

QUIZ: Try out this interactive quiz with commonly asked sex education questions to test your

Multi-Lingual Learners Deserve a Practical Approach to English



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Although the thought of learning a foreign language was weird for 8-year-old me to understand, through hiccoughs, coughs, and enough thorough learning, I managed to plough through the language barrier and learn English in two years.

Not only does this first sentence explain my experience with learning English, while being grammatically correct, but it also has the letters “ough” in nine words. In those nine words, eight different sounds are made.

Difficulties like this make learning English brutal.

Imagine learning English and coming across that sentence. Phonetically, there’s no way to figure out how to pronounce each word, and not only are there the eight different sounds “ough” can make, but also the words ‘weird’ and ‘foreign’ break the commonly taught “I before E” rule.

Since I was only eight when I moved here from Brazil, I managed to pick up the basics of English very quickly; however, something that I have always struggled with is spelling.

When it comes to double letters, verb conjugations, and words with weird spellings, many non-native speakers struggle a lot. Even people considered fluent speakers sometimes struggle with knowing how to spell certain words.

However, most native speakers don’t realize how hard English is to learn.

“Some languages transfer much faster than others because of the similarities (cognates) that occur across languages,” Cher-

ry Creek District English Language Supports (ELS) Program Lead Tricia Macrae said.

Languages such as Spanish, Dutch, German, and others transfer faster due to these cognates. Since the majority of immigrants to the U.S. are Hispanic, Americans gain the sense that learning English is easier than it actually is.

A big problem people face while learning English if they don’t speak a language that transfers easily is the expectation of learning it as quickly as someone who speaks a more similar language. In reality, they are facing completely different problems than expected by Americans.

There are too many difficulties in English to single one out and name it as the biggest problem for English learners, which is a huge reason why some people struggle to learn English. As a new English learner, it can be incredibly overwhelming to learn and memorize all the different parts of the language.

What could make it less of a burden is changing how English is taught. Co-teaching is the current way they teach English in the whole of Cherry Creek School District. Co-teaching implies that there are two teachers in a class of non-English speakers, one who helps the students and the other who primarily teaches the subject. Although this has proven to be a great way to learn and teach a language, it isn’t the best.

“If you are lucky enough to be immersed in the country/culture where the language is spoken/written, etc, that is the very best way [to learn English],” english teacher Amy Ast said.

In the co-taught system, the way students learn is unnatural, because they have extra support at all times and are learning the same thing as native speakers. The extra support isn’t a bad idea, as students might be entirely new to the language, but from my perspective, if they’re learning the same thing native speakers are learning, it won’t help them as much in the real world.

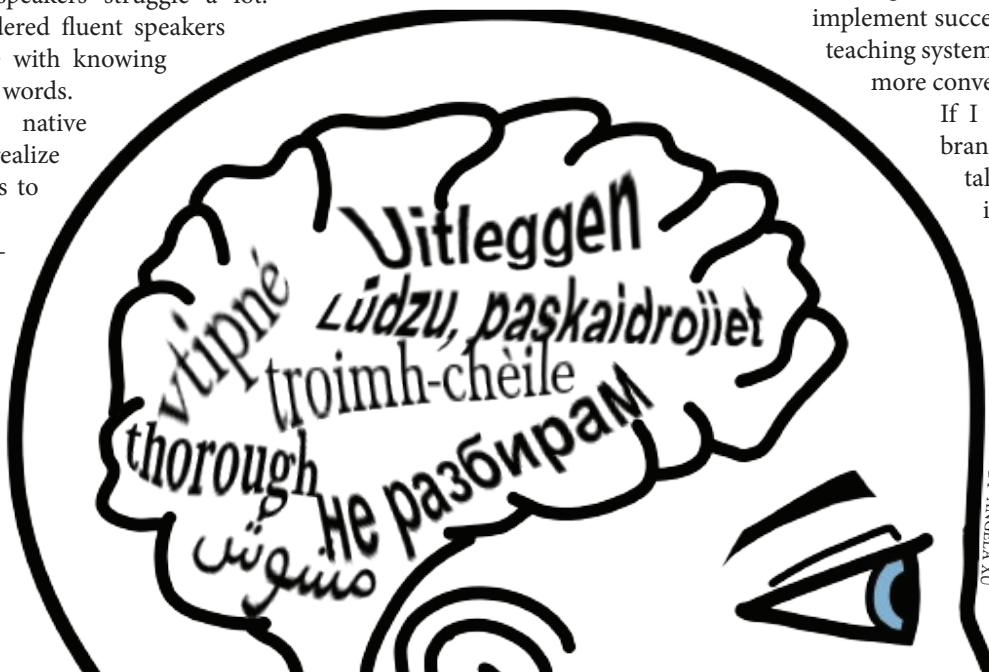
For someone learning the language, things that are taught in a standard Language Arts class aren’t what they need. Instead, they should learn to conversational English because this is the skill they’ll use the most throughout their English-speaking life.

However, separating the students from classes with native speakers might also harm them as they won’t be as immersed in the language. This causes a very tricky situation where you have to prioritize teaching important topics with little practice, or prioritizing the use of the language while sacrificing teaching things students would use the most

Don’t get me wrong, the way CCSD teaches English is excellent, but from my experience, it didn’t work very well. What did work, however, was having conversations and learning from others, which is very hard to implement successfully in one class. Still, the teaching system should at least involve some more conversational skills.

If I managed to be fluent in a brand new language only by talking to people, implementing conversational skills to help English learners would allow them to thrive in the language, not suffer because of a lack of practice.

Most native speakers don’t realize how hard English is to learn.



ART BY ANGELA XU

Creek’s Sex Education Needs a Redesign

Sex-ed has always been a big debate in public schools, with the disapproving parents and uncomfortable students, resulting in thousands of students lacking this life-altering knowledge.

Creek needs to separate sex-ed and health class, maintaining both as graduation requirements.

Sex-ed, short for sexual education, is commonly taught in middle and high schools. Kids are taught about safe sex, pregnancy prevention, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and consent. Students tend to feel uneasy in these classes, but sex-ed is valuable information that they won't learn anywhere

else, and shielding kids from uncomfortable content shields them from fundamental knowledge.

Colorado law doesn't require schools to offer sex-ed courses, but if taught, curriculum must be comprehensible and include equal information about all sexual and gender identities. Parents are permitted by law to opt their children out if they are weary about sex-ed classes.

Five out of seven school districts in the Denver-metro area, including Boulder Valley, Denver Public Schools, Jefferson County, Aurora Public Schools, and Cherry Creek Schools do teach sexual education, while Douglas County and Littleton Public Schools

have not provided any information regarding their curriculum.

According to health and physical education teachers Holly Lane and Allison McKean, CCSD's health curriculum teaches two weeks of sex-ed, including healthy and unhealthy relationships, sexual assault and harassment, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), contraception, and birth control. All Creek students must complete a half credit, or one full semester, of health class in order to graduate, or they can take interpersonal relationships and culinary arts, two semester long classes, to complete their health credit.

For students who take health, two weeks isn't long enough to thoroughly teach kids about their sexual well-being, especially when it completely skips over less discussed topics. All of the components deserve in-depth, detailed lessons rather than the abridged version.

The new sex-ed course could be offered in person or online, both containing in-depth lessons. Students whose religious beliefs, personal safety, or guardians' preferences contradict with topics discussed within sexual health should be permitted to opt out, through a process involving counselors and guardians.


The combination of interpersonal relationships and culinary arts should not be able to waive either health or sex-ed, as both are necessary for students to live safely and healthily.

Accessibility to this education early in life is crucial to stable mental and physical health, and to our pursuit of careers and higher education. STDs, especially HIV, hepatitis, and HPV, are incurable, possibly leading to cancer, organ damage, and other harmful diseases. Pregnancy completely alters the lives of all people, but affects teenagers and young adults the most. In teaching content that can inform students of these life-changing events, Creek will be preparing them for more than just secondary education.

Students come from all different backgrounds, and go through life differently. For all students, the very real risk of sexual disease and unwanted pregnancies bars us from reaching full potential- the potential that could have become a reality if our education was fortified.

SEX-EDUCATION QUIZ

See how much you really know!



1. HOW EFFECTIVE ARE CONDOMS?

A. 40%
B. 55%
C. 98%

2. CAN YOU GET PREGNANT ON YOUR PERIOD?

A. No
B. Yes

3. CAN YOU GET PREGNANT ON BIRTH CONTROL?

A. Yes
B. No

4. STD'S LIKE HIVS, ARE ONLY TRANSMITTED BY GAY MEN

A. True
B. False

5. VASECTOMIES ARE ABLE TO BE REVERSED

A. True
B. False

6. HOW LONG DO IUD'S LAST FOR?

A. 3 Years
B. 8 Months
C. 7-10 Years

7. WHEN IN A MENTSTRUAL CYCLE, IS A WOMAN MOST FERILE?

A. Ovulation
B. Luteal phase
C. follicular phase

8. WHAT IS THE AGE OF CONSENT IN COLORADO?

A. 18 C. 15
B. 17 D. 16

ANSWER KEY

4. B
3. A
2. B
1. C

ANSWER KEY

8. B
7. A
6. C
5. A

INFOGRAPHIC BY GABBY SCHROCK