

# Working with English Learners Using a Two-Generation Approach

*Ye He, Deborah Wilson, Amanda Scott, and Xingyi Zhao*

## Abstract

The increasing number of English learners in local communities in the U.S. include both children and their family members. There is an urgent need to provide educational support for both generations of English learners. In this report from the field, a partnership program using a two-generation approach is described. Based on interviews, observations, and teacher reflections, program challenges are reported, and community assets and resources which can be leveraged through such programs are explored using the community cultural wealth framework (Yosso, 2005). Findings of this study offer insights for educators interested in starting similar programs to support English learners and their families through community-based partnerships.

Key Words: English learners, community cultural wealth, two-generation approach, parents, family, adults education programs, children, language learning

## Introduction

The Pew Research Center (2015) projected that the U.S. population will increase by 103 million by 2065, 88% of which will be associated with future immigrants and their descendants. While the educational level of newly arrived immigrants has increased over time, there is a growing number of families with limited English skills. American Community Survey data indicate that over one-fifth of the U.S. population 5 years of age or older (21%) speak a language

other than English at home, and among this population, 42% report they speak English less than “very well” (U.S. Census, 2015). The number of English learners (ELs) in schools has also been increasing steadily. In the 2014–15 academic year, there were 4,806,662 ELs in U.S. schools, comprising 9.6% of the overall K–12 student population (Office of English Language Acquisition, 2017).

English proficiency has also been associated with economic access. Studies have illustrated that immigrants with higher levels of English proficiency have higher employment rates and higher wages (Wilson, 2014). Furthermore, children’s English language proficiency levels are greatly impacted by their parents’ English skills (Estrada & Shah, 2009; Ross, 2015). Therefore, efforts to enhance the English language proficiency of both immigrant children and their families are critical considering the changing demographics in U.S. communities and the future workforce.

While the traditional gateway immigrant communities in states such as California, New York, and Florida have established programs using the two-generation approach to support the English language development of both adults and their children (Ross, 2015), similar efforts are still emerging in new gateway communities such as those in the Southeast U.S. where there has been a recent increase of immigrant populations. In this article, we review different types of programs designed for ELs and their families and introduce the two-generation approach. We then share the community cultural wealth framework (Yosso, 2005) that was used to guide the description and analysis of a partnership program using the two-generation approach. From the perspective of program developers and instructors, we discuss community assets and resources that can be leveraged through such programs to engage and empower ELs and their families.

## **Programs for English Learners and Their Families**

The efforts to provide English language support for ELs beyond the traditional school curriculum are not new. Many schools offer afterschool programs that include support for ELs. Researchers found that afterschool programs with a specific English language development curriculum component are especially effective for ELs (Cosden, Morrison, Albanese, & Macias, 2001). Boys’ and Girls’ clubs, community-based tutoring programs, sports teams, and other community-based initiatives have a positive association with ELs’ language development and academic achievement (Fairbanks et al., 2017; Fischer & Kmec, 2004; Rohr, He, & Murphy, 2014; Tellez & Waxman, 2010). While offering programs to support ELs, it is also important to include an educational component for ELs’ families.

For adult ELs, there are a variety of programs designed to enhance their English proficiency. The National Center for Family Literacy and Center for Applied Linguistics (2008) summarized the major types of adult English programs to include: life skills or general English as a Second Language (ESL) or English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, family ESOL literacy programs, English literacy and civics programs, vocational ESOL programs, workplace ESOL classes, and preacademic ESOL programs. Some of these programs may be open entry with no placement testing, while others require participants to take an entrance placement test (e.g., those offered through local community colleges). For parents of ELs, in addition to the need for English language proficiency development, opportunities may also be provided to better understand the U.S. school system, learn more about ways to be involved in schools, share ideas and concerns with other parents, and participate in school or community-based activities (Lopez, 2004; Maruca, 2002; Tellez & Waxman, 2010). Most of these adult ESOL programs do not offer a component for children at the same time, which makes it difficult to ensure consistent attendance of ELs' families. The recruitment and retention of trained teachers and assessment of adult ELs' language development are two additional major challenges for programs designed for adult ELs.

Working with both adults and children in the programming is key to support both generations to achieve and thrive during their transition. Park, McHugh, and Katsiaficas (2016) examined 11 programs using the two-generation approach and confirmed the potential positive impact of such programs. The report also identified challenges programs face to meet the unique needs of EL families and called for more research in this area. The two-generation approach calls for schools and communities to (a) provide parents and guardians with pathways to achieve financial stability; (b) ensure access to high-quality child care and early education; and (c) enable parents and guardians to better support their children socially and emotionally and to advocate for their children's education (Ross, 2015).

While the benefits of initiating programs using a two-generation approach are recognized (Park et al., 2016; Ross, 2015), to initiate such an effort is not an easy task. In this article, we described a community-based program that involves both an adult education component and children's curriculum to address the needs of both generations (Ross, 2015). We discuss the program challenges and highlight the forms of community cultural wealth that were leveraged in the program (Yosso, 2005).

## Community Cultural Wealth

Bourdieu (1986) described three forms of capital including economic capital, social capital, and cultural capital. Economic capital relates to one's economic assets. Social capital is associated with one's social connections and membership. Cultural capital was described by Bourdieu in terms of three interrelated forms: objectified, embodied, and institutionalized. Objectified cultural capital entails physical resources that are indicative or supportive of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are valued in educational settings. Embodied cultural capital refers to those "long-lasting dispositions" that are associated with being accomplished and successful students (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243). Institutionalized cultural capital is formed when embodied cultural capital is formally recognized in educational settings. These forms of capital play out in the various social fields that entail field-specific structures of internal power relations that are defined and maintained by individuals and through social interactions (Bourdieu, 1993; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977).

Bourdieu's (1986) capital theory has been applied in education settings by many researchers. Compton-Lilly (2007), for example, applied the theory in the exploration of various forms of reading capital through a study involving two Puerto Rican families in both home and school settings. Based on her findings, she challenged Bourdieu's assumption that economic capital is at the root of all forms of capital. Compton-Lilly highlighted the potential of the social and cultural capitals families bring to their home and school literacy practices as they negotiate the dynamic social fields in both the "official and local worlds" (p. 96).

Similarly, other scholars have also confronted the dominant perspectives regarding traditionally marginalized populations by featuring voices and counternarratives from the minority perspective (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Harper, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2006, 2013; Leonardo, 2013). Yosso (2005) argued against the deficit perspective in education that diminishes the cultural capital students and families of color bring into the school setting. Building upon the concept of wealth (Oliver & Shapiro, 1995) and incorporating the concept of "funds of knowledge" (Moll & Gonzalez, 2004), Yosso (2005) highlighted navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capitals as forms of community cultural wealth families bring into education. According to Yosso, aspirational capital refers to the aspirations community members hold for their future despite the current obstacles and challenges they may face; navigational capital is the ability to navigate and negotiate the systems that may not be accommodating to the needs of minority community members; social capital highlights the power of social network within and across communities;

linguistic capital recognizes the knowledge and skills associated with multilingual competencies; familial capital refers to the support from extended familial and community networks; and resistance capital depicts community members' resilience and ability to challenge the status quo.

In this article, we apply Yosso's (2005) framework in describing the community resources which support the implementation of the two-generation approach for ELs and their families from the program development perspective. We first describe the general program context. Then, we summarize three major challenges. Relevant forms of community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) that were recognized by program developers and instructors are then highlighted to draw implications for other family literacy providers working on community-based programs for ELs and their families.

## **Program Context**

The program was initiated by a parent liaison working in a local school. She noted that an overwhelming number of parents of Hispanic students did not speak English and appeared alienated from their English-speaking peers and the school environment. Representing the Spanish-speaking parents who expressed interest in learning English, she went to the school district and requested permission to hold Saturday ESL classes for the Hispanic parents, and she approached a local university for assistance. Faculty and staff from the university collaborated with the school and local community to initiate a pilot program in 2015.

Feedback was sought from administrators, teachers, and parents at the school, the district parent association, and parent liaisons to identify the curriculum focus. Both ESL teachers and the parent liaison at the school joined all curriculum planning meetings. Teacher educators with ESOL backgrounds from the university also participated in these meetings. Building upon an existing field experience partnership with the school district, the university teacher educators also saw this program as an opportunity to engage preservice and in-service teacher candidates in direct interactions with families and community members. Based on the feedback from all stakeholders, the program was designed to include components for both adults and children. The focus of the adult program was on participants' use of the English language in their daily interactions. Parents with relatively low English proficiency also expressed the need to have instructors who are bilingual and could use the Spanish language in their class. The focus of the children's curriculum was on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math), to be aligned with the district curriculum requirement.

Classes were (and continue to be) held from 9:00 am–noon on Saturday mornings for 24 weeks per year. Adult English classes consist of three levels, each based on the learner’s level of English proficiency. Emergent bilinguals attend the Level 1 class, with both Spanish and English as the instructional languages. Level 2 utilizes English as the instructional language, with the use of Spanish language as scaffolding support. Level 3 employs English almost exclusively. For three out of four Saturdays each month, the program is located at the local middle school, where instructors and volunteers from the teacher education program provide English literacy instruction intended to address real world situations, such as using public transportation, grocery shopping, doctor and dental visits, filling out job applications, helping children with homework, and participating in community and school events. On the fourth Saturday, all participants attend computer classes at the university, where they learn basic computer competencies. While the instructors for the program were teachers and teacher educators with ESOL backgrounds, volunteers included teacher candidates who were in the teacher education program with only internship and/or student teaching experiences working with ELs.

The children’s program is run by a bilingual university instructor who plans STEAM activities for the children while encouraging the use of their full language repertoire. On the fourth Saturday of the month, the children participate in the program at the university to engage in the innovative use of technology through the university’s makerspace.

During this study, there were four instructors working with adult participants in this program. Two of the instructors were native Spanish speakers from Peru. Each had experience teaching adult students in Peru, and both were ESL teachers at the local middle and high schools. One adult instructor who taught Level 3 (advanced) in the program was a professor at the partner university. The fourth instructor was a former high school Spanish teacher with no prior experiences working with adult learners.

The four authors of this paper are all involved in this program. The first author is a university faculty member, and the other three authors are graduate teacher candidates from the university teacher education (M.Ed.) program. Prior to enrolling in the university program, they had various levels of teaching experiences working with ELs in the United States or overseas. They served as instructors and volunteers to work with adult and student participants. In addition to the authors’ reflections and observations, interviews were conducted with seven other program developers, instructors, and volunteers to gather their perspectives. Four of them were instructors for the adult language program, one worked with the children’s program, and the other two included a program leader and a parent liaison (see Table 1).

Table 1. Participants' Roles\*

	Participant Role in the Program	Participant Professional Role	Language Background
Participant 1	Program Leader	Faculty at the University	English
Participant 2	Adult Level 3 Class Instructor	Faculty at the University	English
Participant 3	Adult Level 3 Class Instructor	Community Volunteer	English
Participant 4	Adult Level 2 Class Instructor	School Teacher	English–Spanish Bilingual
Participant 5	Adult Level 1 Class Instructor	School Teacher	English–Spanish Bilingual
Participant 6*	Adult Level 1 Class Instructor	School Teacher/Candidate in the University Program	English
Participant 7	Children's Program Instructor	Faculty at the University	English–Spanish Bilingual
Participant 8*	Children's Program Volunteer	Teacher Candidate in the University Program	English–Chinese Bilingual
Participant 9	Parent Liaison	School Parent Liaison	English

*Note.* \*Participants 6 and 8 are also co-authors of this article.

All interviews were transcribed to be reviewed together with the observation and reflection data. Constant comparative analysis was conducted to explore themes based on all data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). All researchers reviewed the data individually first and then compared their analyses to identify program-specific challenges and community cultural wealth that was leveraged for program development.

## Program Challenges

Challenges faced by program stakeholders fell into three major categories: (a) program focus and differentiation; (b) program engagement and sustainability; and (c) program funding sources.

### Program Focus and Differentiation

Community-based programs established through partnerships need to respond to the goals of various stakeholders. In this program, while the university and school system may have prioritized the academic language learning of adult and child participants, participants were more concerned about daily interactions in social settings or job attainment. Because of varying stakeholder

goals, educational and linguistic backgrounds, and levels of readiness, differentiation was key in both the adult classes and children's activities.

For adult classes, one major endeavor was to determine the appropriate balance of English and Spanish as the instructional language. All program instructors recognized the importance to leverage learners' first language as they designed lessons. The Level 1 instructor, for example, shared that while her original plan had been to teach almost entirely in English and to set up her lessons and classroom environment much like she had when she taught high school, she soon realized that the plan would not work with the adult students in this program. Students in her class were much more comfortable using Spanish as the medium for language learning. The range of participants' educational backgrounds also presented challenges for instructors who were more familiar with instructional design in K–12 settings. Some of the participants had limited educational experiences in their home country and may not have been familiar with specific vocabulary or grammar structure in their first language. Even though the program was not grammar-based, familiarity with first language vocabulary and grammar structure can greatly facilitate learners' acquisition and learning of the English language. A lack of first language proficiency may require instructors to offer scaffolding accordingly to build primarily upon learners' first language from an oral language perspective.

For the children's program, one of the major challenges was the need for differentiation. Since the adult program was open to any adults in the local community interested in developing their English skills, child participants' backgrounds varied greatly. Children joining this program ranged in age from babies to high school students. The instructors collected children's background information when adults and children registered for the program and considered these backgrounds in the program design. The focus of the children's program was centered around STEAM to involve participants with different backgrounds in scientific inquiry activities. As one volunteer commented,

At the beginning, all children were put into a big group to be involved into an activity. Then, the program had more volunteers and children were divided into small groups; every group had a volunteer to help them to build their projects. Sometimes, children would be assigned to different parts based on their level—babies, middle school[er]s, and others. Babies were taken care by several volunteers, and they also had many toys to play [with]. Middle school[er]s participated in high level activities, such as “Team Building” activity. The process [went] more smoothly based on this way.

Children's various language backgrounds also presented challenges for instructors and volunteers. While most school-age children participating in this program spoke English in addition to their home language, their proficiency levels varied. There were several young children who only spoke Spanish. In addition, some participants were from Asian countries and spoke home languages other than Spanish. Even though several volunteers were from China, when participants' home language was not Mandarin Chinese, both the volunteers and participants experienced language barriers. As one of the Chinese volunteers for the children's program recalled, after she tried to communicate with the child from China in Mandarin Chinese and received no response, she learned that the family was from Inner Mongolia, an autonomous region of Northern China where Mongol rather than Mandarin Chinese was spoken.

### **Program Engagement and Sustainability**

It is not unusual to see attrition in most adult language learning programs over time or high turnover rates among instructors. Various challenges, such as transportation and time commitment, can impact sustained engagement and participation.

During instructors' debriefing meetings, participant engagement was a recurring topic. One instructor shared that she encouraged her adult participants to join the classes and serve as role models for their children. She also recognized the transportation challenges some of the participants face:

I would like to be able to offer transportation to parents, because that is one thing. Many parents don't come because they don't drive, so they have these obstacles. Transportation is an obstacle, and as you have seen, most of our students are females. They're moms. Because most parents work even on weekends. The dads are working, and the moms are the ones that come here, taking their children. So, sometimes they don't drive, or just have one car. Dad has to work, so there's nobody to take mom.

Similarly, for instructors and volunteers, the time commitment on Saturdays presented challenges when they had other professional and personal obligations and responsibilities.

### **Program Funding Sources**

This program received financial support from two major sources: the local school district, and the local university. Program participants expressed gratitude for the financial assistance offered to sustain the program. As the parent liaison commented, "Our wonderful team has been so instrumental in finding funds for the program each year."

At the local school district, the parent association contributed financial support to compensate teachers from the school district who served as instructors for the program and allotted money to purchase program supplies. At the local university, funding from two internal grant applications supported the program. Faculty and graduate students from the university served as volunteer instructors for the program. In addition to the local school and university, an external grant from a community organization and donations from local stores and nonprofit organizations also provided additional support to enhance the quality and sustainability of the program. However, these forms of financial support, especially grant-based funding, were not always renewable. Program funding difficulties can pose a credible threat to a program.

### **Community Cultural Wealth in the Two-Generation Program**

Despite these challenges, the program stakeholders were able to successfully leverage community cultural wealth to address some of the challenges. Five out of the six integrated forms of community cultural wealth identified by Yosso (2005) were observed in the program, including linguistic capital, navigational capital, social capital, familial capital, and aspirational capital. These capitals were leveraged throughout the program to overcome the challenges and ensure program success.

#### **Linguistic Capital**

Linguistic capital was one of the key aspects of community cultural wealth highlighted through this program. Even though the major program goal was to enhance adult participants' English language proficiency, participants' first language backgrounds were recognized and leveraged throughout the program.

Across all levels of classes, the instructors encouraged participants to use both Spanish and English for peer interactions and support, asking clarification questions, and expressing their thoughts and ideas. Given her students' needs, the Level 1 instructor most often used Spanish in her instruction and intentionally applied Total Physical Response strategies in her lessons to engage all students. The Level 2 bilingual instructor affirmed the practice of maintaining fluency in one's heritage language as a means to increase life opportunities. Although she used English for instruction and email communication, she interacted in Spanish with her learners during informal situations, particularly before class began, since all her learners in the class were Spanish-speaking. In the interview, she commented,

When they are coming into the classrooms, sometimes I talk to them in Spanish. Most of the time they will respond in English. The adults

feel more comfortable with Spanish, obviously. It's their mother tongue, and they are learning English....Some adults feel more comfortable [in speaking English], and some of them are more shy or need more support.

Although instructors for the Level 3 class taught entirely in English, they were also aware of the value of their students' linguistic capital. As one Level 3 teacher commented,

I absolutely think that the more well educated you are in your first language [i.e., formal education completed in one's first language], it's going to help you with your second languages...whatever you have, you leverage that to learn other languages....I always tell them...to help each other. "It's fine to talk in Spanish. I won't know what [you're] saying, but you can help each other, and that's great." Because sometimes they can explain something or find a word that helps somebody.

Instructors' linguistic capital ensured successful program implementation.

All instructors utilized their linguistic and educational backgrounds in their planning and instruction. The three Spanish-speaking teachers, for example, were able to use the Spanish language to explain challenging concepts to students. With extensive prior teaching experiences, instructors in this program also purposefully planned instruction to enhance participants' reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in connection with real-world applications. The Level 2 instructor commented, "They write a lot, they record what they read, they practice first, and then when they feel that they are doing things better, they record their voices, and I give them...personalized feedback. We talk, compare, [regarding] the experiences they have." She built a lesson around shopping and everything they would need to go shopping and what problems they might encounter (i.e., finding the right size, price, color, etc.).

### **Navigational Capital**

Program developers, instructors, and participants negotiated the instructional objectives, activities, and outcomes as they learned from one another. Local educational resources were also leveraged to meet the needs of program participants.

For the adult classes, instructors listened to the requests of their students for coverage of particular topics. As a result, units were offered to address these needs, and thus included such themes as conversing during parent-teacher conferences and U.S. holiday traditions. To assist those seeking to become U.S. citizens, material on U.S. history, politics, and citizenship comprised one complete semester in the Level 3 class. Adult participants also recognized this student-centered approach in instructional focus selection and appreciated the

instructors' efforts to identify relevant topics based on their needs. In addition, instructors were attentive to students' needs and were flexible to deviate from their lesson plans to fulfill students' learning goals. The Level 3 instructor, for example, shared, "Even though I have a lesson plan, I have [material] I want them to learn. If we veer off from that, I try to go with them. Sometimes we end up having side conversations that I think are good—because they're interested."

The children's program was originally developed as a childcare component to support the adult English language program. The integration of the STEAM content into the children's activities enriched the program and engaged students of all ages. The instruction involving children relied on local resources especially from the partnering university. The need for volunteers to work with children in this program was shared with instructors at the university who worked with education majors. Several instructors added this volunteer opportunity as one of the service learning opportunities that their students could participate in as part of their teacher education course requirements. These courses included a diverse learners course and ESOL methods courses. The number of volunteers and volunteers' educational backgrounds supported the successful delivery of the STEAM activities in the program. In addition, the university's technology resources were also utilized.

### **Social and Familial Capital**

This two-generation program is designed to be a Saturday program to maximize the possibility of participant attendance. However, while most of the participants had Saturdays to attend this program, several adult participants and other potential participants had to work on Saturdays or their Saturday schedules were dependent on work schedule changes. Participants and instructors demonstrated great social and familial capital as they worked around the schedule challenges to ensure consistent engagement as much as possible.

One participant, for example, figured out a way to accommodate the Saturday program schedule even though he had to work on Saturdays. His wife shared with the instructors that to be able to attend this program, her husband negotiated a plan in which he would go into work at 6:00 am and then attend the program from 9:00 am to noon on an extended lunch break. He then returned to work at 1:00 pm and completed his shift at 6:00 pm. Such dedication was inspiring, and he was representative of a number of adult participants in this program who had to negotiate schedule challenges.

Instructors in this program also understood and appreciated participants' efforts for engagement. Instead of penalizing participants for missing classes, they utilized various communication strategies to encourage participants to return and kept all participants posted about homework and other class

announcements. For example, during the week, instructors would send a text, phone call, or email to all participants to remind them of class homework. For those who may have had to miss a class, the instructors would also contact them personally and discuss what they missed. The creation of social networks among instructors and participants supported and strengthened the engagement of all participants.

### **Aspirational Capital**

Both the adult program and children's program relied on school-based and volunteer instructors who commit to planning for and delivering instruction on Saturdays. While the motivations that initially brought the volunteer instructors may differ, all volunteer instructors seemed to share the aspirational capital to promote changes through educational programs involving local parents and children from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Several of the volunteer instructors in this program hold doctoral degrees and/or have extensive teaching experiences. They were motivated to share their educational expertise with the local community. One professor from the local university who volunteered to teach the Level 3 adult English class, for example, shared that she desired to continue contributing to the community as she moved into retirement:

I'm fully licensed to teach ESL but not experienced, and so this was my chance to do that.... We wanted to be responsive to their request to teach English for their parents, and I thought that was a...good thing that parents wanted to improve their English, so they can help their kids, get a better job, and feel more comfortable in settings where they need their English.... I would like for us to draw from a wider circle of schools... I'd like us to be able to sustain this. I hate just starting and stopping something, so I'm in for the long haul.

An experienced teacher of English from a South American country served as a volunteer instructor for intermediate level students. With five years of teaching experiences in the U.S. in middle school settings, she shared the desire to contribute her experiences and expertise to this program. She said she enjoyed teaching adults because it is "fun." She incorporated games as well as conversations with her students about serious, real-life events and issues.

Volunteer instructors with less teaching experience also recognized the shared learning that took place. One volunteer instructor for the children's program was an international student enrolled in a master's degree program. She recognized that her own encounters with learning English allowed her to offer a unique contribution from the perspective of a learner.

In addition, program developers and instructors also shared aspirational capital as they saw the potential of the program beyond its immediate outcomes. One of the program developers, a professor from the university, believed that this program addressed issues of injustice:

I wholeheartedly believe that becoming educated is a community process that should be democratic. Students are taught by teachers who are led by administrators. Students also bring with them their first education, one that is generated through their immediate and extended families and influenced by community members.... While rules and decisions about students' learning may not be shared by all parties, visions for learning should be designed to be in the best interest of students, especially considering and placing issues of equality and equity in the forefront of thinking about and designing curriculum, etcetera, for ALL students. Additionally, as we educate students, we are also educating their families and members of their community. Learning and education go much farther than the walls of a school building.

Another program volunteer who supported the administration of the program also served as a Parent Academy representative for the county. As a parent representative, she saw the program as an opportunity to offer services to empower parents to advocate for their children. Her goal was to see this program become part of a countywide effort that "provide(s) access to services, support, and scholarships designed to prepare...students for success in college, career, and life."

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

To support newly arrived immigrants as they explore education and career opportunities in the United States, it is important that we consider program options beyond the traditional boundaries of schooling. In addition to offering school-based programming for immigrant children and community-based educational programming targeting adult immigrants separately, it is important to consider offering programs that serve both adults and children while meeting their unique educational needs. While many informal educational entities (e.g., local churches, nonprofit organizations, etc.) may offer programs for both adults and children, educational agencies such as the K-12 public schools can further contribute to these educational efforts to expand existing family literacy programs. Different from school-based family literacy programs that often focus more on families' roles in children's academic learning, the program described in this report supported the learning needs of adults who chose to participate in the program.

The program described in this report from the field has many limitations and illustrated challenges other similar programs may face. The program was initiated as a university–school partnership based on the request from a parent liaison. While teachers from the school, university stakeholders, and the parent liaison participated in the initial design of the program and pilot, not all community partners and participants were involved in the initial discussions. The original intended participants of the program only included families with children attending the school where the program is housed. The expanded involvement of community members interested in such a program illustrated the need for such a program, but at the same time presented challenges such as transportation for program participants. Even though consistent participation was an expectation of all program participants including adult students and volunteers, competing priorities such as work schedule shifts, academic program requirements, or family commitments sometimes prevented them from sustained engagement in all program activities. Funding was used to cover instructor compensation and program materials in this program. All university faculty members volunteered their time. However, instructors from K–12 schools typically are compensated for their instructional commitments during the weekend in the district, and it was expected they would be compensated for their time in this program. Additional funding was also needed for program materials in both the adult and children’s programs. In spite of these challenges that educators need to be aware of as they consider the implementation of such programs, the community assets highlighted throughout this program offer insights for educators as they create local partnerships that support ELs and their families.

First, programs using the two-generational approach offer an alternative learning space for instruction based on learners’ multilingual backgrounds and can maximize the linguistic capital of ELs, their families, and the teachers involved. While the majority of programs may focus on learners’ social and academic English development, sometimes with a focus on college and career readiness (Park et al., 2016), the promotion of immigrant families’ home language use and children’s bilingual development can further enrich multilingual and multicultural practices in both school and home settings. From a teacher education perspective, the multilingual learning space can also offer preservice and in-service teachers opportunities to leverage their linguistic backgrounds and develop their multilingual and intercultural competencies as they interact with students and families from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Second, to develop and sustain community-based programs for ELs and their families, it is critical for educators to leverage local resources and be attentive and flexible to meet the needs of both children and adults participating

in these programs. In this program, instructors for both the adult and children's classes adapted the curriculum to utilize available resources and best meet the needs of participants. The success of other large-scale two-generation programs funded through grants such as Promise Neighborhoods (<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html>) also demonstrate the importance of understanding localized needs when launching and developing these programs situated in specific community contexts.

Finally, the aspirational capitals of immigrant children, families, and local educators can be leveraged in the design of community-based, two-generation programs to highlight local talents and enhance the well-being of all participants involved in such programs. In this program, through the collaboration among the local university, school district, and the community, not only were children and adults who attended the Saturday classes sharing their aspirational capital, but teacher candidates, community volunteers, and university faculty and staff were also engaged in the shared process to realize their aspirations and contribute to the imagined community of education through a shared vision (He, Bettez, & Levin, 2015). Breaking the boundaries of learning spaces through collaborations can provide community partners an opportunity to establish further shared understanding as educators and community members work together to enhance the quality of education for the community.

Just as Compton-Lilly (2007) found in her study, in this program, economic capital is not the root which undergirds the various forms of capital shared by program developers, instructors, volunteers, community partners, and participating students and adults. Rather, it is other forms of capital—which may not be recognized in official social fields—that connected the community through the two-generation program.

## References

- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). New York, NY: Greenwood.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993). *Sociology in question*. London, UK: Sage.
- Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. (1977). *Reproduction in education, society, and culture*. London, UK: Sage.
- Compton-Lilly, C. (2007). The complexities of reading capital in two Puerto Rican families. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 42(1), 72–98.
- Cosden, M., Morrison, G., Albanese, A. L., & Macias, S. (2001). When homework is not home work: After-school programs for homework assistance. *Educational Psychologist*, 36, 211–221.
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2013). Discerning critical moments. In M. Lynn & A. Dixson (Eds.), *Handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 23–33). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Estrada, R., & Shah, S. (2009). *We want to know what they are saying: A multiagency collaborative effort to address parental language barriers and disproportionate minority contact*. New York, NY: Vera Institute of Justice.
- Fairbanks, C. M., Faircloth, B., Gonzalez, L., He, Y., Tan, E., & Zoch, M. (2017). Beyond commodified knowledge: The possibilities of powerful community learning spaces. In S. Salas & P. R. Portes (Eds.), *Latinization of K–12 communities: National perspectives on regional change* (pp. 43–66). New York, NY: SUNY Press.
- Fischer, M. J., & Kmec, J. A. (2004). Neighborhood socioeconomic conditions as moderators of family resource transmission: High school completion among at-risk youth. *Sociological Perspectives, 47*, 507–527.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York, NY: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Harper, S. R. (2008). Realizing the intended outcomes of Brown: High-achieving African American male undergraduates and social capital. *American Behavioral Scientist, 51*(7), 1029–1052.
- He, Y., Bettez, S., & Levin, B. B. (2015). Imagined community of education: Voices from refugees and immigrants. *Urban Education, 52*. doi:10.1177/0042085915575579
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to education debt: Understanding achievement in U.S. schools. *Educational Researcher, 35*(7), 3–12.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2013). Critical race theory—what it is not! In M. Lynn & A. Dixson (Eds.), *Handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 34–47). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Leonardo, Z. (2013). *Race frameworks: A multidimensional theory of racism and education*. New York, NY: Teachers College.
- Lopez, G. R. (2004). Bringing the mountain to Mohammed: Parent involvement in migrant-impacted schools. In C. Salinas & M. E. Franquiz (Eds.), *Scholars in the field: The challenges of migrant education* (pp. 135–146). Charleston, WV: AEL. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED481644)
- Maruca, P. M. (2002). *Impact of parent involvement on Hispanic, limited English proficient students and their parents* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff.
- Moll, L. C., & Gonzalez, N. (2004). Engaging life: A funds-of-knowledge approach to multicultural education. In J. Banks & C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (pp. 699–715). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- National Center for Family Literacy and Center for Applied Linguistics. (2008). *Practitioner toolkit: Working with adult English language learners*. Retrieved from [http://www.cal.org/caela/tools/program\\_development/CombinedFiles1.pdf](http://www.cal.org/caela/tools/program_development/CombinedFiles1.pdf)
- Office of English Language Acquisition. (2017). *Profiles of English learners (ELs)*. Retrieved from [https://nclae.ed.gov/files/fast\\_facts/OELAFastFactsProfilesOfELs.pdf](https://nclae.ed.gov/files/fast_facts/OELAFastFactsProfilesOfELs.pdf)
- Oliver, M. L., & Shapiro, T. M. (1995). *Black wealth/White wealth: A new perspective on racial inequality*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Park, M., McHugh, M., & Katsiaficas, C. (2016). *Serving immigrant families through two-generation programs: Identifying family needs and responsive program approaches*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/serving-immigrant-families-through-two-generation-programs-identifying-family-needs-and>
- Pew Research Center. (2015). *Modern immigration wave brings 59 million to U.S., driving population growth and change through 2065: Views from immigrants' impact on U.S. society mixed*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/09/28/modern-immigration-wave-brings-59-million-to-u-s-driving-population-growth-and-change-through-2065/>

- Rohr, J., He, Y., & Murphy, M. B. (2014). Learning from struggling readers: The impact of a community-based service learning project on teacher preparation. *PRISM: A Journal of Regional Engagement*, 3(2), 99–118.
- Ross, T. (2015). *The case for a two-generation approach for educating English language learners*. Retrieved from the Center for American Progress website: <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/reports/2015/05/06/112074/the-case-for-a-two-generation-approach-for-educating-english-language-learners/>
- Tellez, K., & Waxman, H. C. (2010). A review of research on effective community programs for English language learners. *School Community Journal*, 20(1), 103–119. Retrieved from <http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/SCJ.aspx>
- U.S. Census. (2015). *Detailed languages spoken at home and ability to speak English for the population 5 years and over: 2009–2013*. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2013/demo/2009-2013-lang-tables.html>
- Wilson, J. H. (2014). *Investing in English skills: The limited English proficient workforce in U.S. metropolitan areas*. Washington, DC: Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/research/investing-in-english-skills-the-limited-english-proficient-workforce-in-u-s-metropolitan-areas/>
- Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, 8(1), 69–91.

Ye He is a professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). Her scholarship focuses on the promotion of strengths-based and community-engaged educational practices. Correspondence concerning this article may be addressed to Ye He, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, PO Box 26170, Greensboro, NC 27402-6170, or email [y\\_he@uncg.edu](mailto:y_he@uncg.edu)

Deborah Wilson is a graduate from the Master of Education program in TESOL from UNCG. She currently serves as the teacher and student advisor at New Mind Education. Her work focuses on the support of international college students' academic and cultural transition.

Xingyi Zhao is a graduate from the Master of Education program in TESOL from UNCG. She is a high school teacher at Uwharrie Charter Academy. She also serves as an instructor in a community-based language school. Her work focuses on Chinese language education for K–12 students.

Amanda Scott is a graduate from the Master of Education program in TESOL from UNCG. She was previously a Spanish language teacher, and her work continues to focus on Spanish language education for K–12 students.