



Project TAPP:
Teachers and
Parents as
Partners

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Acknowledgements

- Collaborators: Patti Manz, Kristin Martin, Tom Hammond, & Scott Garrigan
- Parents and teachers who participated in the project
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Agenda

- Why this project?
- What we did
 - Focus groups
 - Community of practice
- Interactive discussion

Dual language learners

- 26% of nation's population under 5 years of age is Latino (National Council of La Raza, 2011)
- *Latino children under the age of 6 represent the largest group of DLLs (Passel, 2011)*
- *29% of children in Head Start come from homes in which a language other than English is spoken. (ACF, 2013)*
 - 84% of DLLs were from Spanish-speaking homes

Dual language learners

- Cognitive, linguistic, and social benefits of being bilingual (e.g., Barac & Bialystok, 2013; Castro, García, & Markos, 2013)
- Yet...
 - Only 30% of DLLs read proficiently by 4th grade as compared to 70% of native English speakers, with this gap widening by 8th grade (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011)

The Need...Our Role

- Family risk factors (e.g., poverty, low education).
Hard to change.

What can we more readily change??

- Incorporation of native language and more instructional support for DLLs into classrooms
- Increase teacher efficacy/preparation to teach DLLs
- Enhance partnerships between schools and families

Focus on early childhood

- Preschool years are critical in building the foundational skills for children to become successful readers (NELP, 2009)
- DLLs derive equal and possibly greater gains from high quality preschool programs than other preschool children (Administration of Children and Families, 2013; Gormley, 2008; Magnuson, Lahaie, & Waldfogel, 2006)

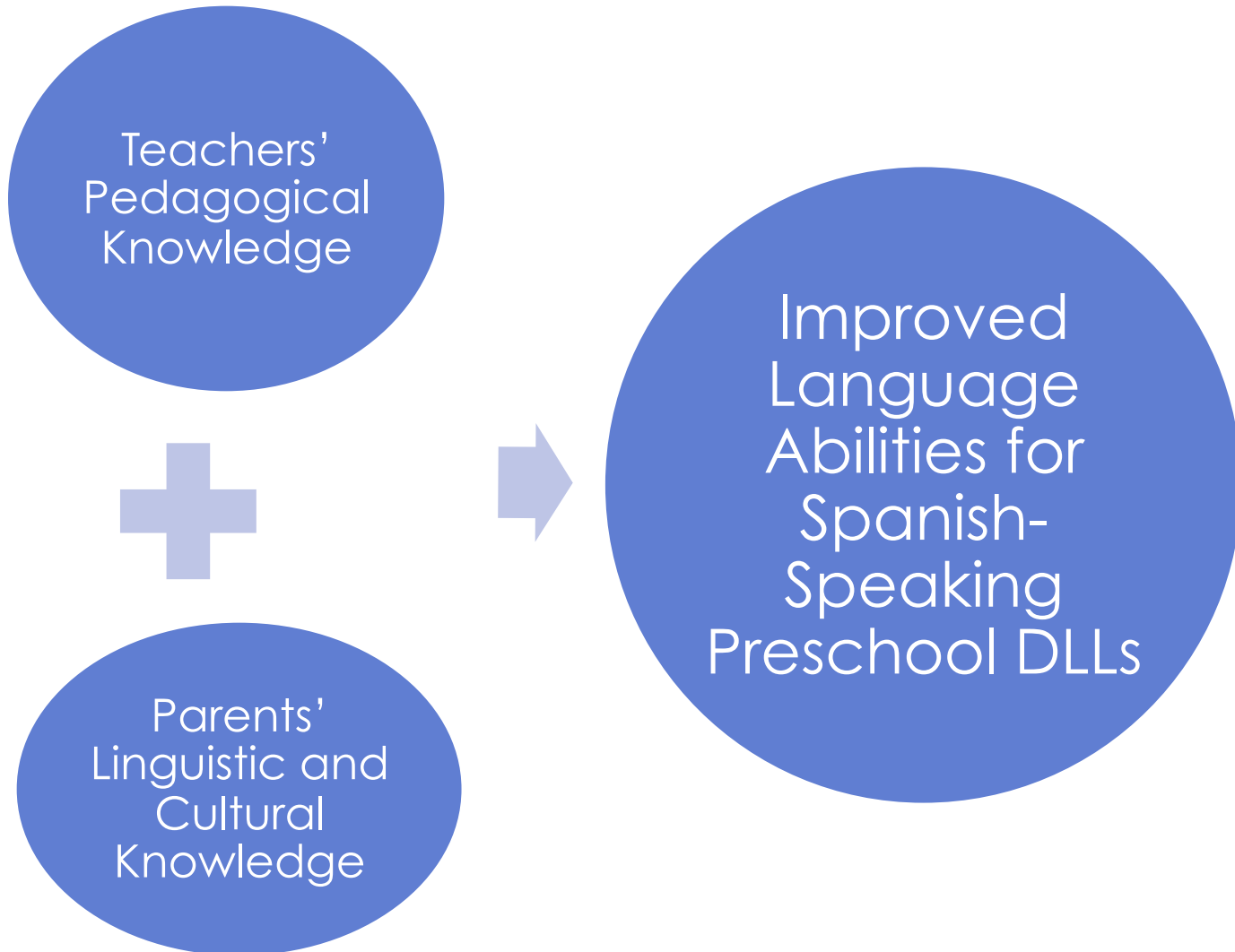
Typical educational training scenario?

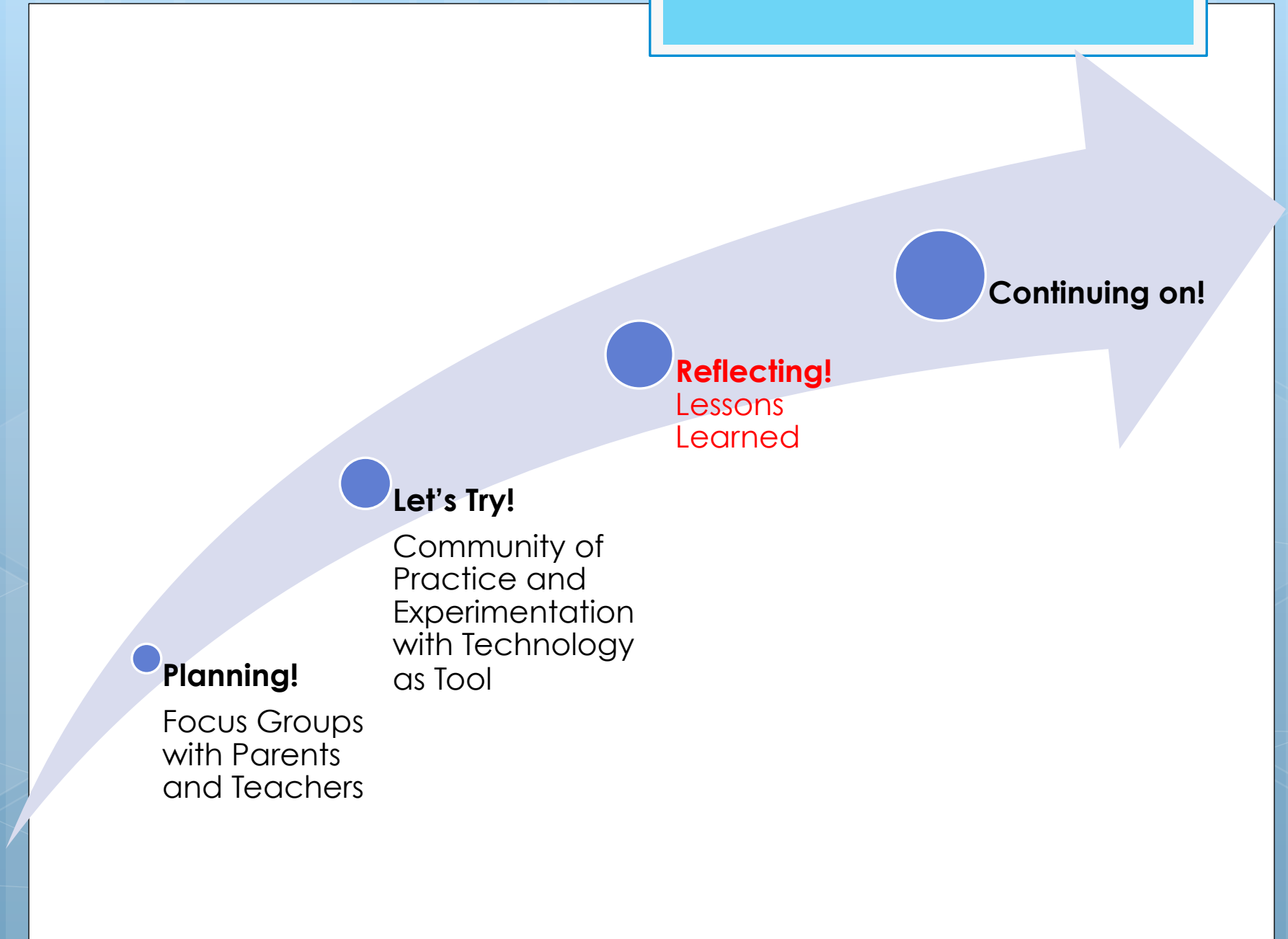


Project TAPP- initial step to
move to this....



Our partnership approach





Planning!

Focus Groups with Parents and Teachers

Let's Try!

Community of Practice and Experimentation with Technology as Tool

Reflecting!

Lessons Learned

Continuing on!

Phase 1

Focus Groups

Focus groups: Parents

- 15 Spanish-speaking parents from 4 EC centers
- 14 mothers, 1 father
- 64% not born in US mainland,
 - with range of living in US mainland from 2-20 years
- Education
 - 9% high school/GED
 - 64% some college/AA
 - 27% college degree

Focus groups: Parents

- Majority (75%) spoke Puerto Rican dialect

	Parent Speaks To Child	Child Speaks to Parent
All Spanish	9%	0%
More Spanish	9%	0%
Equal	18%	9%
More English	64%	73%
All English	0%	18%

Focus groups: Teachers

- 13 teachers and 1 assistant director from 3 EC centers
- 5 bilingual Spanish-English and 8 English-only
- Average enrollment of DLLs: 37% (range 20-53%)
- 6 years preschool teaching experience (range 0-25 years)
- Education:
 - High school – 21%
 - Associate's- 21%
 - Bachelor's – 50%
 - Master's -7%

Focus Group

- Goals for children developing English and Spanish and parents' role to support that development (parent only)
- Role of teachers to support language development (both)
 - Challenges teachers face (teacher only)
- Parent-teacher collaboration (e.g., how/ on what to collaborate, benefits, & challenges; both)



Select Findings from the Focus Groups

Select Findings

Theme	Illustrative Quotation
Learning a second language is easier for younger children	I know that the younger you are, the easier it is to learn the language. Like adults come here and it's more difficult for them to learn the English because honestly I think they just get more embarrassed...Because when you're a kid you don't really care what you say, you just say it. (Parent)

Select Findings

Theme	Illustrative Quotation
Emotional and Behavioral Responses	Because if they're just thrown in, it's going to be hard. It's going to make them not want to come in to school, and hate it, and all that. It did to me (Parent)
	He got mad and put his hands on his hips and he likes lying down on the floor, because I had no clue what he was saying (Teacher)

Select Findings

Theme	Illustrative Quotation
Second Language Acquisition	<p>I think there is an introvert phase when you entered. And that's by experience because I was in the military, but I came directly from Puerto Rico to the service. I had a different personality. I'm [normally] very outspoken...They'll [military colleagues] say, "She's so shy!", and "Can you please participate?" I'm like, "You're so [inaudible]". I wish I can say what I want to say the way I want to say it. That's another-- if you see the child for the teacher at beginning, just won't participate, he's quiet, that's not necessarily who the child is. (Parent)</p>

Select Findings

Theme	Illustrative Quotation
Experience Navigating Discontinuities of Language Environments	They don't say whether they are thirsty, or if they have to go to the bathroom, or they had an accident. She goes, ' Why didn't you say something?' He's not going to say something because he knows-- maybe the kid can't speak English. So, I'm not going to bring attention to myself, knowing she's not going to understand me kind of thing. Some children will stop crying if I am speaking Spanish and they will say, 'I have to go to the bathroom.' (bilingual teacher)

Select Findings

Theme	Illustrative Quotation
Importance of Teachers' Cultural Competence	They [teachers] never asked him [son] to change or you don't say that, or you don't, no, no. "Gato", he used to bring his [stuffed] cat and she'll [teacher] say, "Gato" and then he learnt how to say cat. They were on top of-- they kind of normalized. It's okay if you want to say "gato." She's [teacher] like, I'm learning Spanish. This is so great! (Parent)

Select Findings

Theme	Illustrative Quotation
Importance of Teachers' Cultural Competence	<p>I think it's brave of them [parents of DLLs], that they just bring their kids here when they're not connected with someone that automatically talks Spanish. Because you'd think they would be picking a center that was more in a Spanish part of town or had other people right there. Right at the window, I don't think [directors] speak Spanish. So when they are actually registering. That must be a little scary right there. (Teacher)</p>

Select Findings

Theme	Illustrative Quotation
Parents' Personal Experiences Influence Beliefs and Practices	My kids, they're showing a lot of interest in wanting to learn Spanish, but I'm stuck on English because I'm like, "It was so hard for me, I don't want it to be that hard for them." So I stuck with just English, and little by little, I'm teaching them Spanish. (Parent)

Phase 2

Community of Practice

Community of Practice

- One preschool center
- 3 teachers
 - 2 PreK-4 teachers
 - 1 PreK-3 teacher
- 2 parents
 - Both first generation from Puerto Rico

True or False?

- Learning two languages in early childhood confuses and overwhelms children.
- The younger the child, the more skilled he/she is learning a second language.
- It is better for parents to talk to and read books with their Spanish-speaking children only in English to help prepare them for school.

Community of Practice

- Meeting 1
 - Building connections!
 - Brief discussion about “myths” about bilingualism- through use of poll everywhere.

Community of Practice

- Meeting 1 - Beginning with iPads- games
 - Ben and Bella learn English
 - Talk in 3
 - Action Words
 - Lucha Learning
 - Bilingual Bubbles Child's Game (the favorite)

Community of Practice

- Meeting 2
 - Building connections
 - Feedback on iPad games
 - Discussion on
 - process of learning 2nd language
 - strategies to support DLLs that monolingual English speaking teachers can do!
- Prior to meeting 2, teachers observe DLLs in the classroom using guide. Parents encouraged to observe in a classroom to see if they have ideas of how to use their expertise to support DLLs and to share another viewpoint on DLLs with teachers.

Second Language Acquisition

One Child, Two Languages by Patton
Tabors

- Home language use
- Silent
- Telegraphic
- Productive

Build Relationships

- Develop positive teacher-student relationships
- Learn about and integrate child's language and culture (e.g., internet, going to festivals, asking parents)
- Value child's native language
 - "Allow" child to use native language in the classroom while also teaching English
- Encourage parents to continue to use their native language with their children
- Build partnerships with parents. Invite parents into the classroom to do activities in their native language with children.

Visual Strategies

- Use body language/gestures
- Use repetition and predictability
- Use pictures or props

Language

- Use key words in child's native language
 - Labeling of objects/materials in child's native language AND using those keywords
- Use running commentary when conducting activities
- Expand and extend upon children's verbalizations (and model correct English)
- Expect "more" English as the year goes on. As Tabors says, "Up the ante." Require increased responses as child develop confidence and ability to communicate in English

Books

- Have books in English and child's native language. Use books that reflect children's interests & cultural backgrounds
- Have them in your book area as well as other centers/areas (e.g., dramatic play, blocks, science, etc.)
- Provide opportunities for children to hear books (first) in their native language
- This could be an audio/recorded books in native language
- Target key vocabulary- use and explain new words
- Great time to use keywords in native language or use pictures, props, etc.
- Read more than once!

Grouping

- Small group instruction is beneficial
- Pair child with a child who speaks same language for additional support
- Provide opportunities for children to interact with English speaking peers

Community of Practice

- Meeting 3 (and repeated in Meeting 5)
 - On iPad, recorded the parents reading two books in Spanish:
 - Chicka Chicka Boom Boom – Bill Martin Jr.
 - If You Give a Cat a Muffin – Laura Numeroff

Community of Practice

- Meeting 4
 - Tapikeo

Community of Practice

- Meeting 6
 - Google Translate

Technology- take-aways

The Good

- Children enjoyed the games. Children who were not interested in learning Spanish before became interested
- Recording on iPad could be done by parents at home and shared via dropbox
- Teachers noted many uses for Tapikeo
- Google Translate provided quick access and pronunciation

The Bad

- Selection of bilingual games for non-readers was very limited.
- Recording on iPad was hindered by audio quality.
- Tapikeo app did not work consistently in the school building
- Google Translate “answers” needed considerable vetting

Reflections on Community of Practice

- Participants revealed that they had developed closer relationships with one another.
- Parents reported feeling positively about their language.
- Teachers reported learning more about the Spanish language and Hispanic culture.
- Two (of three) teachers also indicated that participation dispelled negative stereotypes about Hispanic families.

Thank you!

- I welcome suggestions and questions:

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