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Differences in Second Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement by Extracurricular Activity Participation for English Language Learners

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Abstract

In this study, differences in academic performance on the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System and State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness as a function of participation in extracurricular activities for English Language Learners were examined. Data obtained from a large, suburban district in southeast Texas for all students who were enrolled in Grades 6 through 12 for the 2014-2015 school year were analyzed. Patterned after the federal Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives for English Language Learners, participation in extracurricular activities for English Language Learners was not related to second language acquisition or the attainment of English fluency. Conversely, in regard to performance on state assessments in reading and in mathematics, English Language Learners who were not involved in extracurricular activities had higher scores than English Language Learners who were involved in extracurricular activities. Suggestions for research and policy were provided.

Index terms— extracurricular activities, english language learner, limited english proficient, english language acquisition, telpas, staar, academic achievement, a

1 Introduction

he No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 altered the manner in which Grade K-12 students in the United States were instructed and evaluated (Murray, Fix, & Zimmermann, 2007). One of the aims of the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) was to decrease achievement gaps in standardized test scores and to assure that historically marginalized student groups experienced academic growth. Specifically, states were challenged with ensuring that students identified as English Language Learners acquired English language proficiency and developed academic skills at levels similar to their English-speaking peers. These mandates were especially challenging in light of the growing immigrant population in the United States which resulted in an influx of students identified as immigrant and English Language Learners in both elementary and secondary schools (Batalova, Fix, & Murray, 2007).

T Student Succeeds Act is the shifting of accountability for English Language Learners from Title 3 to the larger Title 1 (Carnock, 2016). With this change, the AMAOs under the No Child Left Behind Act were suspended (Carnock, 2016;Walen, 2015). Under new mandates outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act, however, both student academic achievement and English Language Learner progress toward the attainment of English proficiency are required in state accountability systems. These mandates are closely related to the previous AMAOs (Carnock, 2016). For that reason, the federal AMAOs were used as a foundation for this investigation.

Regardless of the directives introduced though the No Child Left Behind Act, and extended in the Every Student Succeeds Act, by which districts and states are charged with ensuring that English Language Learners develop academic English proficiency and realize academic achievement, revealed in data on thirdgeneration

English Language Learners is the fact that schools have faced major challenges in accomplishing these directives ??Batalovaet al., 2007). The number of immigrant children enrolling in U.S. schools in upper grade levels exacerbates the issue. Older immigrant students entering the U.S. public school system might experience more difficulty in achieving English language proficiency due to the fact that resources are scarce at the secondary level and time to recuperate lost content prior to high school graduation is limited (Capps et al., 2005). Short and Fitzsimmons (2007) proposed that many secondary schools have not been provided with sufficient resources needed to support recent immigrants in attaining required levels of academic English proficiency.

School administrators are challenged with the task of increasing student language attainment to show sufficient student growth each year and perform at grade level on state exams (Texas Education ??gency, 2012 ??gency, , 2016b)). Due to the overarching construction of both the federal accountability system and the Texas accountability system, the performance of English Language Learners influences the accountability ratings of schools in multiple ways and across multiple subgroups. Student achievement on the STAAR in all content areas, as well as on the TELPAS, is used to determine accountability ratings for schools. Performance of English Language Learners on both assessment measures, however, is predicated on the English proficiency of English Language Learners (Short, Echevarria, & Richards-Tutor, 2011). For this reason, educational leaders must concentrate their efforts to advance the language acquisition of English Language Learners.

2 III.

3 Second Language Acquisition

Perhaps one of the most valuable theories related to language acquisition is the acquisition-learning distinction. According to Krashen (1982), adults have two manners through which language can be acquired. Both ways are unique and independent. The first way that a second language is developed is through language acquisition (Krashen, 1982). Freeman and Freeman (2001) asserted that almost all language development occurs naturally through language acquisition and not through explicit learning of a language. Natural second language acquisition is similar to the way that children first acquire primary language in that the acquisition occurs naturally within the context of a subconscious process. Moreover, in acquired language, the speaker does not consciously recognize grammatical rules. Instead, the grammatical structures are internalized (Krashen, 1982).

The second manner in which language is developed is through language learning. Language learning refers to a conscious knowledge of a language, including having knowledge of grammatical rules and structures necessary to consciously self-correct language errors (Krashen, 1982).

Although error correction is thought to be of little consequent to subconscious acquisition, it is useful to language learning, and helps the learner to induce correct grammatical structures (Krashen, 1982). a) Language Input and Output Krashen (1982) posited that a key aspect of language acquisition is the amount, quality, and relevancy of the language input to which second language learners are exposed. Optimal language input is input that is comprehensible to the second language learner. If the language input is not understood by the second language learner, language acquisition will not occur. Although language output is not necessary for language acquisition, language output provides and indirect contribution to the overall process of language acquisition, particularly where academic language is important (Krashen, 1982). For English Language Learners in the United States, the development of oral language is essential. Moreover, many researchers (e.g., Baker, 1998;Cummins, 1979;Krashen, 1996) agreed that oral language fluency comprises a vital part of the overall education and success of English Language Learners.

In short, engaging in conversation with native speakers is likely more effective than simply eavesdropping on conversations for overall second language acquisition.

The importance placed on affective and emotional considerations of the learning community plays a critical part in lowering the affective filter and increasing both receptiveness to language input and willingness to engage in language output (Collier, 1995). Providing opportunities for English Language Learners to rehearse and cultivate oral language in a variety of academic and social settings is an important consideration for teachers and educational leaders (Saunders & O'Brien, 2006).

4 b) Affective Considerations to Language Learning

In his Affective Filter Hypothesis, Krashen (1982), expanding upon the work of Dulay and Burt (1977), conveyed that a variety of affective variables play a part in, or act as barriers to, second language acquisition. These variables include motivation, selfconfidence, and anxiety.

Captured through The Affective Filter Hypothesis is the notion that a relationship exists between effective second language acquisition and these affective variables. For instance, second language learners with attitudes more conducive to language acquisition, meaning learners with strong motivation and self-confidence, will both seek and obtain more comprehensible input from native speakers than those second language learners who are unmotivated or who lack self-confidence (Krashen, 1982).

In addition, language learners with high anxiety and fear might have exposure to quality language inputs, but be rendered unable to acquire language as a result of those inputs because the affective filter acts as a barrier to the natural process of language acquisition. Freeman and Freeman (2001) further explained that the affective filter acts as an impediment to the process of language acquisition, and when the second language learner has a

high affective filter, language inputs cannot reach the area of the brain where acquisition occurs. Whereas the affective filter to language inputs is limited in Krashen's theory, Freeman and Freeman asserted that the same affective block can occur as language output is attempted. Implied by The Affective Filter Hypothesis is that the role of language instruction, particularly in schools, is not just to provide quality language input, but also to create a learning environments through which the affective filter can be lessened, optimizing the opportunity for language acquisition to occur (Krashen, 1982).

5 c) The Role of Interaction in Language Acquisition

Krashen (1982) used the term acquisition to account for the natural psychological process of language development, but because language is used in social interactions, it is important to explore the role that interaction plays in language acquisition. Expanding Krashen's work, Gee (1992) confirmed that "acquisition is a process of acquiring something subconsciously by exposure to models, a process of trial and error, and practice within social groups, without formal teaching" (p. 113). Freeman and Freeman (2001) explained that in social groups, learners receive language input and language modeling from others using the target language. Gibbons (1991) claimed that although being immersed in a target language and having appropriate language models was important to language acquisition, this exposure would not be enough to develop language.

Instead, language learners need should have an opportunity to use language through interaction with both peers and adults (Gibbons, 1991).

6 d) Extracurricular Activities and Second Language Acquisition

Although the majority of language learning is limited to the language classroom in schools, Krashen (1982) explained that the environment beyond the classroom excels in providing language input and opportunities for language output. Despite the attention educators place on creating classroom environments that are natural for language acquisition to occur, "there is no way the classroom can match the variety of the outside world" **??**Krashen, 1982, p. 59). Collier (1995) contended that in schools with strong support for language learning among language minority students, educational leaders have a commitment to empowering language learners by providing opportunities for meaningful extracurricular activities. Because students learn better in an atmosphere that is supportive, Díaz-Rico (2004) advocated for educational environments by which language learners can develop integrative motivation, or the desire to affiliate with peers from the target language group. Being comfortable with and capable of eliciting cooperation from the target language group is vital to second language acquisition (Díaz -Rico, 2004).

Further, McWhorter (1995) asserted that language learners who participate in extracurricular activities are more likely to be successful in school than those individuals who do not participate. Language learners who participate in extracurricular activities have presented themselves as cultural participants, and have made a commitment to acculturate with the target language group. Accordingly, Saunders and O'Brien (2006) argued that children who are engaged in social interactions may possess language learning advantage in that they seek out more interactions with native speakers. Following this idea, it stands to reason that language learners who engage in social interaction with members of the target language group will engender more language input, output, and language acquisition opportunities.

IV.

7 Extracurricular Activities

As schools have provided more varied opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities, researchers (Covay & Carbonaro, 2010;Farb & Matjasko, 2012; **??**eldman & Matjasko, 2005;Stearnes & Glennie, 2010) have revealed positive relationships between student participation and the degree to which students performed at grade level. Supported in the research literature is that developmental achievements tend to be related to extracurricular activities involvement (Farb & Matjasko, 2012; **??**eldman & Matjasko, 2005). As examined by Covay and Carbonaro (2010), the link between student socioeconomic class and academic attainment is influenced by participation in extracurricular activities.

The connection between extracurricular activities participation and academic achievement is derived from evidence of increased development of non-cognitive skills that is accomplished through participation. In support of this finding, Lipscomb (2007) conducted an examination of mathematics achievement and completion of college degrees as a function of extracurricular activities participation. Positive relationships were revealed between both variables and participation in extracurricular activities. In a study in which data collected in the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 were utilized, Morris (2015) determined that when mathematics performance of students representing a range of socioeconomic classifications were compared based on participation in extracurricular activities, students who participated in extracurricular activities had statistically significant higher levels of academic performance. Furthermore, students of low-income families who participated in extracurricular activities demonstrated greater academic achievement scores in mathematics than students belonging to higher-income families who did not participate in extracurricular activities.

8 a) Extracurricular Activity Participation of Immigrant and Hispanic Students

Though research is available in which the overall tendencies for extracurricular activities participation among immigrant students is described, remarkably few researchers (e.g., Peguero, 2010) have expressed possible explanations for their lack of participation.

Peguero (2010), however, noted immigrant status and English language acquisition as underlying influences of noninvolvement in extracurricular activities among immigrant students. Indicated in the current research literature is that student immigrant status can predict participation in extracurricular activities. In a qualitative study, Okamoto, Herda, and Hartzog (2012) compared secondary student participation in extracurricular activities as a function of different levels of poverty. Using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, trends in extracurricular activities participation of students who were immigrants were compared with the participation trends of native-born students (Okamoto et al., 2012). Immigrant students were less likely to participate in extracurricular activities than their nativeborn peers. Hispanic immigrants were 50% less likely to participate in extracurricular activities, regardless of the socioeconomic status of the school (Okamoto et al., 2012). First-generation Latino students were less likely to participate in extracurricular activities than their nativeborn Latino peers. Peguero(2010) proposed it "may be prudent for school educators and administrators to acknowledge students' immigrant status and ?encourage Latino immigrant children to participate in extracurricular activities, a vital resource that may lead to educational success" (p. 69).

V.

9 Theoretical Framework

Suggested in the social interactionist theory of language acquisition is that acquiring a language is not solely biological or cognitive function (Dolati, 2012). Social interactionists believe that language is acquired through a desire to socialize and communicate with peers (Dolati, 2012). Moreover, interactionists assert that language acquisition occurs as a result of the relationship between the learner and his or her environment (Ellis, 1985). Therefore, interactionists focus on how both language and cognitive development arise from social interaction (Goh & Silver, 2004). Theorists of the social interactionist theory of language acquisition propose that "communicative interaction with others, not just language input, is crucial to language development" **??**Hoff, 2012, p. 20).

Vygotsky, through his zone of proximal development, examined the role of social interactions in the development of language (Díaz-Rico, 2004). According to Vygotsky, an individual's ability to learn is a combination of natural predisposition of cognitive ability and potential problem development through the guidance of and collaboration with capable peers (Díaz-Rico, 2004). The space between natural ability and potential ability is coined the zone of proximal development. Díaz-Rico (2004) asserted that it is within this zone that collaboration between students, teachers, and peers exist.

10 a) Statement of the Problem

English Language Learners have lower standardized test scores and have higher dropout rates than their native English speaking counterparts **??** Also revealed in the research literature as a factor that contributed to both extracurricular activities participation and academic perseverance among immigrant students was English language proficiency. Immigrant newcomers often come lacking fundamental academic skills needed to succeed in U.S. schools (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009). These educational deficits could be identified as contributing factors to the lack of participation in extracurricular activities among newcomer immigrant students. As immigrant students' standardized test scores increased, the likelihood of their participation in extracurricular activities increased as well (Peguero, 2010). Notwithstanding this literature, limited research exists through which the connection between participation in extracurricular activities and English language acquisition is explored. present a challenge for educational leaders in that their academic achievement is often predicated on their ability to acquire English language proficiency comparable to their native English-speaking peers (Short et al., 2011). Relationships between participation in extracurricular activities, academic achievement, and school connectedness have been examined extensively (Diaz, 2005; Farb & Matjasko, 2012; Stearnes & Glennie, 2010). One student group that has not been adequately represented in the existing research literature, however, is students who are English Language Learners. Limited research is available by which the connection between participation in extracurricular activities and English language acquisition is examined. Because English Language Learners present the added impediment of second language acquisition to academic achievement, educational leaders would benefit from evidence on how school involvement could potentially mediate student achievement and increase English proficiency. This specific topic of study could be beneficial to educational leaders, especially in consideration of literature related to the reported benefits of participation in extracurricular activities and theories associated with language acquisition.

11 b) Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which differences existed in English language acquisition as a function of participation in extracurricular activities. The secondary purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which differences were present in English language proficiency of English Language Learners as a function of participation in extracurricular activities. A third purpose of this study was to determine to what extent those differences were associated with length of time in U.S. schools. Finally, the fourth purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which differences existed in the academic performance of English Language Learners as a function of participation in extracurricular activities.

12 c) Significance of the Study

Presented in this study were data specific to English Language Learners, concerning participation in extracurricular activities as it relates to English language development and academic achievement. In the Texas school accountability system, English Language Learners are referred to as Limited English Proficient. Due to the pejorative nature of that term, the phrase English Language Learner was utilized throughout this study. Through this study, data were obtained that could provide valuable insights around the potential effects that extracurricular activities participation might have on indicators present in the federal accountability system for English Language Learners. Considering that English Language Learners represent the fastest growing student population in the United States (Batalova & McHugh, 2010), educational leaders could benefit from additional research involving this student population.

13 d) Research Questions

Patterned after AMAO 1, AMAO 2, and AMAO 3 of the federal accountability system, the research questions addressed in this study were:

14 Method

Using the social interactionist theory of second language acquisition as a foundation for this study, English Language Learners may benefit from increased opportunities to communicate in social contexts in the common school language through participation in extracurricular activities. Therefore, trends in the level of participation of English Language Learners in extracurricular activities may provide school administrators with valuable information that has the potential to drive programmatic and instructional strategies to increase English acquisition and access to content material. Structuring English language development programs that offer quality instruction in content areas and concurrently providing appropriate support for school inclusion may be the impetus to enhance the ability to acquire English language proficiency and attain higher scores on state assessments.

already taken place at the time of analysis. In addition, variables were not controlled. The archival data that were analyzed in this study were illustrative of past events (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The independent variable analyzed in this study was participation in extracurricular activities (i.e., participant or nonparticipant) of English Language Learners. The dependent variables were growth on the TELPAS composite score from the 2013-2014 school year and the 2014-2015 school year, attainment of Advanced High on the TELPAS, the STAAR Reading scores, and the STAAR Mathematics scores.

15 b) Participants

Archival data from a large school district in suburban Houston were obtained for the 2014-2015 school year.

These data contained demographic information of all English Language Learners in Grades 6 through Grade 12. The sample was inclusive of approximately 1,500 students. Student participation in extracurricular activities, determined by conducting a content analysis of both student schedules and course descriptions printed in the district course guides, was coded as either participant or nonparticipant. For the purposes of this study, only extracurricular activities that were related to a specific curricular course, and for which after school participation was a requirement, were included. After school requirements associated with the courses was verified in descriptions printed in the district course catalog.

16 c) Procedures

Utilizing the federal accountability system for English Language Learners, AMAOs, student performance on the TELPAS, and on the STAAR Reading and Mathematics exams as a function of participation in extracurricular activities were analyzed in this study. Participation in extracurricular activities of English Language Learners in a diverse district of suburban Houston was examined. In related studies, extracurricular activities participation has been categorized as participant and nonparticipant (Hunt, 2005;Okamoto et al., 2012).

Employing similar methods, student schedules were analyzed to establish student categories of participant and nonparticipant.

To determine student participation status in extracurricular activities, course guides for both middle schools and high schools were consulted. Course codes for course descriptions that include specific verbiage relating

to mandatory after school participation were noted for use in the study. Student schedules for students in all Grades 6 through Grade 12 were crossreferenced using the selected course numbers. Student participation was categorized as participant and nonparticipant, and then was merged into the data set holding other student demographic data into the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-Version 23).

Data regarding student performance on the TELPAS, the STAAR Reading, and the STAAR Mathematics tests were also included.

17 d) Instrumentation

The two student assessments from which data were obtained and analyzed to address the previously delineated research questions were the TELPAS and the STAAR. The STAAR system, which was implemented in the spring of 2012, includes annual assessments in reading and mathematics in Grade 3 through Grade 8, assessments in writing in Grade 4 and Grade 7, assessments in science in Grade 5 and Grade 8, and an assessment in Social Studies in Grade 8. At the high school level, End of Couse (EOC) exams are administered for English I, English II, Algebra I, Biology, and U.S. History. The assessments are used to measure mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, and results of the assessments are factored into state and federal accountability systems (Texas Education Agency, 2016b).

The Texas Education Agency designed the TELPAS to assess the progress of English Language Learners in their attainment of the English language (Texas Education Agency, 2011). The assessment consisted of ratings on the four English language proficiency standards: (a) Listening, (b) speaking, (c) reading, and (d) writing. Ratings for Listening, speaking, and writing were determined via holistic rating and teacher observation. The ratings for reading were determined via an online exam (Texas Education Agency, 2011). Student proficiency level descriptors were: (a) Beginner, (b) Intermediate, (c) Advanced, or (d) Advanced High in each language domain. Ratings for all four of the language components were combined to create a composite score (Texas Education Agency, 2016c). The reading rating comprised 50% of the composite score and writing comprised 30% of the composite score. Listening and speaking ratings each made up 10% of the total composite score. The composite score was used to determine growth in English language acquisition. An increase of one level was necessary for the student to be considered as making progress. Sweeping changes were made to both the component percentages that made up the composite score and the rigor of the reading assessment between the 2013 and 2014 TELPAS administrations (Texas Education Agency, 2016c). English Language Learners were assessed using the TELPAS in the spring of each year (Texas Education Agency, 2016c).

Psychometric qualities of these assessments, including score reliabilities and score validities, are available for the reader at the Texas Education Agency website (Texas Education Agency, 2016b, 2016c). Using the same standards as AMAOs, language acquisition between the two groups of students (i.e., participant or nonparticipant)was analyzed.

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VII.

20 Results

To determine whether differences existed in the academic performance of English Language Learners as a function of participation in extracurricular activities, a series of Pearson chi-square procedures were conducted. Chi-square procedures are the preferred inferential statistical procedure when both dependent and independent variables are categorical in nature. Additionally, the available cases surpassed the limit of fivescores per cell. Therefore, the assumptions for employing the chi-square procedure were met (Field, 2005; Slate & Rojas-LeBouef, 2012).

For the first research question regarding the progress of English Language Learners on the TELPAS by their participation in extracurricular activities, the result was not statistically significant, ? 2 (1) = 1.20, p=.27. English Language Learners who participated in extracurricular activities had a similar degree of progress on the TELPAS from the 2014 administration to the 2015 administration as did English Language Learners who did not participate in extracurricular activities. Delineated in Table **??** are the frequencies and percentages of progress by English Language Learners on the TELPAS by extracurricular activity participation.

21 Table 1: Progress on the TELPAS from the 2014 to the 2015 School Year by Participation in Extracurricular Activities

With respect to English language proficiency on the TELPAS as a function of participation in extracurricular activities for students enrolled in U.S. schools for less than five years, the result was not statistically significant, ? 2 (1) = 1.48, p=.22. Although English Language Learners who participated in extracurricular activities were 20% more likely to reach an Advanced High Rating on the TELPAS than English Language Learners who did not participate in extracurricular activities, the sample size was too small to yield a statistically significant result. The reader is referred to Table **??** for frequencies and percentages for this analysis.

22 Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages of Student Attainment of an Advanced High Rating on the TELPAS by Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Regarding the third research question on English language proficiency on the TELPAS as function of participation in extracurricular activities for students enrolled in U.S. schools for five or more years, the result was not statistically significant, ? 2 (1) = 0.03, p=.86. Similar rates of progress on the TELPAS were present for English Language Learners in this study, regardless of participation in extracurricular activities. Revealed in Table **??** are the frequencies and percentages for this analysis.

Concerning the fourth research question about English Language Learners who met the passing standard on the STAAR Reading test as a function of participation in extracurricular activities, the result was statistically significant, ? 2 (1) = 7.45, p=.006. The effect size for this result was small, Cramer's V of .11. English Language Learners who were not involved in extracurricular activities were more likely to meet the passing standard on the STAAR Reading exam than were their peers who were involved in extracurricular activities. English Language Learners who were involved in extracurricular activities were more than 10% less likely to meet the passing standard on the STAAR Reading test than English Language Learners who were not involved in extracurricular activities. Table 3 With respect to the fifth research question concerning English Language Learners who met the passing standard on the STAAR Mathematics test as a function of participation in extracurricular activities, the result was not statistically significant, ? 2 (1) = 3.16, p=.075, at the conventional level of .05 used in education research.

Although the result was not statistically significant at the conventional level, English Language Learners who were not involved in extracurricular activities were more likely to meet the passing standard on the STAAR Mathematics exam than their peers who were involved in extracurricular activities. English Language Learners who were involved in extracurricular activities were more than 6% less likely to meet the passing standard on the STAAR Mathematics exam than English Language Learners who were not involved in extracurricular activities.

Descriptive statistics for this analysis are revealed in Table 3.

Regarding the sixth research question, scaled score on the STAAR Reading test by English Language Learner participation in extracurricular activities, a parametric independent samples t-test was calculated. The independent samples t-test yielded a statistically significant difference, t(286.40) = -1.16, p = .04. The difference represented a trivial effect size (Cohen's d) of 0.10 (Cohen, 1988). The average score on the STAAR Reading test for English Language Learners who were not involved in extracurricular activities was statistically significantly higher than the average score for English Language Learners who were involved in extracurricular activities. The average STAAR Reading test score for English Language Learners who were involved in extracurricular activities was 1974.44, compared to an average score of 2068.91 for English Language Learners who were not involved in extracurricular activities. Table **??** contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

23 Table 4: Descriptive Statistics forStudent Performance on the STAAR Reading Test by Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Concerning the final research question, scaled score on the STAAR Mathematics test by English Language Learner participation in extracurricular activities, a parametric independent samples t-test was conducted. This independent samples t-test yielded a statistically significant difference, t(327.32) = -1.77, p = .003. The difference represented a trivial effect size (Cohen's d) of 0.15 (Cohen, 1988). The average score on the STAAR Mathematics exam for English Language Learners who were not involved in extracurricular activities was statistically significantly higher than the average score for English Language Learners who were involved in extracurricular activities. The average STAAR Mathematics test score for English Language Learners who were involved in extracurricular activities was 1797.01, compared to an average score of 1910.13 for English Language Learners who were not involved in extracurricular activities. Delineated in Table 5

24 Discussion

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the degree to which extracurricular activity participation was associated with second language acquisition and academic performance of English Language Learners.

Inferential statistical analyses revealed that extracurricular activity participation was not related to second language acquisition as measured by progress on the TELPAS composite score. Moreover, participation in extracurricular activities was not statistically significantly related to students having an Advanced High rating on the TELPAS. Readers should note, however, that the TELPAS composite score consists of individual rating of the four components of language (i.e., Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing), and that only 50% of the overall composite score is comprised of the three components, whereas the remaining 50% of the composite score is comprised of the reading proficiency rating (Texas Education Agency, 2016c). As language is acquired, however, proficiency in the language modalities develops independently. Progress in one modality influences progress in another, language progression does not follow a particular sequence (Ellis, 1985). For instance, an English

Language Learner can increase proficiency in speaking, a productive language component, before proficiency in reading is attained.

The TELPAS composite score, therefore, may not provide an accurate representation of language acquisition. Inferential statistical analyses also revealed that English Language Learners who were not involved in extracurricular activities had higher scores on the STAAR Reading and STAAR Mathematics tests than English Language Learners who were involved in extracurricular activities. The fact that both the TELPAS Reading assessment and the STAAR Reading test are closely aligned provides an indication that these independent assessments serve as measure of content skill and reading comprehension rather than reading proficiency (Texas Education Agency, 2016c).

25 a) Connections with Existing Literature

McWhorter (1995) contended that language learners who were involved in extracurricular activities were more likely to be academically successful than students who were not involved in extracurricular activities.

Furthermore, according to several researchers (e.g., Covay & Carbonaro, 2010;Farb & Matjasko, 2012; **??**eldman & Matjasko, 2005; Stearnes & Glennie, 2010), as opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities increased in the academic environment, the degree to which students performed at grade level also increased. Findings in this study, however, were not congruent with the existing academic literature. Participation in extracurricular activities was not statistically significantly related to English Language Learners' English proficiency or reading ability as measured by the TELPAS or the STAAR Reading tests. In fact, English Language Learners who did not participate in extracurricular activities performed better on the STAAR Reading test than their peers who had participated in extracurricular activities.

With respect to mathematics achievement, Lipscomb (2007) concluded that a positive relationship existed between achievement in mathematics and participation in extracurricular activities. Similarly, Morris (2015) determined that students who were involved in extracurricular activities demonstrated statistically significant higher levels of academic performance in mathematics. Findings of this study were not congruent with the existing literature regarding mathematics achievement and participation in extracurricular activities. English Language Learners who participated in extracurricular activities were less likely than their peers who did not participate to meet the passing standard on the STAAR Mathematics test.

26 b) Connection to Theoretical Framework

According to the social interactionist theory of language acquisition, language acquisition is not exclusively a biological or cognitive task (Dolati, 2012). Instead, social interactionists posit that language acquisition is accomplished through a social need to communicate with peers (Dolati, 2012). Neither the TELPAS nor the STAAR assessments measure informal or social language exclusively. Moreover, because the TELPAS test is closely related to the STAAR Reading test, a measure of content skills and not English proficiency, social language acquisition would not be obtained from data used in this study.

Furthermore, Vygotsky analyzed the influences of social interactions in language acquisition (Díaz- Rico, 2004). An individual's ability to learn, according to Vygotsky, is an amalgamation of natural inclination toward cognitive ability and potential cognitive growth that is cultivated through collaboration with capable peers (Díaz-Rico, 2004 Dolati, 2012), participation in extracurricular activities for English Language Learners in this empirical investigation was not related to academic performance or to second language acquisition. One possible explanation for this phenomena is that the structure of the school environment is such that English Language Learners who participate in extracurricular activities are not provided the academic support necessary to combat the cognitive and linguistic demands of the assessments analyzed in the study. For instance, participating in extracurricular activities might limit student access to after-school tutorials or special intervention programs. Moreover, intervention opportunities and specialized classes designed to mitigate academic deficits, such as strategies and preparatory classes, which are offered during the school day might not be available to students who elect to participate in extracurricular activities that are associated with a school course, as was analyzed in this study. Sufficient academic and linguistic support necessary for English Language Learners may not have been provided in a way, or to a depth, that would allow students to have full access to the educational environment. Educational leaders must develop policies and implement creative structures that would allow students to participate in school activities without sacrificing access to interventions and targeted assistance needed to develop linguistic and cognitive skills.

27 d) Recommendations for Future Research

For the purposes of this investigation, the definition of extracurricular activities was limited to activities that corresponded to course offering within the school curriculum. Extending the scope of the activities to include activities that are offered independent from school courses, as well as community activities, might provide a more comprehensive representation of student participation. Extending the study to students in elementary and middle school settings is also recommended.

One half of the TELPAS composite rating is derived from the reading assessment included in the system (Texas Education Agency, 2016c). Analyzing the separate components of the TELPAS assessment (i.e., Listening,

Speaking, and Writing) with extracurricular activity participation might provide useful information. Another suggestion for future research, because the TELPAS Reading test is closely related to the STAAR Reading test, is for researchers to use alternative measures of language acquisition (Texas Education Agency, 2016c). Further, utilizing a variety of assessments geared specifically for measuring English language acquisition is recommended.

To expand the current literature on the potential relationship between extracurricular activity participation and second language acquisition, extending this study to other school districts is encouraged. This investigation was conducted using student data from one school district in the State of Texas. The degree to which results might be generalizable to English Language Learners in other school districts or in other states is not known. As such, research into the relationships of extracurricular activity participation with the academic achievement of English Language Learners in other school districts and in other states is recommended.

A final recommendation is for researchers to gather qualitative data regarding student and teacher perceptions on the perceived advantages and disadvantages of extracurricular activity participation for English Language Learners.

28 IX.

29 Conclusion

In this study, the relationship of extracurricular activity participation of English Language Learners with their TELPAS and STAAR Reading and Mathematics test scores was addressed. Participation in extracurricular activities was not statistically significantly related to English Language Learner progress toward or attainment of language fluency. In contrast to previous research, extracurricular activity participation was negatively related to English Language Learner performance on the STAAR Reading and Mathematics tests. Implications for policy and practice, as well as suggestions for further research, were discussed. [1]

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Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009). Often immigrants with low socioeconomic realities, English Language Learners

Figure 1:

[1] © 2016 Global Journals Inc. (US) s Differences in Second Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement by Extracurricular Activity Participation for English Language Learners

TELPAS Progress Made Progress Participated n and %age (n = 54) 32.3%

Did Not Make Progress Length of Time in U.S. Schools and (n = 113) 67.7%

TELPAS Rating Less than Five Years in U.S. Schools Attained AH Rating Did Not Attain AH Rating Five

Figure 2:

3

Figure 3: Table 3 :

5

	Differences in Second Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement by Extracurricular Ac				
	Participation for English Language Learners				
	STAAR Assessment and Student Performance	Participated		Did Not Participate	
		n	%	n	%
	STAAR Reading				
	Met Standard	37	23.3%	172	34.9%
	Did Not Meet Standard	122	76.7%	321	65.1%
	STAAR Mathematics				
	Met Standard	68	39.1%	249	46.8%
	Did Not Meet Standard	106	60.9%	283	55.1%
Year 2016					
52					
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XVI					
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-Global	Extracurricular Activity Involvement Participated	n		M	SD
Journal	Did Not Participate	159		1974.44	69.33
of Human		493		2068.91	42.55
Social					
Science					
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Figure 4: Table 5 :

ability and potential ability, the zone of proximal development, is where interactions between students, teachers, and peers exist(Díaz-Rico, 2004). The amount of learning that transpires within the zone of proximal development is difficult, if not impossible, to quantify. Accordingly, it would be difficult to determine if the English Language Learners who were involved in extracurricular activities benefited from the social interaction as potential learning would be difficult to ascertain.

Extracurricular Activity Involvement	n	M	SD
Participated	173	179	38.66
Did Not Participate	523	191	34.73

c) Implications for Policy and Practice

Contrary to prior literature (e.g., Covay & Carbonaro, 2010; Farb & Matjasko, 2012; Feldman & Matjasko, 2005; Lipscomb, 2007; McWhorter,1995; Morris, 2015; Stearnes & Glennie, 2010); and to accepted theories of second language acquisition (e.g., Díaz-Rico, 2004;

Figure 5:

Auhtor ?: Shepherd Independent School District. Auhtor ? ? ?: Sam Houston State University. e-mail: profslate@aol.com

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