Why Study Spanish?

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Introduction

Spanish is the fourth most commonly spoken language in the world. My students need to know the importance of learning a foreign language and the importance of speaking several languages. Learning Spanish makes one part of the 21 countries in the world that speak Spanish and feel like home. As a Spanish teacher, I emphasize that they will be amazed to discover how rich the Spanish speaking world is; in works of music, literature, science or any subject content in Spanish. United States is a modern practice country with the fifth largest Hispanic Population in the world, from different countries around the globe.

Therefore, businesses, government agencies, educational institutions and other employers will be looking for more bilingual employees. Thus, I explain to them that like anything at the beginning is difficult; but once they like it more, they will love it and learn it. Also that they are so lucky to be living at a time where there are almost no limits for opportunities to practice Spanish. The big reason to learn Spanish is because they want to improve themselves.

Students need to learn different cultures, the history, how to interact with different cultures and their people. Culture, as explained by the ACTFL standards is more than a country, it is history, it is art and the most important thing it is people's traditions. Students need to learn, to appreciate countries' values, customs and accept different races. Teacher's instruction need to identify Spanish speaking cultures, its celebrations, traditions in order to compare similarities and differences of each country. By learning different cultures, students understand their own cultural background and have better acceptance for others. Connecting with cultures improves education through relationships.

Learning a foreign language is not just to learn grammar, spelling, and reading skills is also learning different traditions and its history. Another explanation that I use is that they need to learn Spanish for college requirements, so it is not just high school requirement; it is a class for career development. This is a strong point for them to study a foreign language. It was for me in my college times, my language in high school was Spanish, and I love Spanish as my first language, but I never thought I was going to make a career out of it. I always explain this personal experience to my students, so I can inspire them to study Spanish for fun or for a professional career. In the school environment, Spanish is a school requirement.

Students have to study two levels of Spanish. With this requirement I incorporated in my class different resources to enhance their Spanish knowledge. I give students the opportunity to research in the computer lab, enriching their experience while providing an alternative learning platform. The book that we use is Expresate! This book has a lot of vocabulary, spelling, and culture resources, not only has a book to read, but also videos to watch, CDs to listen to and a website to search www.go.hrw.com . This website is an excellent source with grammar and spelling exercises, with culture readings and quizzes to take. It has a student edition and a

teacher's edition. The teacher's edition has a complete source of transparencies where my students have the opportunity to see what the lesson is about.

This is a wonderful hands-on resource. I have expanded my Spanish abilities from this book and its website source offers essential ingredients for successful Spanish education. It also contains a workbook, where the students can practice the lesson learned. This workbook has various readings where they can practice cognitive thinking, comprehension, talking to the text, and thinking aloud. The book and website resource definitely collaborate and enhance the students' knowledge and teachers content-subject expertise.

Another website source is www.studyspanish.com . This is a good tool that gives the opportunity to practice and read in Spanish. I give specific site navigation instructions in where to go and what to read. This website has also different Spanish levels and interesting quizzes and readings. The great part of this website source is that students can submit their work and get a percentage grade of their performance. This source has more languages than Spanish and has a lot of culture and traditions from different countries. I use a lot of readings from this source for all levels of Spanish.

For Spanish 1 students have to translate Spanish to English with comprehension questions at the end. For Spanish II they have more complicated readings with a strong emphasis on vocabulary and more complex questions. This is my professional curriculum which I incorporated interesting strategies learning skills for my students learning process. Keeping my subject material interesting; while making the learning objective visible and at the same time providing challenging sources, validates the great sentiment that I always hold, which is having high expectations of my students.

Factors that Improve Students' Intelligence and Education

Language development is crucial in enhancing students' intelligence. Educators have to learn to improve students' retention memory, creativity and critical thinking skills. Chomsky (1968) proposed that language is learned by special genetically programmed procedures that are unique to language learning. Several studies have found that students attain more intelligence with more language acquisition; this process is connected directly from the family and social factors that are the key factors for language development. I always explain the importance of knowledge, believing that the learning process is defined by the culture context. We cannot separate our knowledge from our environment experiences. Thus, students enhance their knowledge by their cognitive thinking in their organizational systems.

Vygotsky's theory is applied to the educational system such as scaffolding reaching higher levels of critical thinking. Hence, this theory emphasized language as a means of learning and enhancing student's cognitive thinking process. As teachers we have to use a lot of motivation as an important aspect for improving language, memory, and intelligence. A student is interested in learning if he or she is connecting with their own experiences, and they feel accountable for future experiences in their own lives. The use of motivational gestures is what American Psychologists have shown that students improve intelligence by using hands on their daily learning process.

Several foreign language teachers use the Total Physical Response storytelling; which is a method of telling a story in the target language with gestures. With this methodology students enhance memory, intelligence and comprehension. Students use their gestures as the means to open their brain, principally helping to remember long time situations and help to transfer these circumstances from the working memory linking the past to the present making student's similarities in the brain as information and personal experience learning.

Students embrace intelligence in two major factors; the ability to understand words and the facility to accrue knowledge; explaining the hands on task and verbal educational knowledge. Where some students learn being proactive with the activity or others learn by communicating or listening the instructor. By using the Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) scaled where the bottom is the knowledge where students recapitulate information converting this information into a new situation where they can apply this knowledge in role play or personal presentation.

As educators we need to stimulate instruction by relating knowledge to their personal experiences. Hence, instruction needs to be differentiated conquering different cognitive learning skills and different types of learners.

Some students have linguistic intelligence, where they are good in readings books. Others are excellent with landmarks and maps, some others enjoy music and have great voice to sing. Students also demonstrate their body skills such as dancing. As teachers we have to have the aptitude to relate to our students and be able to cope with different attitudes.

By adapting students' capabilities, they could understand their abilities (intrapersonal intelligence) in their own classrooms environment and learn to deal with their inconveniences. Thus, they can explain their internal world by searching and writing assignment. As students acquire more information, they will have more capacity to relate to the external world and be able to adapt better in society as well as improve self-concept and self- acceptance.

Dialogue as a Means of Teaching and Learning

Dialogue in education helps build relationships between individuals. It is a social bond where there is understanding, caring, trust, respect and appreciation. Students need that special bond and hope to feel related to teachers in order to learn and develop high expectations. In our daily lives we communicate and converse within our environment. The new theme of "No Child Left Behind" education was geared toward differentiated teaching, student needs and communication. In this difficult economic era, our daily communication needs create hope and a true meaning of value toward student's needs and concerns. This writing will explain the purpose of dialogue in education and learning; understanding the necessity for our future leaders to engage into new ways of expressing their desires, expectations and goals through open dialogue.

Teachers have to understand how students learn and develop dialogue that can provide opportunities to enhance knowledge. Teaching is creating relevance for students by linking prior experiences to thought by using group activities where students have the opportunity to interact and communicate effectively. These group activities encourage students to discuss the content learned with the rest of their classmates.

Teachers have to use different learning strategies that help students to assume responsibility, a purpose to learn and way of saying their needs and goals. The most important teaching strategy for dialogue is to help the students recognize their strengths and weaknesses and hone their skills and develop knowledge.

Effective instruction is when teachers model the importance of dialogue, by enriching diversity and convey those ideas into expressions in writing, speaking or drawing. In this sense it is not so much a specific communicative form of question and answer, 'but at heart a kind of social relation that engages its participants' (Burbules 1993: 19). Dialogue is sensitive to gender and cultural differences, therefore teachers need to acknowledge these different expressions and learn to understand their attitudes and behaviors.

Students tend to share their feelings when they are comfortable, feeling the needed support and the respect that they desire. Thus, it is a characteristic of every true conversation that each opens himself to the other person, truly accepts his point of view as worthy of consideration and gets inside the other to such an extent that he understands not a particular individual, but what he/she says.

Dialogue as a means of a learning has to motivate and engage students in a reflective learning environment. Self motivation and confidence needs to be established and built upon in order to improve dialogue and enrich their knowledge. The learning process should be motivational and seek to develop new ideas to enhance students' development. Students will relate to the knowledge or instructional activity through understanding the central concept of learning by their own experiences. This learning dialogue has to provide opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal enrichment.

Relevant experiences will foster better dialogue enhancing cognitive and emotional development. Creating dialogue into learning is accommodating learning differences, need of students and knowledge of diverse cultures; connecting the students through different types of interactions and assignments that will engage them in critical thinking, problem solving and dialogue.

Explaining the need for dialogue as a means of teaching and learning, it is lucid that students need to be involved and proactive in building relationships and learning through dialogue. Teachers should engage students into different learning activities that will require communication and self expression. These daily activities and learning process should build a social bond full of motivation, honesty, support, unconditional caring and the most important thing, respect.

A dialogue is a means of forming knowledge and improvement towards cultural acceptance, critical thinking, self confidence and cognitive development. Students will enrich their attitudes and better their behaviors with this close relationship, thus learn to cope and express their needs, formulate ideas and goals to reach high expectations not only in school but in their future life.

Teachers and Education in the 21st Century

The fundamental goal of education is the student's learning development. In the 21st century professional educators and the educational research are focused on how students learn, how to motivate students' interest, and searching for new strategies that will develop their cognitive and critical thinking. The Bloom Taxonomy (1956) and more recently Anderson (2001) studied and expanded the taxonomy explaining in his recent research in cognitive psychology expressing that the crucial tool for students' academic development is the knowledge; where qualified teachers need to design different learning activities that actively involve students. Thus, they need to utilize different strategies for all learning tasks; enhancing the ability to learn, constructing critical thinking, and supporting diverse needs. At the same time creating an inviting environment for participation and learning development.

Today's school system faces a constant series of challenges to reform and improve teachers and schools effectiveness. Thus, teachers have a crucial role in the school's changes and reforms, yet they face more challenges. With the reform of "No child left behind"; teachers have to create a new and innovative curriculum following the State Standards for Standardized assessment and for their content instruction. In addition, they have to plan their instruction based on differentiated strategies that assess students' critical thinking, and cognitive development.

Teachers need to participate and provide leadership for the school's decision making and be engaged in ongoing professional development activities that will enhance their classroom productivity. Teachers have to demonstrate and master their content knowledge and become leaders of their instruction. In addition, they have to direct their professional development to a proactive and effective instruction based on students' problem solving and critical thinking. At the same time, engaging students in academic opportunities, and self- reflection that will achieve high educational expectations for success.

Leadership in Education

Leadership in education is a changing process; where the Principal has the main role of the school's leadership. While some teachers' colleagues and I express that Motivation and building relationships are the crucial key for our school's leadership. I conducted surveys, conversations with my colleagues and in depth observation of my principal's behavior and follow the schools response towards this new leadership.

The motivation and building of relationships compels the school's leadership and examines with respect to a former true leadership style versus a new micro-management leadership style. A disparity between both leadership styles suggest a learning process and examination that may facilitate my understanding and clarification of what it takes to be a true leader in education. As teachers leaders, we have to arouse motivation; the challenge of creating a new educational strategies and environment in the school is fundamental for our students' academic achievement.

We must encourage our students to create an environment of trusting, strong relationships; where responsibility and self-acceptance occurs in our classrooms. We need to make

connections and build strong relations empowering our instruction and our students learning development.

Leaders make strong relationships that make them grow with the help and trust of each other; they provide support and are committed to the service of their people. A true leader knows how to motivate and values their people. They believe in change and strive to make it happen. They empower relationships with respect, honesty and love. As teachers, members of a Professional Learning Community, dedicated to enhance school's curriculum development, we are committed to work collaboratively in an ongoing process of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students we serve.

Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improve learning for students is continuous, job- embedded learning for educators. As educators, we keep a mission at work; to learn new things, provide quality instruction and be committed to develop our students in a continuous improvement of their cognitive thinking skills as well as help them with their academic success.

Students' accomplishments require a collective engagement of teachers, parents and administration taking action of the knowledge, collaboration and learning by doing. This is a great example of what my school is doing, teachers and students are learning by doing; we have a proactive project called TIF- LEAP, where teachers need to submit Students Learning Objectives (SLO) in order to increase students achievement through assessment, re-assessment based on quality planning curriculum and instruction. We have to plan a curriculum following the North Carolina State Standards.

This leadership team is dedicated to improve academic achievement by participation, motivation and support. As Adler (1964) explain in his "Socioteleological approach that people are motivated by social forces and striving certain goals, moving from a perceived minus to a perceived plus." This service learning is following the Adlerian Approach teaching students better ways to meet academic challenges, providing curriculum direction, helping them to change their behavior and attitudes and offering them encouragement of high expectation and creating a true meaning of their academic performance.

At the same time, as educator I incorporated a new program called Youth Voice program dedicated to support and teach students' academic, cognitive thinking skills, interpersonal, cultural, social and communicative skills. My Spanish II former students are tutoring my present students and helping them to succeed in the course. The program has specific social interests and a community feeling trying to create self identification within the students, cultural awareness, true sense of belonging in a group, empathy with others and connect knowledge through academic leadership.

The teacher participants have great motivational strategies, and are able to group students' participation that is so difficult in Title 1 schools. These students have a strong need of uniqueness; trying to enhance their academic performance.

Youth programs are teaching students better ways to meet academic challenges, providing curriculum direction, helping them to change their behavior and attitudes by participation and commitment, offering them encouragement of high expectations and at the same time creating a

true meaning of their academic performance. Thus, changing the school's culture to a positive more proactive; following high academic expectations with great leadership behavior management.

We raised important leadership questions such as: Do you want to be a leader? Would like to be part of an innovating learning service program? These questions conveyed an interesting thematic and definitely interested more students.

My Educational Strategy for Teaching Spanish

My strategic learning plan is dedicated to improve and maintain assessment scores for the End of the Year (EOY) Spanish II Assessment. The school public system implemented this new Spanish I exam that every student need to achieve in order to continue to Spanish II for Graduation. This is an academic thematic; a lot of students barely meet the score requirement.

World language Teachers receive the EOY curriculum that makes the difference in their instruction. Thus, some teachers have a differentiated learning planning that makes an effective quality instruction, in comparison with others that experience low assessment score achievement that do not reach the school system expectations.

The EOY assessment score is not only based on teacher's quality instruction, but also in the students' involvement, cognitive skills, interest and motivation. Therefore, I have implemented a Strategic Leaning Plan (SLP) dedicated to motivate students to achieve the EOY state requirements.

My Strategic Learning Plan (SLP) involves:

a) Instructional Guidance: Where students are receiving improvement process through testing. Cawelti & Protheroe (2001) explained that schools are more effective developing learning skills through regular assessment programs that improve the school's academic achievement. With an effective instructional testing guidance parents, teachers and students have clear evidence of the students' learning skills abilities, improvement, and academic development.

b) Cognitive Development & Demand: As teachers we have to follow the assessment curriculum. This is my key success that I always remark; students' low academic achievement sometimes will low cognitive teachers' development, expressed in low differentiated instruction achievement. Oaks, Quartz, Ryan, & Lipton (2000) suggested that what students are taught obviously influences the opportunities they have to learn, and these opportunities may differ in their content and rigor. Therefore, the assessment curriculum and the teacher's experience and effectiveness are the key success in the students' assessment achievement. In this stage of my planning I will also incorporate to the curriculum; After School Tutoring, Direct Reading Sessions, and Summer School.

c) Collaborative Culture: In my Spanish class culture acceptance, involvement and access to

knowledge in learning community is a priority. Students need to know different cultures, be involved in searching about different cultures and collaborate in community activities that develop cultural acceptance. The Spanish Class is elaborating "The Cultural Week" that will enhance the school's values, beliefs and the most important thing cultivating cultural acceptance. As Bryk & Schneider (2002) expressed that social resources such as interpersonal trust and caring relationships with students will facilitate collaborative improvement processes.

These three stages in my Strategic Learning Plan are dedicated not only to improve the EOY score assessment, but also develop cognitive learning skills in order to improve the students' academic achievement, social skills, and cultural collaboration and acceptance.

Learn About the World Languages Assessment- EOY

North Carolina education has increased state assessments in the Public Schools. Spielberger and Vagg (1995) have discussed testing in a large cultural context, expressing the ever increasing number of tests used in the educational setting. Not only students have the tests for core courses, but also they have to achieve elective class exams in this case the End of the Year (EOY) assessment in order to graduate.

The EOY is mandated in Spanish I in order to continue to Spanish II and achieve the graduation requirements. Cawelti and Protheroe (2001) explained that schools are more effective developing learning skills through regular assessment programs that improve the school's academic achievement.

With the situation currently being placed on this standardized state assessment, it is understandable that the students have to improve their learning cognitive skills, feel motivated, and enhance their knowledge. Oaks, Quartz, Ryan, and Lipton (2000) suggested that what students are taught obviously influences the opportunities they have to learn, and these opportunities may differ in their content, motivation and rigor.

The nature of the test has been producing anxiety in both parties; within the teachers incorporating the curriculum in order to achieve the state requirements and at the same time implementing differentiated learning strategies that will improve the End of the Year scores.

On the other hand, the students committed to reach the score for a passing grade. Schultz, Davis, and Schwanenflugel (2002) have distinguished between high and low level of the tests and have discussed the ways students and teachers perceive the test taking process and the ways teachers and students cope with the score results.

These results have prompting a contextual framework for further study, especially in the assessment process, design, preparation, and the assessment data that demonstrated the academic problem. How could teachers improve their teaching strategies in order to improve the students' cognitive learning skills, transforming the End of the Year Assessment score into success?

The End of the Year (EOY) results was the main cause of analyzing this academic problem. Thus, students' scores demonstrated an academic problematic which provided important data to summarize and analyze in an educational research study. The scoring data is obtained from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in conjunction with the Charlotte Mecklenburg

Public Schools.

The data analyzed should guide curriculum, implementation and improvement; understanding that the EOY standardized test provides an educational value data known about the student's cognitive learning skills development.

North Carolina state and the Public School Administration require the use of student testing score data to comply with the Testing Code of Ethics (16 NCAC 6D.0306). The data is reported as a quantitative data with a deductive- descriptive statistic graph that demonstrates and calculates students' scores of central tendency, validity and variability. The EOY testing data scores have demonstrated an academia problematic that students encounter in order to graduate and continue their education to college.

However, the finding scores indicated that some students achieve higher than others, illustrating that teachers have to acquire differentiated instruction in order to reach different levels of cognitive thinking learning skills; as well as motivate students to get involved and develop critical thinking that would achieve their academic success.

School Activities for Spanish Class

Youth Voice Learning Service

The service learning community project had a Training Group Strategy Meeting with all the staff, and the principal gave us the opportunity to show, train and present to my colleagues the Youth Voice Learning Service Program. We started with an explanatory Introduction of the Youth Voice Service project vision and the main student academic achievement development purpose. The stakeholder C.A.R.E representative was present in order to support and validate the Youth Voice Program. We presented the Power Point Presentation and remarked the Program vision as Adler (1964) explain in his "Socioteleological approach that people are motivated by social forces and striving certain goals, moving from a perceived minus to a perceived plus."

At the same time we explained that this service learning is following the Adlerian Approach teaching students better ways to meet academic challenges, providing curriculum direction, helping them to change their behavior and attitudes by participation and commitment, offering them encouragement of high expectations and at the same time creating a true meaning of their academic performance.

We cordially invited all the teachers to be part of The Youth Voice program that has a specific social interest and community feeling creating self identification within the students, cultural awareness, a true sense of belonging in a group, empathy with others and connecting knowledge through academic leadership. We were so impressed with the staff support and with the great innovating ideas for our student invitation action plan. One of the colleagues mentioned to pass little invitation papers with the name of the program, purpose, day and meeting time for the students informational meeting; the paper will be stapled with a piece candy.

Another colleague had the idea to announce the invitation a week before the meeting with the morning news. This brainstorming meeting also brought the idea to allocate informational posters around the school with the name of the project, the purpose and time of the meeting, expressing effective questions such as; do you want to be a leader? Would like to be part of an innovating learning service program? Join the Voice Youth program to our training leadership meeting. At the same time, we are sending a second invitation via e-mail to all the teachers in order to raise the teachers' participation.

The Service learning Community program explain the time and date of the teachers' participation; offering two days after school participation Tuesdays or Thursdays it depends their schedule. The C.A.R.E program representative offered paid time for the EOC participants and explained that the program is offering transportation and a snack for the students. They were so happy with the great news.

At the closure of the meeting, we had important feedback in order to come up with a better understanding not only of the decision making of how to invite the students; but also understanding that the students' support will enhance their leadership , social, and cognitive learning skills. The student participants with good knowledge of Math, Science, English, Spanish, and possible other courses will tutor other students that need to improve their grades, complete assignments or homework.

We incorporated an action plan that will reach the community, stakeholders, teachers and students' participation in order to improve the school academic achievement. As Hord and Sommers (2008) noted learning system shares beliefs, values and a vision. It shares supportive leadership conditions and a personal practice."

We had positive feedback and great support from my colleagues and administration. They were interested to initiate this challenging project. I explained them the true meaning of a service learning program, the mission, the objectives such as improve academic students' achievement by motivation, participation and tutoring students in different courses.

We all understand the need that we have in this Title 1 school; we need to change or try to improve the school academic achievement, students participation, and bring creative and motivational programs that would help our students grades.

The Youth Voice Program had an excellent outcome. We followed the service learning program's vision of developing students' academic achievement by motivation, leadership and participation. This service learning provided curriculum direction by helping students to change their academic expectations, cultural awareness and have a true meaning of their academic performance. As Adler (1964) explain in his "Socioteleological approach that people are motivated by social forces and striving certain goals, moving from a perceived minus to a perceived plus." As the program initiated the academic mission, we have had to make some changes with the meetings schedules.

The stakeholder C.A.R.E program provided a two hour tutoring paid session to the teachers in order to develop effectively students' cognitive thinking levels following the Taxonomies of learning Domains such as; knowledge, comprehension, application and analysis (Bloom, Englehart, Fusrt, Hill and Krathwohl, 1956).

At the same time, teachers learned to enrich students' needs by differentiation instruction; changing the curriculum accordingly to the learner's capabilities; how he or she learns and what each student really need to enhance their academic learning skills. In the other hand, this training helped teachers to instruct the leader-tutor students that will help other students. Thus, they were reminded of the Youth Voice Program's mission: "A social interest and community feeling; creating self -identification within the students, cultural awareness, a true sense of belonging in a group, empathy with others and connecting knowledge through academic leadership".

We invited students with the reminder note, morning announcements, informational posters around the school with the meeting time, location and reinforcing the leadership questions: Do you want to become a leader, do you want to change your academic achievement? Would you like to be a Tutor- leader with the Youth Program? We incorporated a Student- President, a Vice-president, a secretary, and five leader-tutors to help with the mission of the program.

The Youth Voice program committee selected the best five students with the highest grades and behavior management. Teachers recommended these five students and receive their approval following their academic and behavior performance during the school year. This new academic design motivated students to participate and became actively and academically involved with the school's academic level.

We started with the Youth Voice Program tutoring sessions Tuesday and Thursday from 2:30 to 5:00pm. However, we have had to change and review the hours from 2:30 to 4:00pm; realizing that the students have the capacity to review themes and study with the teachers and leader- tutors for an hour and a half with a snack break; where they can eat and enjoy their drink and snack and with a bathroom break. At the same time, we have had to change the location from the cafeteria to a normal classroom with the specific academic qualifications for an effective instruction.

The stakeholder C.A.R.E. had provided all the support and training to the Youth Program learning Service. Hence, the Youth Voice Program had the opportunity to perform an academic development and has helped the school's and student's growth. This service learning follows the mission of enhancing students' academic achievement by motivation, leadership, cultural awareness, and teaching students a true meaning of their academic success.

We keep inviting teachers to participate and I even mentioned the program with the School Leadership committee. The Youth Voice Service Learning committee will keep working to enhance this service program with new innovating leadership changes; transforming students' academic performance and their school attitude towards graduation.

The Youth Voice Service learning had a positive impact in the school's culture. It made a challenging and improvement change. Students received a lot of support and help in their academic achievement and it made significant changes in their assessment and grade scores.

With the situation currently being placed on this standardized state assessment, it is understandable that the students have to improve their learning cognitive skills, feel motivated, and enhance their interest and knowledge. Oaks, Quartz, Ryan, & Lipton (2000) suggested that what students are taught obviously influences the opportunities they have to learn, and these opportunities may differ in their content, motivation and rigor. The nature of the test has and has

been producing anxiety in both parties within the teachers trying to incorporate the curriculum in order to achieve the state requirements and implement differentiated learning strategies that will improve the End of the Year scores.

Schutz, Davis, and Schwanenflugel (2002) have distinguished between high and low level of the tests and have discussed the ways students and teachers perceive the test taking process and the ways teachers and students cope with the score results. These results have proposed a contextual framework for further study, especially in standardized assessment process, the design, the preparation, and the assessment data that demonstrate the academic problematic. How teachers could improve students' cognitive learning strategies in order to improve the End of the Year Assessment.

This is one of the reason Youth Voice program was implemented and incorporated or the students' academic achievement. Youth Voice service learning project demonstrated that it made a crucial change in the students' morale and academic performance. It provided motivation in the school's culture and environment. Thus, we felt happiness around the students and more interest for improvement with their grades in order to graduate.

Youth Voice service learning definitely promoted value knowledge, leadership skills and academic success for the students. Teachers dedicated their time and knowledge to improve students' cognitive learning skills. They enhanced students' confidence of being able to achieve positive outcome in those difficult assessments or class work. They work diligently to bring up the school's morale, motivation, providing quality instruction and effective instruction to our students.

The C.A.R.E program stakeholders made possible all this academic success, they also provided all the resource that they offered at the beginning; snacks, drinks and transportation for the students. This great support made reality our Youth Service learning academic mission. At the same time, they offered teachers' compensation for their dedicated time. This Youth Service Learning project was a true success that I would like to share too many more teachers in order to improve students' needs and academic achievement.

THE INTERNATIONAL WEEK

The world languages teachers coteaching with other colleagues prepared The School International week to raise school motivation, cultural awareness and self acceptance. During this week we had different activities inviting the whole school to participate. We incorporated the "Go around Passport"; where the students had the opportunity to get know different cultures from different countries by using traditional customs from Japan, India, Mexico, Africa, France, and Spain. In addition, they have to stamp their passport from each country they visited.

Students have the real life experience of having a passport and travel around the world. In addition to the program, we have Zumba classes with Spanish songs, pop, merenge, salsa etc. They had the opportunity to dance with the Spanish teachers and express their feelings through different movements. Thus, they were part of traditional dances from different countries.

Other students sang traditional songs in Spanish, Japanese, and Talago- Philippino. They had great moments and being able to share their likes and dislikes of these different countries. They got to know people from different places, dance with several traditional songs, and talk to

different cultures. With this creative and magical week the students learned to accept others and to establish relationships with different cultures. In addition, they were part of a historical creative week; where everybody had fun and interacted with different teachers and students. This type of activity developed close trusting relationships, and brake cultural barriers.

RESOURCES

The main resource is the Book Expresate! This book has a lot of vocabulary, spelling, and culture resources, not only has a book to read, but also videos to watch, CDs to listen to and a website to search www.go.hrw.com . This website is an excellent source with grammar and spelling exercises, with culture readings and quizzes to take. It has a student edition and a teacher's edition. The teacher's edition has a complete source of transparencies where my students have the opportunity to see what the lesson is about.

This is a wonderful hands-on resource. I have expanded my Spanish abilities from this book and its website source offers essential ingredients for successful Spanish education. It also contents a workbook, where the students can practice the lesson learned. This workbook has various readings where they can practice cognitive thinking, comprehension, talking to the text, and thinking aloud. The book and website resource definitely collaborate and enhance the students' knowledge and teachers content-subject expertise.

Another website source is www.studyspanish.com . This is a good tool that gives the opportunity to practice and read in Spanish. I give specific site navigation instructions in where to go and what to read. This website has also different Spanish levels and interesting quizzes and readings. The great part of this website source is that students can submit their work and get a percentage grade of their performance. This source has more languages than Spanish and has a lot of culture and traditions from different countries. I use a lot of readings from this source for all levels of Spanish.

APPENDIX

IMPLEMENTING DISTRICT STANDARDS

To increase student Spanish knowledge achievement by ensuring educators those students need to understand the reasons to learn Spanish and what a student must know and be able to do with this beautiful language.

1) Classroom activities – The International Week, Youth Voice Service, El librito project, Final Culture project Power Point Presentation.

2) The most efficient way to measure Spanish proficiency is to use a proficiency scale. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has established a national proficiency scale which currently has 10 levels of proficiency:
1. Novice Low (NL) = Spanish I
2. Novice Mid (NM) = Spanish II

Within the *World Language Essential Standards for Spanish*, Communication has been delineated into the three modes of Communication (Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational) and, with Culture, comprise the four Essential Standards for World Languages. The other three national standards are encompassed in the strands:
a) Connections to Language & Literacy (CLL)
b) Connections to Other Disciplines (COD)
c) Communities (CMT)

NL.CLL.1 Use the language to engage in interpersonal communication.
NL.CLL.1.1 Use single words and simple, memorized phrases to
Express needs, preferences, and feelings.
NL.CLL.1.2 Use culturally appropriate greetings, farewells,
apologies, and expressions of courtesy.

NL.CLL.2 Understand words and concepts presented in the language.
NL.CLL.2.1 Understand the meaning of simple, spoken greetings,
words, and phrases, when accompanied by visual clues
and/or prompts, as needed.

NL.CLL.4 Compare the students' culture and the target culture.
NL.CLL.4.1 Compare behaviors, such as gestures and greetings, in
the target culture and the students' culture.

NL.COD.1 Use the language to engage in interpersonal communication.
NL.COD.1.1 Carry out simple exchanges of information using
memorized content vocabulary.
NL.COD.1.2 Use single words and simple, memorized phrases to
express classroom needs, preferences, and feelings.

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After reading widely about your chosen topic and participating regularly in your seminar, you should complete a curriculum unit consisting of:

Content objectives -

 To increase student Spanish knowledge achievement by ensuring educators those students need to understand the reasons to learn Spanish and what a student must know and be able to do with this beautiful language.

3) Classroom activities – The International Week, Youth Voice Service, El librito project, Final Culture project Power Point Presentation.

4) Resources – The main resource is the Book Expresate! This book has a lot of vocabulary, spelling, and culture resources, not only has a book to read, but also videos to watch, CDs to listen to and a website to search www.go.hrw.com . This website is an excellent source with grammar and spelling exercises, with culture readings and quizzes to take. It has a student edition and a teacher's edition. The teacher's edition has a complete source of transparencies where my students have the opportunity to see what the lesson is about.

This is a wonderful hands-on resource. I have expanded my Spanish abilities from this book and its website source offers essential ingredients for successful Spanish education. It also contents a workbook, where the students can practice the lesson learned. This workbook has various readings where they can practice cognitive thinking, comprehension, talking to the text, and thinking aloud. The book and website resource definitely collaborate and enhance the students' knowledge and teachers content-subject expertise.

Another website source is www.studyspanish.com . This is a good tool that gives the opportunity to practice and read in Spanish. I give specific site navigation instructions in where to go and what to read. This website has also different Spanish levels and interesting quizzes and readings. The great part of this website source is that students can submit their work and get a percentage grade of their performance. This source has more languages than Spanish and has a lot of culture and traditions from different countries. I use a lot of readings from this source for all levels of Spanish.