	emails, agenda, text messages, phone calls, one on one parent teacher conferences.	<a href="#">View</a>
11076218	I use letters, classroom newsletter, email, and team website.	<a href="#">View</a>
11078701	both	<a href="#">View</a>
11078712	Phone, student agenda, behavior reports.	<a href="#">View</a>
11081088	Email, notes in agendas, phone calls, conferences	<a href="#">View</a>
11134994	emails letters	<a href="#">View</a>
11136017	Mail, letters, a phone call to most of parents if they don't respond.	<a href="#">View</a>
11136736	I use email, notes home, newsletters and calling	<a href="#">View</a>

### Question 3\*

In your classroom, which method of communication works best for you when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

verbal communication	18	58.06%
written notification	5	16.13%
the use of technology	8	25.81%

Pop-up

### Question 4\*

In your classroom, which method of communication does not work when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

verbal communication	10	32.26%
written notification	9	29.03%
the use of technology	12	38.71%

Pop-up

### Question 5\*

On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, is verbal communication effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Total
1	3	7	2	10	8	31
						134

ID	View Survey	Additional Comments:
11002481	<a href="#">View</a>	Test
11004096	<a href="#">View</a>	Yes for me personally it is since I am bilingual myself I tend to communicate more with parents verbally so that they can understand me more. It also gives the parent a sense of security in the well learning of their child.
11004399	<a href="#">View</a>	You would want a translator to do this, but I feel this is the best way to communicate with families.
11005622	<a href="#">View</a>	It depends, if there is a translator, then yes. Otherwise, not really.
11013130	<a href="#">View</a>	It depends on the adult's comfort with English. Using the same strategies we use with the students (slower rate, less complex language, repetition, etc) seems to help
11013919	<a href="#">View</a>	Even if there is the language barrier it is important to see parents face to face. So that you can show them their students work and grades rather than trying to explain it. I have also used a translator in many meeting with ELL students.
11044379	<a href="#">View</a>	Unless someone is present to translate
11071014	<a href="#">View</a>	Yes, but it requires a translator.
11071544	<a href="#">View</a>	It is very important a face to face communication when you have parent who are limited in the second language because you may use visuals, gestures and even translators who can come into your classroom during meetings.
11071987	<a href="#">View</a>	Its more effective to have verbal communication with these parents because you can have someone translate it for you if you need. When your sending an email or written it is sometimes misunderstood.
11072575	<a href="#">View</a>	Yes, because even those that do not speak the same language will often find someone to interpret for them, if you can have face to face contact.
11072820	<a href="#">View</a>	When is one on one yes! Over the phone is quite challenging
11136736	<a href="#">View</a>	I try to get someone to translate for me

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### Question 6\*

On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, is written notification effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Total
1	6	12	4	4	31	109

ID	View Survey	Additional Comments:
11002481	<a href="#">View</a>	Test
11004096	<a href="#">View</a>	5
11004399	<a href="#">View</a>	When something is written down things can be lost in translation if they don't have someone to explain it for them. However if you are lucky enough to have someone to translate all your notes into the language of the family it works fine. Usually that is not an option outside of important documents. You also have the problem of the student losing the document.
11005622	<a href="#">View</a>	Usually I have more of a response from written because either the student or another family member can translate the message.
11013130	<a href="#">View</a>	I find that often written communications can be more easily ignored or overlooked
11013919	<a href="#">View</a>	I think it depends sometime they feel more comfortable being able to take the time to try and understand what you are saying in an e-mail and/or letter then trying to comprehend it in a quick phone call. Again all parents and situations are different.
11044379	<a href="#">View</a>	Usually their child translates
11071544	<a href="#">View</a>	Not always, parents understand the notes if notes are written in the second language. If I use the same language as their native language, then, there is no problems.
11071735	<a href="#">View</a>	Most families have access to someone who can translate for them so written form is usually most effective.
11071987	<a href="#">View</a>	If translated to their language yes
11072575	<a href="#">View</a>	Depending upon if it is translated to their native language.

### Question 7\*

On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, is the use of technology effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

1	2	3	4	5	Responses	Total
3	5	8	3	8	31	113

ID	View Survey	Additional Comments:
11002481	<a href="#">View</a>	Test
11004096	<a href="#">View</a>	5
11004399	<a href="#">View</a>	I rated this a little higher because in most cases this will make it to the parents more than a letter sent home with a student would, but all the same reasoning from the last question still applies.
11005622	<a href="#">View</a>	Most of the families don't have internet
11013130	<a href="#">View</a>	I have not used technology to communicate with families, so I am unable to say.
11044379	<a href="#">View</a>	The parents can translate the email online or have someone translate it for them. My <a href="#">ESOL</a> parents ask for email updates.
11071544	<a href="#">View</a>	Not every parent has access to internet or other kind of technology devices to communicate with teachers.
11071987	<a href="#">View</a>	if translated
11072575	<a href="#">View</a>	Again, it can be effective if they have a computer at home and it can be translated.
11072620	<a href="#">View</a>	Lack of \$ to have a computer at home. Usually the it will take more than a week to get a reply back from a parent.

### Question 8\*

On a scale from 0 to 5, 0 being the least effective and 5 being the most effective, are community action strategies effective when communicating with families who speak little to no English?

Communication action strategies include school-sponsored events that are held on the school grounds (i.e., Math or Reading Nights, Fall Festivals, fundraising events, etc.).

1	2	3	4	5	6	Responses	Total
1	0	7	6	9	8	31	139

ID	View Survey	Additional Comments:
11002481	<a href="#">View</a>	Test
11004096	<a href="#">View</a>	5
11004399	<a href="#">View</a>	I feel that these events are important to everyone, but even more so to students and parents that speak little or no English. Events like this help everyone to feel involved in the community, which makes them want to try more to boost scores and help their children.
11005512	<a href="#">View</a>	If the parents come.
11013919	<a href="#">View</a>	The best way to communicate those type of things to the parents, is to have the students be excited and understanding whats going on. They are the ones that push their families to come to those types of things.
11044379	<a href="#">View</a>	We offer some of these in Spanish and English so they can be effective. Many times parents won't come because they feel embarrassed.
11071544	<a href="#">View</a>	The school sponsored events are definitely a link between the school and the community and it is an effective way to bring parents to school to participate of their children activities.
11071735	<a href="#">View</a>	It depends on the family's involvement and if there are people available to translate.
11072575	<a href="#">View</a>	Our parents are more than willing to attend such events, but do not participate on the planning and volunteering side of fundraising carnivals, etc. It requires many hours of work on the part of the teachers and administration.
11072620	<a href="#">View</a>	Yes they provide parents sometimes with visuals that aid their understandings about "X" concept.

11004399	<a href="#">View</a>	We have translators and we even offer free classes to teach English.
11005512	<a href="#">View</a>	People to translate letters, adults to sit in on conferences
11005622	<a href="#">View</a>	Translators
11006162	<a href="#">View</a>	Teacher Translators for conferences, bilingual information sent home
11006613	<a href="#">View</a>	The CCT Curriculum Compliance Teacher is usually available to assist in translating parent teacher conferences.
11008097	<a href="#">View</a>	If it is Spanish, we have several people able to translate. If it is anything else, then we do not have a resource.
11013130	<a href="#">View</a>	Translation via ESOL Compliance teacher and other staff
11013919	<a href="#">View</a>	For the spanish speakers, yes. Other languages alittle bit harder.
11030571	<a href="#">View</a>	translating from English to Spanish in writing or orally
11044379	<a href="#">View</a>	Sometimes other teachers or faculty will translate for us.
11052977	<a href="#">View</a>	Translated phone messages and newsletters
11071014	<a href="#">View</a>	Tmaslators, everyhting is sent home in English and in Spanish. Individual teachers know the families who need translation and send things home accordingly.
11071313	<a href="#">View</a>	English classes Parent nights
11071544	<a href="#">View</a>	Almost all the letters sent home have different translations if coming from the county. Also, we have the weekly phone calls system made by our Principal that is also translated to Spanish. In addition, the news paper (The Owl Observer) that goes home every month in English and Spanish.
11071735	<a href="#">View</a>	Staff members are willing to translate written communication if necessary or verbally translate.
11071987	<a href="#">View</a>	yes they send important letters home in multiple languages,also you can have another teacher or office personnel to translate.
11072575	<a href="#">View</a>	Important forms and letters are often translated into Spanish and Haitian Creole which are the two main other languages spoken in our community.
11072620	<a href="#">View</a>	Many bilingual employees
11076218	<a href="#">View</a>	Translators, written resources from the ELC
11078712	<a href="#">View</a>	School personnel.
11081088	<a href="#">View</a>	Translators Translating English notes/information into another language
11136736	<a href="#">View</a>	Translators

### Question 9\*

Does your school provide resources for teachers to use to communicate with families who speak little or no English?

Yes	29	93.55%
No	2	6.45%

ID	View Survey	If so, what resource(s) are available:
11002481	<a href="#">View</a>	Test
11004096	<a href="#">View</a>	There is always a translator available. Plus we have our own ELL department person in our school. She handles communications and meetings with parents and school personnel.
11004399	<a href="#">View</a>	We have translators and we even offer free classes to teach English.
11005512	<a href="#">View</a>	People to translate letters, adults to sit in on conferences
11005622	<a href="#">View</a>	Translators
11006162	<a href="#">View</a>	Teacher Translators for conferences, bilingual information sent home
11006613	<a href="#">View</a>	The CCT Curriculum Compliance Teacher is usually available to assist in translating parent teacher conferences.
11008097	<a href="#">View</a>	If it is Spanish, we have several people able to translate. If it is anything else, then we do not have a resource.
11013130	<a href="#">View</a>	Translation via ESOL Compliance teacher and other staff
11013919	<a href="#">View</a>	For the spanish speakers, yes. Other languages a little bit harder.
11030571	<a href="#">View</a>	translating from English to Spanish in writing or orally
11044379	<a href="#">View</a>	Sometimes other teachers or faculty will translate for us.
11052977	<a href="#">View</a>	Translated phone messages and newsletters
11071014	<a href="#">View</a>	Trnsiators, everything is sent home in English and in Spanish. Individual teachers know the families who need translation and send things home accordingly.
11071313	<a href="#">View</a>	English classes Parent nights
11071544	<a href="#">View</a>	Almost all the letters sent home have different translations if coming from the county. Also, we have the weekly phone calls system made by our Principal that is also translated to Spanish. In addition, the news paper (The Owl Observer) that goes home every month in English and Spanish.
11071735	<a href="#">View</a>	Staff members are willing to translate written communication if necessary or verbally translate.
11071967	<a href="#">View</a>	yes they send important letters home in multiple languages,also you can have another teacher or office personnel to translate.
11072575	<a href="#">View</a>	Important forms and letters are often translated into Spanish and Haitian Creole which are the two main other languages spoken in our community.
11072620	<a href="#">View</a>	Many bilingual employees

### Question 10\*

What resource(s) do you use if you need a letter translated to another language? (i.e., school personnel, online website, etc.)

ID	Text Answers (31)	View
11002481	Test	<a href="#">View</a>
11004096	I use the dictionaries sometimes that are provided in both languages to review some words that I might find confusing. But since I am proficient in Spanish I really don't use much.	<a href="#">View</a>
11004399	I use school personnel, but this can't always be used due to their time being spent on their jobs as well.	<a href="#">View</a>
11005512	school personnel, and online resources.	<a href="#">View</a>
11005622	school personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11005846	other teachers on team	<a href="#">View</a>
11006162	School personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11006613	The CCT Curriculum Compliance Teacher is usually available to assist in translating parent teacher conferences.	<a href="#">View</a>
11008097	If it is in Spanish, I have a fellow colleague write the translation. If it is a different language, I utilize a translation website.	<a href="#">View</a>
11008763	school personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11013130	school personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11013919	use the other teachers on my team all the time to help me communicate to the spanish speakers. However, its a little more difficult to find translators for other languages. Most of the time its a relative or sibling that comes in to translate	<a href="#">View</a>
11024169	Translate through word	<a href="#">View</a>
11030571	school personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11044379	Fellow teacher	<a href="#">View</a>
11052977	personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11071014	School personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11071313	School personnel, other parents	<a href="#">View</a>
11071544	School personnel if available or the district also have human resources who may help	<a href="#">View</a>
11071599	school personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11071735	school personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11071967	Another teacher, secretary or online translators	<a href="#">View</a>
11072575	I use school personnel and online sites to translate. I have staff check when I online translate to ensure that they are correct.	<a href="#">View</a>
11072620	school personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11076216	School personnel such as our paraprofessional and teammate	<a href="#">View</a>
11076701	coworker	<a href="#">View</a>
11076712	I am bilingual and have never needed to translate to a language different than Spanish.	<a href="#">View</a>
11081086	school personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11134994	cops classes	<a href="#">View</a>
11136017	school personnel	<a href="#">View</a>
11136736	a colleague or babel fish	<a href="#">View</a>

### Question 11\*

How much time do you spend planning for a meeting with parents/gaurdians of ELL students?

0-2 hours	30	96.77%
3-4 hours	0	0.00%
5+ hours	0	0.00%
I do not spend time planning for meetings	1	3.23%

Pop-up

### Question 12\*

It is extremely challenging for me to communicate with families of ELL students.

True	6	19.35%
False	25	80.65%

ID	View Survey	Why or why not?
11002481	<a href="#">View</a>	Test
11004096	<a href="#">View</a>	I am proficient in Spanish which all of my students first Native language is in my class.
11004399	<a href="#">View</a>	With the resources I have available at this school it is not as hard as it could be. If I didn't have access to translators I would have an extremely difficult time.
11005512	<a href="#">View</a>	It would be extremely if I did not have any resources to translate.
11005622	<a href="#">View</a>	Our school has plenty of staff that will sit in on meetings or a phone call to help translate.
11005846	<a href="#">View</a>	I have the support of my team. If I did not it would be extremely challenging.
11006162	<a href="#">View</a>	Even with parents who do not speak English, I have found teachers or even the student/child is able to help translate.
11006613	<a href="#">View</a>	I do not speak any other languages.
11008097	<a href="#">View</a>	I find that when two people come together for the same reason, you can find other methods to use for communication rather than language.
11013130	<a href="#">View</a>	Again, it depends on the situation and the family member's knowledge of English. If they know very little or no English, it is very helpful to have a translator present.
11024169	<a href="#">View</a>	I speak Spanish which in our school is the highest population.
11030571	<a href="#">View</a>	It may be somewhat challenging but not extremely.
11044379	<a href="#">View</a>	Most of the time the students handle all of the translating. As long as they are respectful and honest students, it is not a problem. Often times the parents will know enough to translate or look it up online.
11052977	<a href="#">View</a>	Because I do not speak the language
11071313	<a href="#">View</a>	I have enough support from school personnel
11071544	<a href="#">View</a>	I speak two languages and if do not speak another language different from English or Spanish, there is always a way to facilitat the communication between both parts.
11071599	<a href="#">View</a>	If the family does not soeak English communication becomes non-existent

11071735	<a href="#">View</a>	I do not speak Spanish or any other language fluently.
11071987	<a href="#">View</a>	No because approach them how you would want to be approached, take inconsideration that it is new to them most of the time.
11072575	<a href="#">View</a>	I can communicate with those that speak Spanish. French Creole usually require an interpreter.
11076218	<a href="#">View</a>	Most of the time I understand key phrases that help me to communicate verbally to my parents.
11078712	<a href="#">View</a>	I am bilingual.
11081088	<a href="#">View</a>	If I cannot communicate, I use other resources in order to do so.
11134994	<a href="#">View</a>	they love to be involved
11136017	<a href="#">View</a>	Because I communicate often with my parents to help my students succeed academically.
11136736	<a href="#">View</a>	I find no more challenging than meeting with parents of English speaking students

### Question 13\*

Do you speak another language?

Yes	9	29.03%
No	22	70.97%

ID	View Survey	If yes, what language(s):
11002481	<a href="#">View</a>	Test
11004096	<a href="#">View</a>	Spanish
11005622	<a href="#">View</a>	A little Spanish
11024169	<a href="#">View</a>	Spanish
11071544	<a href="#">View</a>	Spanish
11072575	<a href="#">View</a>	Spanish
11072620	<a href="#">View</a>	Spanish/Portuguese
11078712	<a href="#">View</a>	Spanish.
11136017	<a href="#">View</a>	Spanish/ English

Question 14*		
Explain the most challenging part of communicating with families of ELL students.		
ID	Text Answers (31)	View
11002481	Test	<a href="#">View</a>
11004096	The most challenging sometimes is not being able to sometimes get in contact. As a lot of my parents work more than one job. Scheduling meetings have to be flexible as different things might come up.	<a href="#">View</a>
11004399	The language barrier and cultural differences can be a challenge at times, Esedally the ones about being late not being important.	<a href="#">View</a>
11005512	Knowing that students are communicating information to parents as they sometimes become the translators.	<a href="#">View</a>
11005622	Messages are either delayed or can be misconstrued in translation.	<a href="#">View</a>
11005846	If I dont have a translator. I do not speak another language.	<a href="#">View</a>
11006162	Getting the family to come to a conference when they know very little English is a challenge.	<a href="#">View</a>
11006613	Finding someone to translate during a parent teacher conference. They are not usually able to assist their children with school work.	<a href="#">View</a>
11008097	The most challenging part would be deciphering between lack of communication or lack of understanding.	<a href="#">View</a>
11008763	Sometimes they are hesitant to come in because of the language barrier.	<a href="#">View</a>
11013130	It is sometimes difficult to determine how well the family really understands what I am trying to say. Sometimes, like our students, they will nod along because they are embarrassed to ask further questions or to indicate that they don't understand.	<a href="#">View</a>
11013919	I feel that sometimes parents believe since they dont speak english they just shouldnt have any communication with their english speaking teachers.	<a href="#">View</a>
11024169	More culture vs language.	<a href="#">View</a>
11030571	The most challenging part is clearing up any confusion about grades or assignments.	<a href="#">View</a>
11044379	The language barrier and not knowing if they are understanding the importance of what you are saying.	<a href="#">View</a>
11052977	None	<a href="#">View</a>
11071014	Getting them to understand what we are trying to say or inform them of. This is why a reliable translator is important.	<a href="#">View</a>
11071313	Getting your point across and being sure that it is understood and not taken the wrong way or with the wrong emphasis	<a href="#">View</a>
11071544	I do not think that is a challenge for me but I always try to be very sensible about their culture and customs.	<a href="#">View</a>
11071599	The language barrier	<a href="#">View</a>
11071735	don't understand the language	<a href="#">View</a>
11071987	Having them understand that you always do things to help their child even if the homework is reputation. The more practice the better.	<a href="#">View</a>
11071987	Having them understand that you always do things to help their child even if the homework is reputation. The more practice the better.	<a href="#">View</a>
11072575	Getting them to understand the importance of school. Other cultures have a very different view of education and our role and their role in helping their children learn. Getting on the same page is the most challenging aspect of these meetings.	<a href="#">View</a>
11072620	Lack of vocabulary, cultural background, lack of technology also limits communication opportunities.	<a href="#">View</a>
11076218	One of the most challenging	<a href="#">View</a>
11078701	If the family does not speak English or another language that is easily translated.	<a href="#">View</a>
11078712	Have them understand cultural differences related to education.	<a href="#">View</a>
11081088	Making sure that we are all on the same page. Making sure that everyone understands what needs to be understood. Answering questions too.	<a href="#">View</a>
11134994	make ourselves available with a translator	<a href="#">View</a>
11136017	The parents of my ELL students are mostly not available when I need to meet with them. The parents are sometimes too busy to meet with me and they usually cancel my appointments without telling me.	<a href="#">View</a>
11136736	Making sure they truly understand what I am trying to communicate to them.	<a href="#">View</a>

### Question 15\*

Does your school provide ample opportunities for parents to become involved?

Yes	30	96.77%
No	1	3.23%

ID	View Survey If yes, please list a few ways below:
11002481	<a href="#">View</a> Test
11004096	<a href="#">View</a> There are many different parent child activities and events planned throughout the year.
11004399	<a href="#">View</a> They can volunteer for several different events, they can come help in the classroom, English classes are provided, etc.
11005622	<a href="#">View</a> PTA, school activities (Fall Festival, Skate night, movie night)
11006162	<a href="#">View</a> Parent language classes, volunteer opportunities, FCAT night, Math & Science night
11008097	<a href="#">View</a> PTA, events, volunteering
11030571	<a href="#">View</a> Evening programs for math, science, and reading; PTA and SAC; volunteering; Fall Festival
11044379	<a href="#">View</a> FCAT night, coffee with the principal, Fall Festival, PTA, etc.
11052977	<a href="#">View</a> SAC, PLC PTA
11071544	<a href="#">View</a> PLC meetings Parental Involvement (Title I) School Volunteers Coffee with the Principal Other activities during school year
11071599	<a href="#">View</a> field trips class activities math night reading night
11071735	<a href="#">View</a> PTA, SAC, Family nights
11071987	<a href="#">View</a> Reading Night, Math and Science Night, Fall Festival, volunteering in the classroom, and asking for parent volunteers to help admin. out with special rewards.
11072575	<a href="#">View</a> PTA, activities for the students, <u>reading</u> , math, science and FCAT nights, field trips, parent helpers.
11076218	<a href="#">View</a> School meetings, community activities such as fall festival.
11078712	<a href="#">View</a> Volunteers; Meet the teacher; Conference night; Coffee with the principal, FCAT Night, Math & Science Night.
11136017	<a href="#">View</a> PTA, SAC, Additions Volunteer
11136736	<a href="#">View</a> volunteering, participating in events sponsored by the school, they have English tutoring also

### Question 16

OPTIONAL: What advice would you give to future educators about communicating with families who speak little to no English?

ID	Text Answers (16)	View
11002481	Test	<a href="#">View</a>
11004096	It would be to be forthcoming and to ask for help if you need translators. Parents are usually open to any advice you give as they want their children to succeed in school.	<a href="#">View</a>
11004399	Use translators whenever possible to avoid running into the language barrier. It is much easier to fix a miscommunication with a translator present! :)	<a href="#">View</a>
11005512	Be patient and use the resources you need.	<a href="#">View</a>
11005622	PATIENCE!	<a href="#">View</a>
11006162	Do not be afraid to admit that you do not know their home language, but take the time to prepare and alternate form of communication (translated notes, a translator present, etc.)	<a href="#">View</a>
11008097	Just breathe. Everyone is there for the benefit of the child. If you keep that in mind, you will realize that everyone is on the same side.	<a href="#">View</a>
11008763	Don't spend too much time having things translated. It is their responsibility to access the information you provide.	<a href="#">View</a>
11071313	Keep all avenues of communication open. You will find one works best, and each family is different.	<a href="#">View</a>
11071544	Be always very sensible to their culture and customs, Be attentive, make them feel welcome and comfortable when they come into your classroom for meetings, invite them to participate of school activities, try to use translators during meeting and send information home in their native language.	<a href="#">View</a>
11071987	Be prepared with other resources outside of your school. Also provide letters in multiple languages if possible. Encourage parents to talk the English classes that some schools offer for free to these parents. Know how to handle different cultures languages/ gestures.	<a href="#">View</a>
11072575	Win them over. Be sure they know that you care about their child and their child's future. Help them to understand what you are looking for and what your expectations are for them as parents and for the student. Let them know that you are there to help and then be sure to be there when you are needed.	<a href="#">View</a>
11072620	Effective communication is essential to create strong school-home partnerships and to increase parental involvement. Always remember to retaining the human touch!	<a href="#">View</a>
11078701	Use pictures, have a coworker translate or always have a translator when setting up a meeting.	<a href="#">View</a>
11081088	Use your resources! Ask colleagues, use the internet, ask other parents and students.	<a href="#">View</a>
11136017	Try getting someone to have school personnel to assist you when you are having a meeting. Look for letter translations so the parents can understand everything better. Be specific and reschedule appointments for the child benefit.	<a href="#">View</a>

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