INNOVATION IN ESL EDUCATION: MOBILE-LEARNING TECHNOLOGY

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Innovation in ESL Education: Mobile-Learning Technology

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THE PARTHENON GROUP

Boston • London • Mumbai • San Francisco

• What is the problem?

- How can we innovate?
- What are other potential opportunities?

The Adult ESL Population Is Enormously Underserved



Note: Includes U.S. LEP Population 18 years and older; LEP defined as speaking English less than "Very well"; Acute LEP are those that speak English "Not at all" or "Not well" Source: NCES; US Census Bureau; 2005 National Household Education Survey: Adult Education; Business Wire (9/07); Parthenon Phase I Survey (n=70)

Unmet Need Is Driven by Funding Constraints



Source: U.S. Department of Education; U.S. Office of Vocational and Adult Educations; U.S. Census; NCES

Mitigants to Near-Term Increases in Funding Levels

- Difficult political climate for immigrants
 - Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007 died in the Senate after a filibuster
 - States cracking down on illegal immigrants: denying in-state tuition and state financial aid, not issuing driver's licenses
- No federal funding directed specifically to ESL
 - States free to distribute federal funding between the two elements of Adult Education (Adult Basic Ed. and ESL) as they see fit
- State caps and restrictions limit funding growth
 - States are required to match at least 25% of the federal funding allocation, but the actual levels of state matching vary widely
 - Some states, like California, enforce an annual growth cap on adult school funding

Hence the Need to Prioritize a Target Population – Those with the Greatest Need Who Will Most Benefit from ESL Training

Average Foreign-born Income by English <u>Proficiency and Educational Attainment</u> Poverty Index by English <u>Proficiency and Educational Attainment</u>



A clear relationship exists between both income and the poverty line and the level of English proficiency; a similar relationship does not hold for the unemployed or those not in the labor force

Note: Poverty line based on U.S. Census calculations based on family size and household income; Poverty line=100, most federal programs accept up to 130 or 185 Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey; Parthenon Analysis

By Focusing on the Employed, There Is Potential For Significant Impact on Lifetime Earnings by Improving English Ability



This Employed Target Population Consists of ~5.1MM Adults Who Speak English "Not at All" or "Not Well"; At Current Funding Levels, this Number will Continue to Grow



Note: Target population consists of employed, acute LEP population with high school diploma or less, ages 18 and older Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey; Parthenon Analysis

Increased Efficiency Through More Innovative Technology Is Most Needed with "Not at All" Population



- Priority I: Design a product to meet the needs of the "Not at All" adult employed population
- Priority II: Investment in high potential existing technologies to increase access to instruction for the "Not Well" population

• What is the problem?

• How can we innovate?

• What are other potential opportunities?

Common Sense Dictates the Necessary Components to this Solution

Solution Components	Description	What We Heard
Reduces classroom time through blended learning	Allows reduction in classroom time by 75%	" <i>I know it's possible, I've seen it."</i> - University Professor
component		"It is certainly possible to reduce classroom time with the use of mobile technology." - University Professor
Flexible and convenient	• Ability to learn English during downtime (e.g., on bus, at home, etc.) and at own pace	"Students can go at their own pace and on their own timethis will give students who can't make class regularly a way to learn." - Adult Literacy Provider
Targets employed individuals	 Relationship between level of English and income helps define target pop.; class scheduling should be conducive to the employed 	"We've seen proof of higher rates of promotion and performance due to English Language Learning. The employers we work with will tell you this definitively." – technology-based ESL Provider
Low-Cost	 Leverage existing infrastructure and tools 	"Anything for these students should be easy to use, and cheap!" - University Professor
Personalized	 Monitor student use of application and engagement 	<i>"It can help to individualize learning but must be simple – just push a button."</i> - Public Library Representative
Interactive	 Critical component of learning a language (e.g., pronunciation, confidence) 	"Anyone can figure out how to use a cell phone; if this technology could go onto cell phones, people world-wide could learn English." - Community College Program Director
User-friendly	 Simplicity and ease of use is key for adoption purposes 	"Many of our students, even low-level, already use hand-held devices like cell phones to communicate. Using Web 3.0 apps to give students more time with the lessons just seems like a natural extension of a skill they already have." - Community College Professor
Pedagogy that addresses key ESL Learning areas (e.g., life skills, job skills, civics, etc.)	 Lessons should focus on building skills that are most relevant to the learner 	"Should have lots of listening and repeating sequences or listening and matching activities; any type of tool must include life skills and be culturally sensitive." - CBO Representative
Prescriptive program driving curriculum	• Must set complete curriculum (vs. solely a supplemental	"If the content is scaffolded, and the technology is intuitive and easy to use, there is no reason why lower levels of students couldn't use it." - Community College Program Director

Source: Parthenon Analysis; Parthenon Interview 5001) In order to gain traction

No Current Domestic Technologies Meet These Hurdles

Does not meet criteria Meets criteria

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	Description	Examples	Low Cost	Interactive	User- Friendly	Does Not Require Computer	Does Not Require Literacy	Allows Study Flexibility
CD-ROM Software	 Supplemental tools offering practice problems and quizzes as well as more structured curriculum-based programs 	 Rosetta Stone Pearson ELLIS	\bigcirc			\bigcirc		\bigcirc
Online Practice Tools	 Primarily supplemental tools offering practice problems and quizzes, games and activities 	 4esl.org TESL.org - Teachers of ESL 				\bigcirc		\bigcirc
Electronic Dictionaries	 Online or handheld tools popular to expand vocabulary and practice pronunciation 	ECTACO Partner EW800/ITravl						
Interactive Web Portal	 Newer products package learning in a multimedia experience 	• USA Learns				\bigcirc		\bigcirc
Social Networking Sites	 Networking sites allow ELLs to interact with native speakers to practice pronunciation and other skills 	LiveMochaSharedTalkSoziety				\bigcirc		\bigcirc
Hand-held Learning Tools	 Newer products offer similar services in a hand-held format, letting ELLs practice skills more often 	• Sed de Saber					•	
Cell Phones	Cell phone-based mobile learning initiatives offer ESL instruction	 METU (Turkey) Praxis (China) Athabasca University (Can Tribal Edu. (UK) 						

However, innovative solutions are in development internationally; a cell phone initiative is the most logical solution to fit the problem

These Innovations Are Occurring Primarily Internationally and Are in Their Nascent Stages

	Description	Insights / Key Observations				
Dr. Kursat Cagiltay, Middle East Technical University - Turkey	 Mobile phone-based ESL program for high school students Use MMS (teaching) and SMS (quizzes) to teach vocabulary and pronunciation 	 Mobile phones found to be more effective than computers or hand-outs (attributed to convenience factor) in a controlled experiment 				
Tribal Education & Technology (M-learning) - UK	 Educational software specializing in M-learning technologies (e.g.,. mobile phones, pocket PCs, online tools, etc.) 	 Used for self-learners, classrooms, or blended learning Targets immigrants 				
Praxis (EnglishPod, ChinesePod) - China	 Primarily podcast-based product EnglishPod product is particularly business-English focused 	 Use of podcasts have shown remarkable increases in popularity ChinesePod is receiving over 300k unique visitors per month online 				
Athabasca University (M- learning) - Canada	 Use mobile phones as the primary component of ESL learning Curriculum designed as a review of grammar principles in a typical beginning ESL course 	 Lowest-level ESL students realized the biggest proficiency increases in pre- and post-testing Teacher provides 30 minutes of training on how to use mobile phone Internet-based content accessed through proxy server on 3G capable phones (\$50 phones provided to students) 				
University of Tokushima – Japan	 Use of PDAs, GPS and RFID tags to teach English to foreign students 	 Supports language learning outside classroom through informal learning and providing real life tasks to students Helps learner memorize vocabularies by using RFID tags to display information 				



These initiatives provide proof that it is possible to use technology - particularly cell phones – to further enable ESL learning

A Cell-Phone Initiative Has the Capability to Address Key Needs; Over 75% of "Not at All" Target Population Has Access to a Cell Phone in Their Home – Penetration Will Continue to Increase



There is room for increased cell phone penetration for this target population, indicating potential opportunity for carrier participation

Source: Parthenon Phone Survey, n=100; Pew Foundation Annual Report

Cell Phone Functionality Is Advancing Rapidly



Source: Parthenon Phone Survey, n=100; Parthenon Interviews; Cell Phone Carrier Websites

M-Learning Can Drive a Blended Learning Program

Potential Program Flow:



Example: Product Delivery (Vocabulary and Pronunciation)



Step 1: MMS Received (New words received 3-4 times per day – sound clip for pronunciation included)



Step 2.2: Visual representation of word



Step 2.1: Definition of word [Step 2.1-2.3 in an 8-second loop]



Step 2.3: Use of word in a sentence

CBOs and Libraries Are Well Positioned to Implement M-Learning



Full Potential Impact on Target Population Enrollment is Moderate; High and Sustained Penetration Is Necessary to Impact This Cohort



Status quo, this target population will continue to increase with no time horizon for graduation

Potential Profit Upside Is Not Significant Enough to Warrant Interest From Large Players



Note: Total market opportunity assumes 3 classes to move all "Not at Alls" to "Not Well" at a tool cost of \$36 per class; *Estimates. based on LiveMocha start-up investment Source: Parthenon Analysis

Additional Minutes and Data Plan Purchase Require a New Funding Mechanism Via the Student or a Cell Phone Carrier

Current and Future Spend per Month on <u>Cell Phone Plan for Target Population</u>

Average Customer Acquisition Costs for Major Cell Phone Carriers



successful roll-out that must be funded through other means (i.e. Carrier partner)

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There Are Several Opportunities to Move the Dial for the "Not Well" Target Population

Enrollment Growth Opportunities

Increased Enrollment within Current Funding Limits

- Cell phone initiative has potential to be adapted to intermediate "Not Well" population
 - Currently being used in pilot phases in Turkey and Canada to address this population
- There are many technology programs considered "best-in-class" in each target channel
 - A "new" effective innovation is needed to differentiate product from current selection
- Social networking is an effective option
 - Provides a platform with content and a built-in peer network
 - Social networking site LiveMocha (founded by a former Microsoft employee) stands out for both user growth and reviews
 - Program currently lacks ties to classroom learning but is well-suited to a blended learning model

New Market Catalyzation

- There are 3.7MM target population "Not Well" LEPs
 - Increasing throughput by improving classroom efficiency is not enough – a market expansion program is necessary
- A cross-channel partnership between a forprofit online ESL instruction provider and an existing for-profit multi-campus institution has the opportunity to significantly expand the market
- Loans are likely required for target population to pay for class, and a strong IRR makes this a worthwhile investment

There are a Plethora of "Best in Class" Products for ESL; CBO & Community College Administrators Find These Products

Effective



An effective but differentiated product is necessary to engage buyers

Though in Its Nascent Stage, Social Networking Has High Potential, Offering A Platform with Built-In Curriculum and Peer Network



- Differentiated offering from traditional online and offline software tools
- Provides a peer network that has built-in interactivity with social and motivational aspect
- Scalable solution that leverages the community and the web

Potential

- Creation of a prescriptive program with 25% classroom time and 75% technology in which peers can work together online
- Many language-learning social networking sites exist, including LiveMocha, Mixxer, SharedTalk, etc.
 - LiveMocha, based on speed of growth and reviews, is proving to be best in class
- USA Learns is a government-funded ESL portal and will go live in September 2008

Opportunity for Funders

- Fund curriculum analysis and assessment to determine quality of curriculum and drop-out rates and identify areas of improvement
- Fund pilot in CBOs/libraries/CCs
- Increase ESL-dedicated computer access in CBOs/libraries/CCs to encourage ESL study
- Merge offering with classroom learning to increase persistence

LiveMocha Growth Has Been Rapid In 1st Year of Operation



Biggest Hurdle With "Not Well" Population is Size – Operating Within Current Funding Restrictions is Not Enough to Meaningfully Aid Segment



Note: Estimated tool cost of \$36 per class; Assume 1 class per year is taken by student at CBO while 2 classes per year are taken at Community College Source: Parthenon Analysis

Census and NRS Levels of ESL and Corresponding Skills

Census Level	National Reporting System (NRS) Level	Language Characteristics
"Not at All"	 Beginning Literacy (SPL: 0 Low Beginning (SPL: 2) 	 Cannot speak or understand English beyond very basic greetings and simple phrases and questions Limited to no written skills in ANY language Functions with difficulty in social situations Limited to no knowledge of computers or technology but may be able to handle routine entry-level jobs
"Not Well"	 High Beginning (SPL: 3) Low Intermediate (SPL: 4) High Intermediate (SPL: 5 	 Can understand common words, simple phrases, and questions about personal everyday activities Can read most sight words and many other common words on familiar topics and write simple sentences Can handle routine entry-level jobs requiring basic English oral with very simplistic written communication May have limited knowledge or experience using computers
"Well"	• Advanced (SPL: 7)	 Can understand and communicate in a variety of context related to daily life and work with basic fluency of speech Can read moderately complex text, using context and word analysis skills to understand vocabulary Can write multi-paragraph text using some complex grammar and a variety of sentence structures Can handle jobs that require routine interaction with the public Can use common software and learn new basic applications

Target Population Breakdown by Industry and Employment Type





Note: Target population consists of those who speak English less than "Well", have less than or equal to a high school degree, and are 18 years or older and employed Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Funding for ESL Differs Across States

