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The efficacy of Florida's approach to in-service English speakers of other languages teacher training programs

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The Efficacy of Florida's Approach to In-Service English Speakers of Other Languages
Teacher Training Programs

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my mother and father Susan and Ron Simmons, and my wife Akemi Simmons. While my parents may no longer reside on this earth, their spirit has and will continue to infuse in me a burning drive to help the disenfranchised and vulnerable.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the members of my committee for the time and considerable effort they provided to me in the course of this study. Their expert advice proved to be an invaluable resource and their numerous suggestions only served to add to the strength of the dissertation. In particular, I would like to thank the committee chair Dr. Barbara Shircliffe. Her guidance and tireless devotion in assisting me over a period of more than three years went beyond the call of duty and I want to extend my profound thanks to her.

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ABSTRACT

Much of how Florida and other states across the country justify the practice of mainstreaming English language learners into regular content classrooms rests on the premise that with the guidance of state officials, local school districts adequately train content teachers to work with English language learners. Yet little to no research exists that can help identify and analyze the overall efficacy of these programs. Consequently, this study has attempted to determine whether district training sessions in Florida are sufficiently covering the state-mandated content areas that teachers are required to learn and to what extent in-service teachers agree or disagree that they received the appropriate amount of instruction that would prepare them to instruct English language learners. Training sessions in three large Florida school districts with high proportions of English language learners were studied using a mixed-methods approach that gathered quantitative and qualitative data from observations, surveys and in-depth interviews. Among other things, the findings revealed a pattern of districts overemphasizing cross-cultural awareness issues to the detriment of other critical areas teachers need to know such as methods and curriculum. In addition, there was a general consensus on the part of participants that the trainings lacked specificity and were both impractical and redundant.

A number of specific recommendations are offered such as ways to modify the focus of the curriculum, provide incentives to teachers, and create more accountability and oversight of the training sessions themselves. Policymakers are strongly urged to prioritize these types of programs by providing training sessions with more resources and attaching to them a larger sense of importance.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The issue of school achievement among English language learners (ELLs) in the State of Florida has grown in recent years to become one that policy makers and school officials can hardly afford to ignore. As of the school year 2006/07, the total number of English language learners in Florida's public schools for all categories was 234,934. This is approximately 9% of the state's total school population. The majority of these children could be found in just five counties, accounting for close to 70% of the entire English language learner population in the state (Florida Department of Education, 2005-06a). Worrying to many is the fact that this very sizeable group has one of the highest grade retention rates in the nation for secondary level students (Kindler, 2002). Additionally, according to the last report available in which state-wide data was collected the graduation rates of English language learners enrolled in English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs, in Florida, a state in which levels are already low, was a paltry 36.2% in 2001 (Florida Department of Education, 2005-06a).

English language learners furthermore do not appear to be faring well on Florida's high stakes accountability measures either. In 2006, only a quarter of the English language learner population received a passing score on the reading section of the 2006 Florida Comprehensive assessment Test (FCAT) (Florida Department of Education, 2006) and perhaps most troubling, in some districts reading scores for English language

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learners actually fell from prior years (Florida Department of Education, 2006).

Statewide the overall passing rate for the general student population for reading in 2006 was 75% for third graders, declining to a paltry 32% by 10th grade. Furthermore, while almost all groups with the exception of students with disabilities have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) at least once since 2002-2003, English language learners in the State of Florida have never once made AYP since reports were made available beginning in 2002-2003 (AYP is a Statewide accountability measure mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) (Florida Department of Education, 2008).

Notwithstanding these dismal results, it should be noted that the percentage of English language learners passing the reading section of the FCAT test increased by 15% from the time the exam was first administered in 2001 to the present. However, it is questionable whether a 15% increase should be considered substantial when the state has spent millions of dollars on its (ESOL) program in the past five years to ensure this important population receives a comprehensible education. In addition, these gains, as noted above, have not closed the gap between English language learners and native English speaking students.

Given these trends, one would assume that Florida would be taking an aggressive approach to rectifying these shortcomings via its compensatory programs aimed at providing English language learners a comprehensible education. These programs are comprised mainly of providing English instruction to ELLs part of the day in ESOL classes as well as training regular content teachers in ESOL methods to work with the large numbers of English language learners that are mainstreamed in their classes

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throughout the school year. These types of programs are not unique to the state. They can be found in various forms from California to Massachusetts, and while the use of such models has proliferated over the past twenty years, some notable scholars have been quick to criticize their use. Cummins claims for example, that despite the myriad of compensatory programs and the hiring of additional aides, and remedial personnel, Hispanic drop-out rates among Mexican American and mainland Puerto Rican students remains between 40 and 50 % and Hispanic students in places such as Texas continue to be overrepresented in special education classes (Cummins, 2001).

Here in Florida it would appear that shortcomings exist regarding these compensatory programs as well. In particular, the ESOL in-service teacher training programs which can be found in counties across the state are, in my opinion, in dire need of reform. English language learners in Florida are overwhelmingly mainstreamed in content classes, (MacDonald, 2004), and it has become the responsibility of teachers to provide a comprehensible and meaningful education to those not proficient in English. If the district in-service training many teachers receive is not sufficiently preparing instructors to manage the thousands of mainstreamed ELLs placed in their classrooms year after year, then the entire system of requiring teachers to take ESOL training courses as a way to justify the system must be called into question.

Background to Florida's Consent Degree

How Florida arrived at this troubling situation in which it appears the vast majority of its English language learners are struggling to succeed is a rather complex question. Florida's story, however, should not be viewed within the parameters of the

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state in and of itself; much of Florida's approach to teaching its English language learners relies on an English-only model which corresponds to a national trend that states have turned to in the wake of the demise of the bilingual education movement beginning approximately twenty years ago (San Miguel, 2004). In August of 1990, the State of Florida signed a consent decree as a settlement of a lawsuit filed by a coalition of eight minority rights advocacy groups. The consent decree created in effect the formalized framework by which districts across the state use to offer instruction to their English language learner populations. The decree mandates six areas of compliance: identification and assessment, personnel, equal access to appropriate programming, equal access to appropriate categorical programs for ELLs, and monitoring issues, and outcome measures. In 2003, the Decree was amended to expand some of the original provisions and also require that administrators and guidance counselors to obtain the 60 hours of ESOL training that social studies, mathematics, science and computer literacy content teachers are already required to take (*LULAC* vs. State Board of Education 1990).

Much of the basis regarding the methods for how ELLs are provided instruction is stated in Section II, "Equal Access to Appropriate Programming" which stipulates that English language learners are entitled to equal access to programming that "shall include both access to intensive English language instruction in basic subject matter areas of math, science, social studies, computer literacy which is (1) understandable to the LEP student given his or her level of conditional English language proficiency, and (2) equal and comparable in amount, scope, sequence and quality to that provided to English

proficient students” (Office of Multicultural Student Language Education, 1998, p.9).

Part F of the Decree offers districts the alternative to provide home language instruction to English language learners over establishing an ESOL model as long as they conform to a number of stipulations such as implementing accepted bilingual pedagogy and requiring that teachers who work with ELLs be qualified bilingual personnel.

The Decree, however, does not prescribe any specific advice regarding bilingual instructional approaches or for any other model for that matter. To compensate for this, the Florida Department of Education has published a resource manual trainers and program administrators can use to guide them through the implementation of their in-service district training courses. In the manual, *Language Arts Through ESOL –A Guide For Teachers And Administrators: A Companion To The Florida Curriculum Frameworks For Language Arts* (1999), chapter 5, section 5.1 “Instructional Approaches” states that “content area instruction *may* be delivered through two major approaches” (p.5). If a school or district chooses to implement the ESOL model, they must ensure that the classes have been structured in conformity with the ESOL strategies for teaching ELLs (English language learners) basic subject matter and also ensure that these strategies are used at all times. The manual also stipulates that the course be taught by qualified personnel and appropriate materials are used and the subject matter taught to English language learners is comparable to that provided to non-ELL students (p.6). If a school or district chooses to implement a bilingual approach, the manual stipulates that content area instruction should be delivered in two languages “utilizing sound, research based instructional strategies that foster the development of discrete linguistic systems in

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the formal and informal registers, as well as literacy, both in English and in the first language.” (p.6) Other stipulations include encouraging and assisting students to maintain their native language as well as teaching them to learn to speak, read and write in English at a developmentally appropriate level provided the students’ first language is not English (p.7).

What is important to note here is that while the decree and training manual may provide guidance and the option for districts to provide ELLs with native language instruction, it does not specifically require them to do so as much if not almost all of the language in the decree places a greater emphasis on establishing ESOL programs over bilingual ones. For example, in Section II, part C, entitled, “Basic ESOL Instruction” the Decree describes in detail what instructional ESOL programs should include, as well as the number of instructional ESOL hours an English language learner should be provided with, the manner in which ESOL services shall prepare students for reclassification, and the standards and criteria the state provides districts for evaluating basic ESOL programs. ((LULAC) vs. State Board of Education, 1990). The Decree does provide certain standards that must be met in order for districts to develop bilingual programs such as those mentioned hitherto but the description of these requirements is in no way comparable in my opinion to the length and breadth of coverage that the Decree reserves for establishing the ESOL formalized framework. For instance, the stated requirements for districts to submit a bilingual program do not include any language which speaks of how ELL students are to be reclassified, nor do they discuss the training of personnel. In terms of the latter, the ESOL model contains clearly stated policies for how personnel are

to be trained, which among other things include the number of hours each type of educator must obtain to receive an endorsement. Indeed, it may very well be left up to the districts to choose whether to implement an intensive English model or a bilingual one, but the emphasis on the ESOL model in the Decree allows districts to make a choice between a program that is generalized and briefly stated to one that is explicitly spelled out throughout the Decree.

One could also argue as well that in today's socio-political climate marked by anti-immigration sentiment and the push for English-only legislation, it is doubtful that districts in the State of Florida would establish a comprehensive bilingual policy if they were not explicitly forced to. This is especially true when there is little to no federal support for bilingual education in the wake of The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) passed by President Bush and Congress in 2001. This bill reauthorized the Bilingual Education Act of 1994, formerly known as Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to what is now Title III of the NCLB (San Miguel, 2004). Nowhere in the title's new title, "Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Children" is the word bilingual mentioned; the simple explanation lies with the fact that through a funding formula which favored one part of the bill over another, money allocated for the program was exclusively directed toward promoting English-only instruction (Kuenzi, 2002). Thus the federal support for bilingual programs which states and school districts had once relied on in the past has evaporated, leaving them on their own to generate funding during a period of limited resources and a stagnant economy. Nevertheless, a failure on the part of districts to implement bilingual programs

might perhaps be more of a result of inadequate resources such as funding and retaining qualified bilingual teachers as well as securing available funds rather than a failure on the part of the Decree to provide sufficient explanation as to how districts might begin to establish such programs.

Thus, while the State of Florida may afford districts the opportunity to implement bilingual programs, the overwhelming majority of districts rely on the ESOL model as their sole instructional method. In one study, scholars at Florida State University surveyed 44 ESOL administrators from various districts across Florida and found that few bilingual services were offered to the majority of lower level ELLs and that inclusion was the overwhelming option at all grade levels (Platt, 2007). According to another scholar at Florida State University, Florida's provision for ESOL "Reveals that inclusion has become the most widespread and preferred model for teaching English" (MacDonald, 2004, p. 18). Inclusion refers to mainstreaming English language learners into regular content classes. Along with taking regular content classes with native English speakers, ELLs also spend one or two class periods a day in ESOL classes where they are taught English using second language acquisition techniques. This practice is commonly referred to as "pull-out" (Iowa Department of Education, 2004). As of 2004-05, 2,674 elementary schools in Florida delivered basic core subject area instruction through inclusion as opposed to just 36 schools which offered basic core subject area instruction in the native/home language. In secondary schools, 1,727 schools employed the inclusion model compared to 14 schools which offered native/ home language instruction (Florida Department of Education, 2006).

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The consent decree's emphasis on English-only instruction over bilingual methods is a program far removed from many past and present approaches throughout the United States to educating students whose first language was and is not English. As far back as the 19th century, European immigrant groups in the United States such as the Germans, Polish and Dutch established bilingual schools in various states. In fact, throughout much of the 19th century, French was the language of instruction in Louisiana as Spanish was in New Mexico. Particularly widespread were German-English schools which had been established across the Midwest in places such as St. Louis, Missouri between the 1880's and World War One (Crawford, 1999). Bilingual schools all but disappeared in the wake of anti-immigration fears during and after World War I but would re-emerge in the 1960's, when Coral Way Elementary was established in 1963 in Dade County Florida, with help from a Ford Foundation grant. Coral Way Elementary is considered to be the first public bilingual elementary school program in the United States established in the post 1963 era (Andersson & Boyer, 1970). Another notable bilingual school in Miami of the same era was Riverside Elementary who had on their staff the former president of a Havana radio station, an attorney and a pharmacist (Chambers & Kersey, Jr., 1973). Riverside, however, would not fare as well as Coral Way as the program was discontinued due to a federal desegregation ruling which paired the school with a mostly all black elementary school. As Chambers and Kersey point out it was ironic that a school which had received federal funds to operate a bilingual program for nine years was closed by an order from the very same government (p.138).

There were other bilingual programs that were established in the 1960's. In Texas, many programs were established, most notably in San Antonio, but also in Edinburg, Del Rio, Corpus Christi and Zapata. In California, Calexico and Marysville began programs in 1966, and in 1967 bilingual programs were established in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and Hoboken, New Jersey. In Naples, Florida, four Collier County public schools operated bilingual programs in grades 1-6 during the early 1970's and in Miami, the Miccosukee Day School began a bilingual school to teach Miccosukee Indians (Andersson & Boyer, 1970). In Tampa, Florida, West Tampa Elementary operated a bilingual program during the 1970's (according to a bilingual teacher I spoke with who went there during that period).¹ Thus, while it is usually Coral Way Elementary which attracts the most attention in terms of being a forerunner of bilingual programs in the post-WWII era, it was by no means the only one, as many other schools began bilingual programs shortly after the school was established.

A number of bilingual initiatives were also passed by the federal government and courts during the 1960's and 1970's. More will be said later in Chapter 2 regarding the history of bilingual education including federal legislative initiatives and court rulings, but for now it might be helpful to provide a brief, detailed timeline of significant laws, acts and initiatives that were enacted prior to the implementation of Florida's consent decree in the early 1990's as they provide a context for how the Decree came to be formulated.

¹ Conversation between a bilingual teacher and researcher at school site in spring of 2008.

Civil Rights Act (1964). Among other things, the Act prohibited discrimination in federally funded programs. This legislation would later be used to determine if federal monies would be made available to school districts in the form of Title I monies based on whether they were found to be following policies which were non-discriminatory in nature.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965). Part of President Johnson's "War on Poverty", the Act began providing categorical aid to schools with high concentrations of low-income children. ESEA Title I funding would later form the basis for providing aid for bilingual programs as the Act was amended in 1968 with Title VII serving as the Bilingual Education Act of 1968.

Bilingual Education Act (1968). Also known as Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Act provided supplemental funding for school districts to implement programs which targeted the "special needs" of limited English proficient students.

Lau vs. Nichols (1974). The Supreme Court decision ruled that local school districts had to take steps to improve the quality of instruction toward children who faced a language "deficiency" and the court ruled teaching non English speaking children in English without assistance violated the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Equal Educational Opportunity Act (1974). Provided clarification of what constituted denial of equal opportunity including the failure by educational agencies to overcome language barriers in instructional programs.

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Lau Remedies (1975). The Office of Civil Rights issued a document detailing a number of remedies by which school districts could establish bilingual programs and later produced a set of compliance procedures which for the first time, pressured districts to establish bilingual programs by threatening to withdraw federal funds if bilingual programs were not implemented. The remedies also discouraged the use of English as a second language (ESL) programs in place of transitional bilingual ones.

Castaneda vs. Pickard (1981), *Idaho vs. Migrant Council (1981)*, *Denver vs. School District No. 1 (Denver), (1983)*, and *Illinois vs. Gomez (1987)*.

These court cases established the legal responsibility of their respective states' Department of Education to monitor and evaluate district programs directed toward limited English proficient students (Mora, 2006).

Amendment to Florida's State Budget (1987). For the first time in Florida, money was earmarked to provide funds to local districts for LEP students (Badia, 1994). to English language learners.

Since the 1990's, the favorable climate which ensured bilingual programs would survive and even thrive thanks to the above mentioned legislative acts and court rulings, has become clouded. This turn of events will be discussed later in Chapter 2 but for now it should suffice to say that it is today, generally accepted by scholars, that bilingual education is dead, if not on life support (San Miguel, 2004, Crawford, 2001). The No Child Left Behind Act, signed in 2001 officially replaced the Bilingual Education Act with an English-only piece of legislation. This, coupled with the fact that various states around the country in recent years have made English only instruction mandatory, has resulted in a general acceptance among the majority of teachers, administrators and policy makers that the English-only model is the only viable alternative to teaching the nation's English language learners (San Miguel, 2004). I should not, however, that there are, nevertheless, numerous bilingual and dual language or two-way immersion schemes that exist in various places around the country where progressive reformers have made determined efforts to maintain heritage language programs.

Thus, for better or for worse, Florida today finds itself in similar circumstances as other states with high proportions of English language learners and perhaps not coincidentally, their approach to dealing with the vast numbers of English language learners that are mainstreamed into regular content classes under the inclusion model is often quite similar. Florida, like Arizona and California for example, essentially takes the approach that by training its teachers in ESOL methods, it is by proxy offering the state's English language learners compensatory services under the consent decree. How this is accomplished can be seen by the rules and regulations outlined in the consent decree.

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The Decree requires basic ESOL teachers or primary English and Language Arts instructors to obtain an ESOL endorsement in which they must complete 300 in-service points or 15 college semester hours. Teachers of mathematics, social studies, science, computer literacy and as of 2003, administrators and guidance counselors, must take an ESOL training course called Empowerment which is equivalent to 60 in-service points or three college-semester hours (Florida Department of Education, 2006).

Within the district in-service training programs, elementary and secondary English and language arts teachers must take five separate ESOL related courses that total 300 hours of training. Other secondary school content teachers such as social studies, science and mathematics are required to take 60 hours of ESOL training in the Empowerment course. Essentially the Empowerment course is designed to be an overview of the five separate ESOL classes which the 300 hour group is required to take. In the Empowerment course, typical ESOL strategies, methods and issues are compressed into a broad framework that is meant to summarize many important aspects of second language acquisition. With a few exceptions, all other teachers, are required to take the Empowerment courses.

The five major areas required to be covered in district in-service settings or at the pre-service level in colleges according to the consent decree are listed on the following page.

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- a.) ESOL curriculum and materials development
- b.) cross cultural communication and understanding
- c.) applied linguistics
- d.) methods of teaching ESOL
- e.) testing and evaluation

Districts are allowed to design their own in-service trainings as long as they meet the requirements as stated in the Decree (Florida Department of Education, 2006).

There have been several attempts in the past to evaluate the training and preparation of teachers and district personnel in charge of English language learners here in Florida by looking at for instance whether teachers were documenting ESOL strategies and if bilingual aids were present in classrooms when 15 or more ELLs were present (OMSLE, 1998). Yet, much of how we understand the process in which the in-service district training sessions are conducted is shrouded in relative obscurity as there has been no empirical study as of yet which focuses on the district training.

In fact, there have been concerns raised about how these trainings were designed and are conducted today. In an interview at the University of South Florida, Peter Roos, a well known lawyer who has argued U.S. Supreme Court cases on the educational rights for language minority children, contends that part of the problem with the training of personnel as outlined in the Decree is the notion that teachers who do not receive the full 300 hours of training are somehow viewed as being fully credentialed in ESOL when they are taking just 60 hours –the one Empowerment course. Additionally, Roos questioned the viability of courses which offer less than 300 hours, believing as he said

that there is a real question as to whether they are taught by faculty who have a specialization in ESOL methods and he worried that there is no meaningful training of the trainers themselves (Roos, 2004). He furthermore raised the issue that Florida at the present time needs to develop a system to check whether educators who have been trained did indeed learn what they were supposed to have learned.

Nevertheless, Roos is quick to point out that Florida before the Decree was a different place prior to its implementation. Before the Decree was signed, there was no training for educators whatsoever, nor was there any method for identifying ELLs. Over time he relates that our expectations have increased and we now see a debate shifting from whether or not to provide programming to which system should be used (Roos, 2004).

The type of instructional system designed to instruct ELLs and to train educators working with them is a critical matter because as we have seen, Florida's system of educating its English language learners based on the de-facto acceptance of the ESOL inclusion model depends on its educators to implement ESOL strategies in the regular content class in which they teach. With so much riding on teachers to use what they learned in district training sessions, it seems almost commonsense to assume that more attention would be given to the training sessions themselves. However, to date, there has been no study evaluating the in-service training teachers receive to earn their ESOL endorsement.

Purpose of Study

Little to no research exists that can help identify and analyze the overall efficacy of professional ESOL in-service training programs across Florida. Consequently, this study attempts to determine whether district training sessions in Florida are adequately covering state-mandated content areas for the ESOL endorsement and to what extent secondary school in-service teachers agree or disagree that they received the appropriate amount of instruction that will prepare them to educate the myriad of English language learners who are mainstreamed into their classrooms each year.

Research Bias

It should be noted that research bias may have existed in terms of how I both viewed the efficacy of these training sessions and how I interacted with participants and trainers in the sessions I observed and studied. I have spent over six years working in a Title I high school where the majority of the school's population is Hispanic and one which has a large number of English language learners. Prior to that, I spent a good number of years living in Japan which provided me with an understanding of how difficult it is to accomplish even the most ordinary of tasks when one is not proficient in the dominant native language. These experiences have sensitized me to the perils and pitfalls of second language acquisition and made me more aware of how critical it is that we provide our own children with a comprehensible education. This sensitivity has also been colored by the fact that over time at the high school where I worked, I witnessed numerous instances in which English language learners were placed in my classroom without even a rudimentary understanding of English. This practice coupled with a

conspicuous lack of meaningful services directed toward these children at the school where I work has over time frustrated me to the point of indignation. To my knowledge, teachers who were supposed to have been trained in ESOL methods do little more than pair Spanish speaking children with English speaking ones and most of the time teachers spent regarding English language issues is almost exclusively concerned with filling out meaningless paperwork that the district required teachers complete. Never in the five years I have been teaching English language learners has an aide come to assist me nor has any district official come to observe whether I was complying with mandates explicitly stated in the consent decree.

In fact the Office of Multicultural Student Language Education came to a similar conclusion in their monitoring report of Miami-Dade County School District back in 1998, where they found teachers were not documenting their ESOL strategies and bilingual aides were not consistently in classrooms where 15 or more English language students were present (OMSLE, 1998). Nevertheless, I would also like to note that I am conscious of the fact that many ESOL professionals in the Florida's schools are hard working professionals who make every effort to improve the lives of the children they teach and assist. I argue the problem is not so much with these individuals but rather with the bureaucratic infrastructure of the entire system itself and most importantly an almost imperceptible disregard on the part of policy makers to go above and beyond the bureaucratic motions entailed in the mandates associated with the Decree.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be addressed in the study:

1. To what extent do the ESOL in-service district training sessions adequately cover the five main content areas the state requires be included in training programs?
2. How do secondary teachers perceive the coverage, depth, and utility of in-service district training sessions?

Significance of the Study

It is hoped that this study's findings will lead policy makers to reevaluate how they approach training in-service teachers to manage the thousands of English language learners who are mainstreamed into content classes each year. Only by taking a serious look at their programs' curriculum and impact on teachers' perceptions will districts begin taking the needed steps toward reform.

Clarification of Terminology

Acronyms, terms and definitions used by professionals and laypersons alike to describe the various groups, subjects, programs and models associated with the instruction of English language learners can be bewildering and confusing to say the least. It is possible to describe in general terms, however, some of the more commonly used identifiers.

There are different terms used to identify students whose first language is not English. These students may be called *Language Minority Students (LM)*, *Limited*

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English Proficient (LEP), or *English language learners* (ELLs). The label (L1) refers to a student's first language and (L2) refers to a student's second language or non-native language. The term English language learner (ELL) is the most widely used today but it is not uncommon to still see the term LEP in recent literature. According to the State of Florida, the terms *English for Speakers of Other Languages* (ESOL) or *English as a Second Language* (ESL) are used to "identify the teaching of English/Language Arts to Students whose heritage language is other than English" (Florida Department of Education 1999). Both terms are essentially the same but in the State of Florida, the acronym ESOL is the most frequently used term. The primary purpose of both ESL and ESOL is to teach English and in no way should these models be confused with bilingual education. Within the ESOL model, students are classified using a number of acronyms that identify their place in the programs based on English proficiency or having received services. For instance a LY student is a student who is identified as LEP and being served in an approved ESOL program. LN students are students who are identified LEP but are not being served in an approved ESOL program and an LF student is someone who exited the program and is being monitored for a two-year period (Florida Department of Education 1999). This is an important clarification because data which identifies ELL populations must discriminate between those students who are still enrolled in ESOL programs (LYs) and those who have been exited (LFs). In the State of Florida, this distinction is quite large because those still in the programs account for approximately 230,000 students as of 2005-2006, but taken together with those who have exited, the number exceeds 2,000,000 individuals (Florida Department of Education, 2007).

In Florida, the vast majority of English language learners (ELLs) receive ESOL instruction through *inclusion* or *immersion* where students are mainstreamed in regular classes and taught by teachers who are trained to deliver instruction using ESOL strategies. There are certain cases where students may receive instruction in *sheltered* or *structured immersion*, or *self-contained classes* where ESOL students are grouped together and learn content in English through modified instruction. Regardless of which method an ELL receives, they will still take ESOL classes during part of the day if they have been formally classified as LYs. This period where they leave to take ESOL classes is called *pull-out*, though it should be noted that there seems to be a discrepancy in the literature in terms of whether *pull-out* means taking ESOL classes during part of the day as described above or whether *pull-out* means a student is actually taken out of their regular content class during the period either at the beginning or mid-way during the period as I have witnessed on a few occasions.

Unlike ESOL or ESL programs which have as their primary goal to teach English, bilingual programs attempt to teach students in both their native language and English. Across the country bilingual programs take the form of three main models. One model is the two-way bilingual program where English speakers and ELL students are in the same class and some subjects are taught in English while other subjects are taught in the language minority student's first language which is not English. These programs are referred to as *two-way immersion* but are also called *dual-language*. They are relatively rare but in the State of Florida they exist in certain cities, though they almost always are found in elementary schools. The second type of bilingual model is called *early-exit* or

transitional bilingual program (TBE) and here the goal is as the name implies, to transition students from using their first language (L1) to English within a few years at the most. Finally there is the *late-exit, developmental or maintenance* bilingual programs which have as their main goal to maintain English and the student's first language throughout a student's educational career as long as possible. Most bilingual advocates support this model over the transitional model because they believe it is the only true program that attempts to establish bilingualism (Peregoy & Boyle, 2005). Often you will hear or see in the literature the term *subtractive bilingualism* which refers to the transitional programs and *additive bilingualism* which refers to the maintenance programs.

Overview of Subsequent Chapters

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature related to the professional development of teachers working with English language learners and two other related areas but important to the study: national, state, and district policies for English language learners and instructional strategies and program models for ELL instruction. Chapter 3 describes the study's methodology, including a discussion of the participants, instruments, issues of validity, procedures, research design, and data analysis. Chapter 4 examines the results of the study based on the three main phases of the research and Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the salient points related to the study as well as offering a number of recommendations.

Chapter 2

Review of the Related Literature

Overview

While there appears to be little if no literature that specifically addresses the training of in-service teachers for the ESOL endorsement that is found here in Florida, there is a sizeable amount of related research on the policies of bilingual education reforms, best pedagogy practices for ELLs and challenges confronting teacher preparations for instructing ELLs. These subjects provide a context to make theoretical assumptions and draw inferences about what problems need to be addressed and offer insight as to what solutions might be recommended to make the professional ESOL training programs for in-service teachers here in Florida more efficacious. In fact, many of the issues found in the literature on professional teacher training parallel those concerning the in-service trainings that are the focus of this study. For instance, there is a consensus among some researchers that professional training programs for teachers in general are in need of an overhaul (Clair, 1998; Garcia, 1992; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990). Specifically, they point to a variety of issues that plague district training programs. For example, rather than encouraging follow-up sessions during trainings to continue the learning experience of participants and provide them with guided practice (Bird & Warren, 1985; Little, 1981), districts tend to favor the one-size-fits-all, and one-shot workshop models over other effective models which may better suit their particular (district) populations (Meskill, 2005). Many districts furthermore do not train teachers specifically through their subject area content adequately enough and choose instead

training that offers broad, generalized practices, and behaviors that do not furnish the specifics as to how to teach populations such as English language learners through one's content area (Gonzalez, 2000).

This review begins by making an attempt to contextualize the larger question of how and why district training programs for teachers working with ELLs were created in the first place. Local school districts do not operate within a vacuum. They, like all local bureaucracies, react and adapt to the larger national and state trends which, to varying degrees influence their own policy making decisions. It is important, therefore, to recognize that a better understanding of these processes which create and shape district training programs can only be understood by first examining the political and social climate in which they were created. To this end, I will begin with a discussion of educational stratification as it relates to the marginalization of English language learners and provide a brief history of bilingual education which traces the movement from its beginnings to the present day. I will then furnish a discussion of effective ESOL pedagogy so as to better inform the reader of what scholars today generally consider to be the best practices used in instructing English language learners in the classroom. The rationale to include this subject in the discussion lies with the understanding that as states such as Florida move toward a greater emphasis on requiring content area teachers to carry the weight of instructing ELLs who have been mainstreamed in their classrooms, a critical need arises to provide these teachers with training programs that provide relevant and meaningful instruction that is pertinent to ELL pedagogy. Finally, I will turn to the

crux of the study which will examine matters related to the professional development of teachers working with English language learners.

Marginalizing English Language Learners

In a time of anti-immigration sentiment and perceived fears of ethnic separatism tearing apart the country, there seems to be little will on the part of those who can affect change to reverse these trends (Crawford, 2000). One way to understand this dynamic is to look at the critical theory of educational stratification. According to this theory, policy makers, teachers, and administrators work consciously and unconsciously to perpetuate the existence of their status groups. This phenomenon results in an unwillingness to enact social reforms that would allow others to share power (Collins, 1971). Larson & Ovando (2001) argue that English language learners simply do not have the power to effect change because they exist outside of the dominant social, economic and racial hierarchy of district and school power structures. (There are exceptions of course in places such as Miami where generations of Cuban immigrants and other groups have received bilingual instruction in schools such as at Coral Way Bilingual K-8 Center, which was the first bilingual school in the United States and Ada Merritt k-8 Center but the vast majority of Miami's children still attend Miami-Dade Public Schools, and receive instruction via English immersion).

The notion that English language learners do not have the power to effect change is supported by Larson, and Ovando who in the *Color of Bureaucracy* (2001) argue that there is a tendency by educators to consistently enforce rules, policies, and practices that discourage change. According to Larson, and Ovando the attitudes of school officials

regarding how schools should be run places a great emphasis on stability and traditional procedures that are enforced through coercion rather than consensus (Larson & Ovando, 2001). Because most local, state, and national officials are White middle-class English speaking professionals who are concerned with maintaining support from their own class, they continue to rely on the colorblind image of schooling that fails to uncover inequities that do not directly affect their constituencies (Richardson & Johanningmeier, 2003). Because, as Jim Cummins argues, the relationships today between teachers and students and schools and communities remains “essentially unchanged” (Cummins, 2001, p. 2), there is an unwillingness on the part of the dominant class to forge any type of real and meaningful communication with others. This results in a continuation of past behaviors which hampers attempts at school reform. He points out that policy alone will not affect real change until the fundamental relationships between individuals are re-defined. This re-defining of roles with respect to minority students and communities involves more than creating good policy; it also entails changing how teachers and administrators interact with students. However, to make meaningful change will prove to be difficult, as some theorists argue that many in the dominant class view this relationship as a struggle for social dominance and preservation, akin to class warfare (Crawford, 2000). Districts only have a limited amount of resources, and the competition for them is highly political. Some segments of the population believe resources directed toward equity concerns such as programs for immigrants, underclass, or disenfranchised ethnic enclaves have sapped money from core academics, resulting in lower standards. Policy makers view such program as favoring special interests and respond to pressures from the dominant power

groups. From this perspective, English-only advocates view bilingualism and multilingualism as disadvantaging native-born, first language English speakers, whom they represent. By making decisions as to where and how money will be spent, policy makers are in effect engaging in a type of inconspicuous warfare that results in winners and losers (Crawford, 2000; Gershberg, Danenberg, & Sanchez, 2004).

Because ELLs lack the political clout to demand equitable treatment *that is meaningful*, they continue to suffer under the weight of failed policies which ignore their growing importance in society's increasingly diverse landscape. Their marginalized position to date is not without historical precedent, however, so let us turn now and examine the forces which shaped their present circumstances

A Brief History of the Bilingual Education Movement

As mentioned previously, European and Asian immigrant groups throughout the better part of the 19th century had successfully established bilingual schools across the country. New York City, Chicago, St. Louis and other cities had established bilingual schools for the children of German speaking immigrants as far back as the 1830's and in Texas and California, Czech and Chinese language schools were created toward the end of the century to accommodate the rising tides of unskilled workers and their children that flooded into the country to fill industrial jobs (Blanton, 2004; Rothstein, 1998). Indeed, bilingual education was an important cultural issue for those immigrants as it was for any group who desired to preserve their heritage in the face of pressures to Americanize at all cost. Still, for the nation's Latino population, bilingual education has historically been more than just an important issue. This is due perhaps to the fact that

Hispanics have traditionally viewed bilingual education as essentially “the central issue of Latino civil rights” just as school integration was and is for African Americans (Hacsí, 2002, p. 63) and not surprisingly, Latinos have been fighting to preserve their right to use their native language in schools for as long as Europeans and Asians have.

During the mid 19th century, large numbers of bilingual schools in Texas existed for Mexican-Americans in Brownsville, El Paso, Laredo, and San Antonio to name a few. How these public schools were able to exist was due in part to Texas law which neither officially sanctioned nor outlawed them and to an education system that had not yet articulated a common goal of Americanization prevalent later during the Progressive Era (Blanton, 2004). Then as now, many Latinos have fought to retain their own language and culture and resisted the push to abandon their heritage by forming groups and organizations such as the *mutualistas* in Texas which were working class organizations that supported schools such as small private institutions called *escuelitas*. These schools acted as havens against economic exploitation and discrimination (Blanton, 2004). One scholar found that even in public schools, certain communities in Texas supported bilingual education, believing that student achievement rose as a consequence of employing bilingual teachers from the communities in which the schools resided (Blanton, 2004).

The rise of nativism which occurred during and after World War I led a number of states such as Ohio to ban bilingual education, and in Texas a law passed in 1918 made teaching in Spanish a crime (Rothstein, 1998). These events spelled the end for the

grassroots bilingual education programs that had existed prior to the War and it would not be until the 1960's that the nation would see a resurgence in calls for their renewal.

During the civil rights era, Latinos became empowered by the federal government's political position that Mexican Americans had been neglected and began to pressure Congress to provide school districts with federal funds to support bilingual programs (Donato, 1997). The passage of the Bilingual Education Act in 1968 was the culmination of these efforts and seemed to be a promising first step but as San Miguel (2004) has written, there were a number of problems associated with the bill. To begin with, the money appropriated (\$85 million dollars) was insufficient in comparison to money ear-marked for poverty programs. Furthermore, and this is perhaps the most significant, program participation was voluntary and carried no mandate. As a consequence, it was inevitable that school districts generally neglected to establish bilingual programs. Adding to the problem was that the bilingual programs established by the government were "open-ended" and did not determine any type of curriculum that districts could use as a guide. Finally, these programs were vaguely conceived and unclear in how they were to be implemented. Goals were not specified and there was a lack of experienced teachers and appropriate instructional materials (San Miguel, 2004).

By 1970, two years after the passage of the Bilingual Education Act, the federal government had begun to realize that districts had to do more and formed a commission which notified districts of their responsibility not to discriminate if they were beneficiaries of federally sponsored programs. According to one scholar, most ignored the commissions' recommendations and "carried on business as usual" (Donato, 1997,

p.106). Then in 1974, the Supreme Court moved the issue to the forefront when it ruled in the landmark bilingual education case *Lau v. Nichols*. *Lau v. Nichols* built on the precedent of supporting bilingual educational programs when it ruled in favor of non-English speaking students of Chinese ancestry who had brought a class suit in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California against officials of the San Francisco Unified School District (*Lau v. Nichols, 1974*). The Court concluded that the San Francisco Unified School District had violated 601 of the Civil Rights Act which bans discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The Lau case was an important victory for bilingual advocates, but it failed to mandate participation because it left it up to the districts to decide whether they would initiate bilingual programs or not. In addition, many districts were confused about how to implement the Court's rulings.

It really was not until a full seven years after the passage of the Bilingual Education Act in 1968 that school districts were finally forced to begin enacting bilingual education programs. In 1975, the U.S. Department of Education created the Lau Remedies which sought to assist schools with complying with the Lau ruling by provided administrative guidance in developing bilingual curricula and programs and required districts to develop voluntary compliance plans if they were found to be noncompliant with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and if programs contained 20 or more students of the same language group who had been identified as non-native English speakers (Gonzalez, 2000). Between 1975 and 1981, bilingual education programs were imposed on hundreds of school districts throughout the country. The Lau Remedies were an

attempt by the Office of Civil Rights to clear away the confusion associated with determining how to interpret the Supreme Court's Lau decision and while this may have been what bilingual advocates finally wished for, the Lau Remedies proved to be a catalyst for the emergence of an anti-bilingual movement to emerge due to the feeling on the part of many at the time that the federal government had overstepped its boundaries and had no right to enforce mandates on local constituencies. Although, some schools may have welcomed the government's assistance, the Lau Remedies was seen as a period of heavy-handedness which contributed to a backlash against bilingual education programs (Crawford, 2000).

Beginning in the 1980's under the conservative administration of Ronald Reagan, attacks against bilingual education grew louder and occurred more frequently after the birth of U.S. English formed in 1983 by Senator Hayakawa of California and Dr. John Tanto. This group, working alongside various neo-conservatives such as then Education Secretary William Bennett, called for an end to bilingual education in favor of English-only programs (Rodriguez & Simmons, 2007). According to one scholar, Bennett allowed school districts to decrease the amount of native language instruction offered within federally funded programs. Additionally, Bennett also reduced the staff, and budget of the Office of Civil Rights, and tried to de-fund the National Clearinghouse on Bilingual Education (San Miguel, 2004). For its part, U.S. English successfully waged a campaign in various states to declare English the official language of their state governments.

Yet beyond the rhetoric of U.S. English and Secretary Bennett's attempts to dismantle the bilingual movement, even more dramatic and substantive changes took place in how the federal government funded educational programs. Prior to the Reagan administration, schools accepted money from the federal government through categorical funding, which set regulations and controls over how the money would be spent. During the Reagan administration this was changed to block grants which replaced regulated programs with a small number of "few strings" programs that were only given to states that the federal government deemed important (Ornstein, 1984, p.2). Of course this change in the way educational programs were funded during the 1980s did not spell the demise of bilingual education, but the lack of federal commitment coincided with a growing English-only movement that appeared just as bilingual advocates were searching for ways to garner support.

During the early 1990s, opposition to bilingual education decreased because the George Bush Administration and the Republican Party tried to attract Latino voters in the 1992 presidential election, but it was not long until opposition resurfaced when the Republicans won a majority in both houses of Congress and opponents of bilingual education such as Majority Whip Tom Delay began attacking federal bilingual education policy (McDonald, 1998). Still, the 1990's saw a period of resurgence in aid and effort on the part of the federal government during President Clinton's two administrations (Pack, 1993). The Bilingual Education Act was reauthorized in 1994 and for a time it looked as if the bilingual movement had survived the turbulent 1980's.

Yet as the 1990's came to a close, key states began efforts to replace bilingual educational programs with an English-only curriculum. California led the way with proposition 227 in 1998, followed by Arizona's proposition 203. In 2002, Massachusetts' "Question 2" closed the door on bilingual education and Colorado attempted to do the same with "Amendment 31" in 2002 which was initially defeated only to be reborn in 2006 as "Ballot Issue 95" (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005; Myers, 2006; Rouse, 2006; Vaishnav, 2002). These initiatives were the culmination of efforts by policy makers associated with the English-only movement who, beginning in the late 1970's, began the drive to end bilingual education. They succeeded finally when President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2001, which reauthorized Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act into Title III of the NCLB and made bilingual education an "English-only piece of legislation" (San Miguel, Jr, 2004, p.87; Crawford, 2000). As mentioned previously, funding for bilingual education programs has dried-up since the passage of No Child Left Behind due to a funding formula that uses a formula-based block grant. The bill has two parts; Part A promotes English-only programs and Part B promotes programs which maintain bilingual students. Only one part of the bill can be in effect at any one time. Part A can be in effect when Congress appropriates an amount equal to or more than \$650 million dollars, and Part B is effective when the funding fails to match this amount. When NCLB was authorized, the funding Congress provided matched the amount needed for Part A and federal funds were directed under the umbrella of an English-only framework (United States Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition, 2008).

Policies directed toward educating ELLs in recent years have for the most part coalesced under the widespread practice of mainstreaming English language learners into regular content classes. Much of the explanation for this lies with a failure on the part of the federal government to provide funds under NCLB and with state initiatives to mandate an English-only curriculum. Still other perhaps less obvious explanations exist which point to the causes for this general trend.

The political movement to end bilingual education has further been bolstered by a lack of consensus regarding whether there is reliable evidence that bilingual education programs benefit children in school. In *Children as Pawns: The Politics of Educational Reform*, Timothy Hacsí (2002) argues that while there have been studies that have been accepted by experts as valid, such as a study by the American Institutes for Research Evaluation (1977), the Ramirez Report (1991), and more recently Thomas and Collier (1997), the results have not convinced the general public that there is as he writes “compelling evidence one way or the other on what kind of program will help children learn English and be successful students over the course of their educational career” (Hacsí, 2002, p. 100). In fact there are those on both sides of the issue who point to flawed method in studies supporting or refuting bilingual models, and it is next to impossible to find a consensus in a climate in which people on both sides of the issue have, as Hacsí writes, little trust in their opponents’ “good intentions” and are unwilling to listen to each others’ positions (Hacsí, 2002, p. 63). Furthermore, the media has played a role in lending credence to the argument that if the experts are divided regarding whether or not bilingual programs are effective, then it is assumed that the scientific

evidence itself must be inconclusive and should not warrant federal expenditures (Crawford, 2000).

Adding to the divisiveness is what I believe to be a misunderstanding on the part of the English-only advocates that immigrant groups who seek to preserve their native languages are anti-assimilationist at heart. Those who make such claims point to the fact that immigrants in recent years have sought to preserve and maintain their mother-tongue at levels not seen in the past (Lambert & Taylor, 1996), and indeed there are a variety of factors which have led to increasing mother tongue maintenance. These range from the continuous flow of immigrants to ethnic enclaves which serves to support and sustain native languages, to the growing phenomenon of round trip immigration which inhibits permanent settlement, to the emergence of oppositional youth culture as a response to de-industrialization (Fidler, 2001; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Still there is evidence that the same people who seek to preserve their heritage languages also make efforts to learn English and become successful within the dominant culture.

In fact, many immigrants and native-born non-native English speakers care deeply about developing competence in English and finding ways to acculturate within the dominant framework of American society. Lambert and Taylor (1995) found that Hispanic and Asian mothers seek to forge an additive form of bilingualism/biculturalism that both protects their heritage culture while at the same time accepting Americanization so their children might be successful. They know all too well that bilingualism has become an asset on the job market. For example, Park and Sarkar (2007) surveyed 87 Korean-Canadian parents and found that a majority of respondents believed strongly that their

child's bilingualism would "ensure them better future economic opportunities, and give them more chance to communicate with their extended families." (p. 232). Others find success juggling both languages and culture by rationalizing that their two languages belong in public and private spheres. In *Hunger for Memory* (1982), Richard Rodriguez spoke of his native Spanish as an intimate language and English a public one. By drawing this distinction he was able to move easily between both worlds and walk the fine line between preserving his heritage while at the same time working within the dominant culture.

Today, in fact there are millions of non-native English speakers who seek to both preserve their linguistic heritage while at the same time learn English and attempt to become successful within the dominant framework of American society. English-only advocates are wrong in my opinion to assume that these same individuals are somehow unwilling to acculturate. They assume that today's immigrants refuse to learn English, or that ethnic leaders are promoting bilingualism or that language diversity leads to ethnic conflict and political separatism (Crawford, 2001). Yet, according to James Crawford there is no evidence to support any of these assumptions and are in fact "demonstrably false" (p. 6).

Indeed, it would be true that wanting to preserve one's heritage and language at the expense of learning English and the culture and customs of a society would be anti-assimilationist, but I suspect those who choose this path are far outnumbered by the millions of others who understand that much of their success in American society rides on navigating successfully between both worlds. How well these families and individuals

succeed in this endeavor will undoubtedly define how well the English-only advocates are able to make their case that cultural and language maintenance is inherently anti-assimilationist.

Beyond the Bilingual Education Movement

As federal and state support for bilingual education programs has dwindled over the last two decades, the research bilingual advocates might have used for support to justify their programs has, in turn, evaporated in the face of attacks. In this void, some states such as Arizona, California, Florida, and Massachusetts have taken the lead in devising approaches to educating English language learners that rely solely on inclusion. All four states mainstream ELLs and place the onus on the educator to be trained in second language acquisition issues and techniques. They do this by requiring educators to complete a set number of ESOL professional development training hours within specified periods of time. In these states, regular content instructors are required to be trained either in colleges and universities at the pre-service level or by the district professional training offices once they have been hired. As of 2004, Arizona required instructors to obtain a Structured English Immersion (SEI) endorsement. A provisional SEI endorsement requires 15 hours of professional development and a full endorsement requires 45 hours or three semester hours, for a total of 60 hours (Arizona Department of Education, 2005). Florida's Category II teachers who comprise social studies, mathematics and science instructors are required to obtain the same 60 hours but they do not receive an endorsement. An ESOL endorsement in Florida is only obtained after completing 300 hours of ESOL training. California also has a requirement that all teachers must

complete a 45-hour Commission approved staff development program in order to continue teaching and must pass either the Cross-Cultural Language and Academic Development Program (CLAD) or the Bilingual, Cross-Cultural Language and Academic Development Program (BCLAD) competency tests (California Commission on Teaching Credentialing, 2006). Yet, one scholar (Mora, 2006) argues that instructors in these programs are not required to be certified in the CLAD or BCLAD, prior to instructing English language learners.

Massachusetts also requires teachers to take ESOL professional development training. All teachers in the state regardless of the content they teach are required to take a total of 70-80 hours of training if the district they teach in has English language learners. Teachers there are required to take a total of four classes with training in sheltered content instruction comprising the bulk of the required in-service hours (Massachusetts Department of Education, 2008).

The changes in these four states represent a larger trend to place the onus on teachers to provide compensatory services for ELLs in their classrooms. If this trend continues, the need to ensure that the training teachers receive is adequate will require vigilance on the part of policy makers to allocate every available resource to professional development training programs and classroom support so that the burden instructors now assume is reduced.

It is clear that district in-service training programs for instructors working with ELLs have not been and are not created in a vacuum. The forces that shape and mold the decisions as to how English language learners will be educated go far beyond the district

level (Batt, Kim & Sunderman, 2005). Inevitably these policies filter down from the federal government and states leading to the creation of programs that districts use both to justify what is expected of them and absolve themselves from the responsibility of having to tackle these difficult decisions on their own (Iatarola & Fruchter , 2004, p.492).

Before discussing the final subject of professional development of teachers working with English language learners, we should briefly address the topic of effective ESOL pedagogy in order to guide our understanding of what the literature reveals in terms of best practices. This is a critical issue because a better understanding of recent research will better inform this particular study in terms of whether the participants being studied covered material in line with what researchers are suggesting should be taught.

Effective ESOL Pedagogy

There are three general approaches to ELL instruction. They are direct instruction, interactive instruction, and a process approach to instruction. Direct instruction teaches reading and writing explicitly and is generally thought to be a good method to teach ELLs who may require additional reading and writing assistance (Genesee & Riches 2006). Genesee and Riches (2006) looked at a number of studies related to direct instruction and concluded that while direct instruction was indeed a good method for teaching reading, there was less agreement whether direct instruction was effective at teaching writing. Echevarria and Short (2000), on the other hand, found that there was a statistically significant difference in writing between students who were instructed using the sheltered instruction method (SIOP) and those of a similar group of ELLs who did not receive the sheltered instruction approach. It should be noted, however, that the there is a

question whether one can even consider the SIOP method direct instruction being that much of the strategies contained in the approach are interactive by nature. Other studies reveal that the direct instruction method excels at vocabulary development and developing ideas based on reading text (Avila & Sadoski, 1996; Bermudez & Prater, 1988).

The second general approach to instructing ELLs is interactive instruction. The majority of scholars seem to agree that this method is the most advantageous because it allows students to have opportunities to interact with competent speakers of English while being given direction by the teacher through direct instruction (Egbert & Simich-Dudgeon, 2001). In the interactive method, students engage in literacy activities with one or more learners who are competent readers and writers in English. From this arrangement, students are able to develop their higher order mental functions by engaging in conversation and working collaboratively with other students and the teacher. Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the zone of proximal development forms the basis for this approach because it posits that children can accomplish tasks with the assistance of more competent peers, which they ordinarily would not yet be able to do on their own. Genesee and Riches (2006) again looked at a wide assortment of studies which evaluated the efficacy of this approach and concluded that in almost all of the studies they reviewed, the interactive method using peer assistance saw improvement in reading and writing skills.

Current trends in education for English language learners emphasize more student participation and communication in the classroom that are hallmarks of the interactive

approach (Short, 1991). At the heart of this concept is the notion that teachers should introduce to the curriculum a variety of ways to present and assimilate information beyond lecture and reading from the text. These strategies can include multiple media activities such as the use of realia, graphs, journals, dialogue activities, graphic organizers and a host of other activities (Peregoy & Boyle, 2005; Gibbons, 2002). The rationale behind this approach is to make input comprehensible (Krashen & Terrel, 1998). Krashen posited that to make input comprehensible, instructors should use a natural approach which stresses language acquisition over formal knowledge in the beginning stages of second language acquisition. Krashen developed a number of hypotheses to demonstrate that a variety of conditions must first be met before a child can acquire information through a second language. One of the key hypotheses put forth by Krashen (1995) was the Affective Filter Hypothesis which posited that a student's emotional filter must be low in order to allow information in. This can be accomplished by reducing the student's anxiety and increasing his or her motivation, and self-confidence which will together prevent the filter from being raised and thereby block out information.

How a teacher attempts to reduce anxiety, raise motivation, and improve self confidence can be a difficult proposition but an important tool toward accomplishing this challenge is by scaffolding information. Scaffolding information refers to building on student's background knowledge so that learners can make sense out of activities as they progress toward information that they would usually not be able to comprehend (Gibbons, 2002). Just as the zone of proximal development provides learners with assistance from more mature students adept at speaking, reading and writing in English,

scaffolding techniques give students a way to comprehend information through a gradual process that builds on the information they already know. For example, in social studies instruction for example, scaffolding is an important process that is used to provide students with comprehensible input. Teachers can help students prior to reading text by going over key vocabulary terms and concepts through the use of semantic webs, maps, diagrams and charts (Egbert & Simich-Dudgeon, 2001). Deborah Short (1995) argues that content specific strategies which build on background knowledge should include pre-reading and pre-writing strategies and other strategies to develop schema that builds associations between student experiences and what is being taught. In order to accomplish this, teachers should prepare students for text by introducing key vocabulary and even consider doing a thematic unit prior to teaching required content to build understanding of particular topics.

Yet activating background knowledge may not always be enough when trying to make sense out of textbooks that are commonly used in content area subjects. According to Schleppegrell, Achugar and Oteiza (2004), students need to learn the difference between everyday language and academic language. For example, in social studies classes, students should understand how to think about history in ways that focus on language and ways that allow them to answer questions about text in more specific ways. For example, students should be asking what historical events are presented, how are they presented and what is the perspective of those taking place in the events (p. 89). Indeed, it may be too simplistic to assume that students will understand text simply by activating their background knowledge and, therefore, teachers need to have a rather sophisticated

understanding of not only the basic underlying concepts of second language acquisition but also content specific strategies to help ELLs succeed in understanding regular content instruction.

A major issue surrounding the instruction of ELLs is the effort to make curriculum more inclusive and relevant to the students. Sleeter (2005) has written extensively about this issue and argues that while teachers may believe they are implementing a multicultural curriculum, they are in fact only adding “bits of diversity” into a mainstream curriculum that lacks any real attempt to discuss and learn about other cultures, histories and lived experiences. Moll (1992) and others have suggested that a key strategy to make curriculum more inclusive is to make use of the student’s “funds of knowledge.” Moll refers to the *funds of knowledge* as a body of knowledge that students bring with them to class that includes a wide range of sophisticated and rather complex understanding of subjects ranging from ranching and farming, to medicine, machine repair, economics, religion and household management to name a few. Teachers, Moll argues, unfortunately rarely make use of these resources and instead often view students as products of working class families that are as he writes, “somehow disorganized socially and deficient intellectually” (p.134). By accessing the *funds of knowledge* teachers have a unique opportunity to be a bridge between the student’s world and the world of the classroom. Teachers can develop for example thematic units that include collaboration between other students and guided instruction from the teacher. These units make use of the students’ background knowledge which draws from their home experiences.

In summary, teachers need to have an understanding of the benefits of interactive instruction and how to create zones of proximal development that are meaningful and not superficial. They should understand how to scaffold instruction, to build background knowledge, and they should know specific strategies that allow students to learn language through content. Teachers should additionally make attempts to create curricula that is inclusive and uses students' backgrounds rather than assuming they do not know anything relevant to class discussions. Of course, one may argue that recommended strategies for ELL instruction would improve engagement and understanding for all students. However, this issue is beyond the scope of the study.

The subject of best practices for ELL instruction is a large and varied topic and it is not possible to mention every relevant issue here. One could go on at length about the need to create authentic assessment instruments, the procedures for implementing curricula that is differentiated, and the importance of adjusting teaching style. What has been discussed here is simply a brief outline of the different strategies teachers can employ to best instruct ELLs.

Indeed, acquiring competency in these best practices would be a challenge and one finds it questionable whether anyone without extensive training and years of classroom experience would be able to effectively instruct ELLs in a mainstreamed environment. College professors who teach ESOL courses in Florida have expressed similar reservations to me and one wonders whether it is even possible to ask regular content teachers to learn all of these subjects and implement them effectively with the

small amount of time devoted to training school districts across the nation provide teachers. This is a question that this study will help answer.

Professional Development of Teachers Working with English Language Learners

The challenges facing regular content teachers to provide worthwhile and comprehensible lessons to English language learners in mainstream classes are formidable. For example, Gandara, et al. (2005) surveyed approximately 5,300 educators throughout 22 school districts in California in 2004 and found that two of the most important issues instructors have to grapple with are not having enough time to plan appropriate lessons for English language learners that require creating differentiated instructional methods and having to teach English language learners who may be relatively proficient in speaking but lack basic writing and reading skills even in their first language. Other issues such as not receiving adequate support from ESOL aids and instructors in terms of planning and carrying out lessons, and lacking knowledge of, or access to, appropriate instructional materials that specifically target these children also adversely affect instructors' chances of planning and teaching adequate lessons (Penfield, 1987).

Sadly, teachers may believe they are on their own in terms of overcoming these types of problems and finding ways to address them satisfactorily. Teachers who do not receive training or support feel that the districts are "sweeping kids under the rug" (Constantino, 1994, p.11) and not providing meaningful help in their instruction. Penfield (1987), surveyed 162 teachers in large urban school districts in New Jersey using an open-ended qualitative approach and found that respondents admitted to having

little to no training in how to instruct English language learners and had no practical understanding of how to make the necessary changes to teach them even when willing to do so. She attributed these views to a lack of decent in-service training and the failure of ESL teachers to assist them in classroom situations.

The consensus of the existing research is that districts can do more to alleviate the plight of mainstream teachers of English language learners. However, there is a lack of literature that pertains specifically to the preparation of teachers in district in-service programs to work with English language learners. A number of literature search strategies produced only a few research articles or papers on topics related specifically to this subject. These searches included ERIC, LexisNexis Academic, and Wilson Omnifile full text mega edition as well as cited reference searches found in the prior searches using the Web of Science's Social Science Index. Nevertheless, while there may be scant literature regarding the specific question of how districts prepare in-service teachers to teach English language learners, it is possible to examine the larger literature as it relates to generalized professional teacher training and offer insights which apply more directly to the focus at hand.

One of the main themes emerging from the literature on district in-service training programs is the notion that school districts tend to take a piecemeal approach to training. In this regard school officials are often more reactive rather than proactive in implementing policies. Floden (1987) surveyed between 20 and 30 school districts among five states in 1982. He observed that when districts take such approaches to the "total set of policies" that confront teachers, creates as he says, a "welter of incompatible

directives”, and thus, the net result is decision-making with no clear pattern of curriculum policies (p.16).

Perhaps an example of this can be seen when one examines the impact that the LULAC Consent Decree has had on district policies since it was signed in 1990 Florida and META, or the Multicultural Education Training Advocacy, Inc. The question of how to address English language learners in the State of Florida had by no means been an irrelevant issue prior to 1990, but barring a few exceptions, districts had made little to no attempt to assist English language learners in schools across the Florida (Badia, 1994). It was only after the consent decree was signed that districts took steps to alleviate the conditions English language learners faced in schools across Florida. Once approved, districts were given a wide latitude to implement their own training programs as long as they followed a number of mandatory guidelines, including requiring content teachers to take a set number of in-service training hours to obtain an ESOL endorsement and requiring district trainers to cover a core curriculum of content such as ESOL methods and cross-cultural awareness issues (MacDonald, 2004). Without being forced to take these steps, one wonders if districts in Florida would have ever made any effort at all to offer training to its teachers.

To determine whether the consent decree spawned a piecemeal, reactive approach to how districts approach training in-service teachers to meet the needs of English language learners may depend on more evidence and research. However, it is clear, that one finds that district approaches across the State of Florida are so varied and convoluted that it takes a vast amount of time and research simply to understand not only what they

offer, but to whom they offer it and even if their programs are in any way monitored or regulated by the state who initially gave them the mandate to develop the programs in the first place.

Part of the problem with these issues is by their very nature, school districts are often loosely-coupled systems that often inadvertently act to thwart attempts at real reform. This is because loosely-coupled systems often allow local decision makers to manipulate mandates to fit their localized environments and they are able to do so without having to change the entire system they exist in (Weick, 1976). This can be a positive phenomenon but also a negative one when local groups are somehow able to subvert top-down directives to fit their local needs which may negatively impact certain groups who do not benefit from those decisions. For instance the State of Florida has in place a regulated system that establishes relatively rigid criteria for how district professional ESOL in-service training programs are to be run. School districts are allowed to implement these directives according to their local circumstance and it is within this loosely-coupled system that districts can bend, and shape policy to their liking. This would explain again why it is so difficult to ascertain how these training programs are run, how and if they are monitored and by whom.

Furthermore, policy makers including district officials and even principals at school sites play a role in shaping policy to fit their own needs by employing a type of creative insubordination which is often employed by street-level bureaucrats. According to Haynes and Licata (1992), street-level bureaucrats often resolve conflicts by consciously bending their directives to be more responsive to their own local realities.

This creative insubordination occurs frequently and in multiple ways ranging from how Title I money is spent to the ways in which professional development programs are implemented. Often these decisions are seen in a favorable light and can be construed as an unanticipated but positive consequence of having to adapt to environments both externally and internally (Haynes & Licata, 1992, p. 34). Yet, I would argue that these consequences may not always be positive for all those concerned being that street-level bureaucratic decisions may not benefit those who need help the most, namely in the case here, English language learners and the teachers who teach them. In fact it is precisely this type of creative insubordination within the context of a loosely-coupled system that may in the end be a critical factor in allowing inadequate training programs to exist and continue on a continuous basis.

In fact the entire system of making and implementing ELL policy is hampered not only by individuals who make autonomous decisions but also by the very nature of the bureaucratic system in which policy is formed and carried out. The sociologist Max Weber, (1946) warned readers in *The Bureaucratic Machine* of some of the many problems associated with modern bureaucracies. For instance, he argued that once bureaucracies are established they are one of the hardest social structures to destroy and likewise those who benefit from bureaucracies make every effort to sustain them (Lemert, 2004).

These arguments strike me as relevant to this discussion because if policies toward ELLs are to be reformed or be drastically overhauled, it will take a gigantic effort to do so given the fact that Florida's ELL policy is formulated within a large state

bureaucracy that may, be “practically unshatterable” (Lemert, 2004, p. 109) Additionally, there are many working in Florida’s ESOL system who gain a livelihood from this very bureaucracy that sustains them, and they more than anybody have a common interest in seeing the system that exists today survives.

During the 1970’s a similar bureaucracy existed forged from the policies of the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights and from money approved through legislation in the wake of the Lau decision. According to Alexander and Baker (1994), this bureaucracy created a bilingual elite which was able to take control of decisions directed at educating ELLs and created a vast bureaucracy of vested players who monopolized the entire process of bilingual instruction. Alexander and Baker’s view may be a cynical one and one that indicates a bias against bilingual education in general, but their points are interesting because one can take the notion of a bilingual elite that emerged in the 1970’s and transpose the notion to what I consider to be the existence of an ESOL elite here in Florida. These individuals would include those at the state level in charge of the Office of Academic Achievement through Language Instruction and local district official who supervise ESOL departments. They, like the bilingual advocates of the 1970’s, have created a vast bureaucracy in which they dictate the sole method by which ELLs are to be educated and because they operate in Weber’s “iron cage” of bureaucracy, any attempts to dislodge them may prove futile. Only time will tell if the ESOL bureaucracy funded by the state and legitimized by the consent decree, will continue to dictate the terms of ELL instruction or take a more inclusive position and become more open to new ideas, programs, models and approaches. Changing the

existing pattern of instruction will be difficult with so many entrenched interests, but it is not impossible to do so. Just as in the past when individuals challenged the orthodoxy of established beliefs, certain key individuals arose to explore new ways of looking at long-held assumptions. Many opposed these challenges but in the end a paradigm shift occurred which radically transformed how people perceived phenomena which they previously had never challenged (Kuhn, 1996). Such a change may very well take place within the paradigm we now rely on to educate ELLs. The bureaucracy that sustains those who depend on it for their livelihood may one day come crashing down to reveal a new system that allows more flexibility and a willingness to be reformed.

Whether it is enough to claim that the pervasive piecemeal approach districts have adopted over time is a sufficient cause to explain how English language learner policy in the State of Florida and across the nation has evolved is difficult to answer. Perhaps a better answer lies with a combination of factors that together act to shape ELL policy. This includes the piecemeal approach but also just as importantly, the phenomenon of loosely coupled systems, the influence of street-level bureaucrats, and the negative attributes associated with modern bureaucracies. One thing we can be sure of is when local policy makers do not have a vested interest in reform, their efforts to create worthwhile and thoughtful programs will fall short (Olsen, 1997). Consequently, the inadequacies we find in these programs are products of an environment that enforces compliance but one that lacks commitment, and while there is no doubt that the consent decree has been an effective tool to force the former, it is still not clear whether it has had any lasting impact on the latter.

Characteristics of Sound Professional In-Service Teacher Training Practices

While the piecemeal approach to training may be a characteristic of low-performing or badly run training programs in school districts, according to Iatarola & Fruchter, (2004), a hallmark of high-performing districts, is their ability to offer a variety of professional development programs that are differentiated and flexible. Carla Meskill (2005) looked at data gathered from five university faculty members and 123 pre-service and in-service graduate students' responses participating in "push-in" workshops organized by the federally funded Training All Teachers (TAT) project. There she found that respondents who had taken part in the workshops indicated that instructors would not be served well by districts which relied on one-shot workshop models or one-size-fits-all approaches. Instead, they suggested that the "best model" was one that fit their particular circumstances and then employed a number of follow-up strategies to ensure that teachers actually used what they learned.

An important characteristic of successful in-service district training programs is the understanding that teachers become actively involved in the process of learning through collaborating with other teachers (Bird, & Warren, 1985; Clair, 1998; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990;). This collaboration among teachers is seen in the literature as a critical component because it is viewed as contributing to increased feelings of ownership an enhanced capacity for handling complex problems and more and better opportunities to learn from each other's shared knowledge that is accumulated in the day-to-day experiences of teaching (Clair, 1998).

Issues such as teacher collaboration and follow-up training have great implications for teachers working with ELLs and lie at the heart of any meaningful attempt to construct worthwhile in-service district training programs. Whether or not both of these topics are covered within the framework of the five general areas related to second language acquisition will be a question which this study hopes to ascertain.

There is literature which identifies a few effective professional development training programs that specifically target teachers of English language learners. Tellez & Waxman (2005), point to three promising programs found in Arizona and California. The Balderas Elementary School in Fresno Unified School District was opened in 1991-92 to accommodate a growing number of students, many of whom were from diverse non-English speaking backgrounds. Not long after opening, the principal at Balderas arranged a partnership with California State University at Fresno to teach graduate courses at the school using Title I money. The professional development program offers in-service credit to teachers but also reduced tuition for those who apply to a master's degree program at the university. The curriculum focuses on working with teachers to develop hands-on content based instruction using ESL methods and emphasizes cross-cultural awareness strategies (United States Department of Education, 1995).

The "Funds of Knowledge for Teaching" (FKT) project in Arizona is sponsored by the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology (BARA) and the College of Education at the University of Arizona. These entities work closely with mostly elementary school instructors to provide training that emphasizes teachers gaining an ethnographic perspective of students and their families. The FKT staff teaches instructors

how to collect ethnographic data about their students and apply their findings to thematic units which make use of their cultural backgrounds and home lives. For instance, teachers found out that one student who visited Mexico, often brought back candy to sell. The teacher created an interdisciplinary unit on candy making and selling and invited a parent to come to the class to make candy where both historical and scientific applications were used (Moll, 1992). Project outcomes revealed that lessons made better use of skills, and information to students and after the home interviews began, attendance rates increased and graffiti and vandalism around school grounds declined (United States Department of Education, 1995).

Finally, the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) has formed a partnership with the Starlight Elementary School in Watsonville, California, where they work closely with staff and administrators to provide professional development opportunities to apply five standards the center has devised which they believe “articulate the philosophical and pragmatic guidelines for effective instruction” (Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence, 2008). With the assistance of a Title VII grant and the guidelines established by the Center, classroom teachers are given time during the day to meet and among other things, share effective instructional practices, develop assessment tools, determine if students have met standards, reflect on how to better improve the program and identify needed materials and resources for the classroom (Starlight Elementary School, 2008).

What makes these three programs seem successful to some observers is the fact that they contain many of the very characteristics that scholars argue professional

development training programs need. The importance of collaboration and follow-up training and the ability to be flexible and offer differentiated instruction seem to be present in these three programs and perhaps most importantly, local policy makers are active and show a vested interest in guiding these schools with assistance and resources.

The importance of curriculum designers to step back and take a fresh approach by evaluating what their programs were and where they needed to go to show improvements can not be overstated. According to the paradoxical theory of change advocated by Gestalt theorists, change can only occur when an organization first seeks to abandon what they'd like to become and look deeply at what they first are (Beisser, 1970). These programs seemed to have done this and yet Florida steadfastly clings to the consent decree which was forged under a theory of action that was reactive and defensive by nature.

According to Argyris and Schon (1974), human beings construct meanings from their environment and design actions to achieve consequences. Often times these actions will be defensive in nature as they serve to protect individuals and groups from threats in the environment. Essentially, defensive routines result in preventing policymakers from identifying and ridding themselves of the very reasons that initiated the action in the first place (Argyris, 1990). The consent decree might very well fall into the category of what Argyris classifies a defensive routine of action because like all defensive routines it is "anti-learning, overprotective, and self-sealing" (p.25). The Decree has created an atmosphere in which participants today comply with the law *without perhaps considering the intent of the law in the first place*. This type of single-loop learning fails to question

the underlying objectives which served to underpin the creation of the Decree in the first place and in the end dooms the process from achieving real change. Because the consent decree was born from a coercive attempt by well meaning individuals to bring equity to the process of educating ELLs, Gestalt theorists would question whether such a process could ever be successful. In order to bring real reform to the process as other programs mentioned previously have done, the State of Florida should consider whether the consent decree as it exists presently lives up to its promise as an agent of change or acts as a buffer between those who desire meaningful reform and those who seek to preserve the status quo.

If the consent decree is to live up to its promise of delivering reform policymakers might also start by reexamining the assumptions regarding monitoring and compliance in terms of the teacher in-service ESOL training programs. The decree states that monitoring should include a review of program effectiveness and that it is the responsibility of the state to monitor program effectiveness through a process of periodic reviews. The Decree goes into some detail for example, regarding monitoring the identification and assessment of children's language proficiency and provides a framework for districts and schools to show documentation that they are in compliance with state mandates (Florida Department of Education, 2008). The decree also has language in it that requires the state issue annual reports summarizing the results of the compliance reviews it conducts. Yet there is no language in the Decree that provides for specific ways in which program effectiveness can be ascertained regarding these trainings. With so much riding on the preparation of teachers to work with ELLs, one

would think this would be a priority and yet, most of the language in the Decree in terms of compliance relates to identification and assessment.

Summary

There are in fact a myriad of perspectives found in the literature that help us understand what creates and shapes district teacher training programs including those geared toward training teachers to work with English language learners. First, at the national and state level, there has been an increase in anti-immigration and anti-bilingual policies shaping how school districts respond to English language learners since the end of the 1990's. In addition, literature suggests program design and implementation of in-service training often involves a piecemeal, reactive approach over a holistic approach that stresses the importance of collaboration. Scholars instead argue for the importance of ongoing training and follow-up measures that include monitoring to ensure compliance (Goodwin, 2002; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1997; Walqui, 2000). However, research on how districts approach training in-service teachers to work with English language learners has been sorely lacking. This dissertation hopes to begin to fill this gap by exploring the efficacy of several in-service teacher training programs here in Florida.

Chapter 3

Method

Overview of Method

This study addressed the following topics:

1. To what extent do the ESOL in-service district training sessions adequately cover the five main content areas the state requires be included in training programs.
2. How secondary teachers perceived the coverage, depth, and utility of in-service district training sessions.

The study was broken into three phases: non-participatory observations, survey and interviews. In Phase I, the researcher observed in-service ESOL professional teacher training programs in three Florida districts with relatively high proportions of English language learners. Three sections were observed, totaling 30 sessions or ten sessions per section (“sections” refer to training classes which include a total of 12 sessions). As in many other districts in the State of Florida, the districts under study have an online in-service training program. However, it is beyond the scope of this study to attempt to evaluate the on-line training programs.

A rubric was developed based on state guidelines in which the researcher scored the degree of trainer coverage based on 30 indicators (see Appendix A). The researcher also took field notes during the observations. Phase II of the study entailed conducting a survey in which participants rated the trainers’ coverage based on identical items found in the researcher’s observation rubric. The scale used in the observation rubric and survey

was also identical and had an equal number of indicators (30) (see Appendix A). The objective for using an observational rubric and survey with the same indicators and same method of scoring was to compare the judgments of participants and the researcher on the same indicators. Finally Phase III was the purely qualitative part of the study. The researcher interviewed 10 participants using a closed-response interview protocol (see Appendix C).

Selection of Participants

In Phase I, I used purposive non-probability homogeneous sampling to select districts that I could access and that also had a relative high proportion of English language learners within Florida. The trainings I chose to study are referred to as Empowerment classes. Those educators who took part in the Empowerment training fall within the state's definition of Category II content teachers who are required to take 60 hours of in-service ESOL credits. These instructors include social studies, mathematics, science, and computer literacy teachers, as well as guidance counselors and administrators. The Empowerment courses may also include elementary and English and language arts teachers as the Empowerment course is considered one of the five courses they must take to obtain the 300-hour endorsement. All of the participants are individuals who did not fulfill the state's ESOL training requirements at a university college of education in Florida either because they transferred from another state, graduated from a college of education before the ESOL endorsement was required, or had degrees in non-education majors. The districts had a number of training sections scheduled for the fall of

2007, and three sections were selected based on availability, and the willingness of the trainers to participate.

In Phase II, the researcher asked participants at the conclusion of each of the three sections that were observed to complete a survey. Asking participants to fill out the ratings scale at that time was more likely to improve my response rate and would likewise avoid any validity issues related to maturation and history. The sample population for the survey was 21 for district 1 (n=21), 16 for district 2 (n=16), and 13 for district 3 (n=13), or a total of 50 surveys collected (n=50).

In the qualitative aspect of the study (Phase III), only educators who participated in the three observed in-service ESOL training programs were eligible. The researcher again used purposive non-probability sampling to choose 10 participants to be studied (n=10). Asking volunteers to provide interviews after the trainings were completed by passing out index cards at the close of each section. Participants returned them to the researcher with their name and contact information if they were willing to be interviewed. In the end, 10 participants showed a willingness to be interviewed. This matched the recommended sample suggestion size considered appropriate by Creswell (1998) who found that 10 participants or fewer would be suitable when the research design is phenomenological in its approach. These were three interviewees from districts 1 and 3 and 4 interviewees from district 2.

Delimitations

The State of Florida requires English, language arts and elementary teachers to take five separate ESOL teacher training courses in order to fulfill their ESOL training

requirements. With the exception of a few other groups such as physical education, art and music teachers, all other in-service teachers including social studies, science, mathematics and computer literacy teachers, as well as administrators and counselors are required to take a 60 hour course called Empowerment. I chose to study the Empowerment course because I wanted to deliberately exclude the English, language arts and elementary teachers as the expertise of the language teachers regarding language domain issues and the large number of hours they take would skew the findings of the other teachers who do not share similar traits, and thereby require two separate studies. I also decided to study the Empowerment courses because it would have not been feasible to prepare and execute a formal study of all five courses. In addition, the Empowerment courses are required for practically all in-service content teachers.

I should note that my attempt was not successful to control the groups of teachers with language expertise i.e. the 300-hour group because after I began the study, I soon found that many participants in the Empowerment trainings were elementary teachers. I had previously thought they would be excluded from the Empowerment course because they were required to take the 300 hours opposed to 60 hours. I learned later Empowerment is considered one of the five courses the 300-hour group must complete. Thus while the Empowerment courses are meant to be an overview for non-English secondary teachers, many of the participants who take these courses are in fact elementary school teachers.

I also confined my study to school districts with proportionally high ELL populations. This would allow me to take a representative snapshot of large district practices with high ELL populations across the state.

Limitations

Threats to internal validity.

Because this study is descriptive, the researcher believed the main threat to validity of the findings had to do with instrumentation. In particular, one or more measures in my best practices rubric may not have generated reliable scores (low internal-consistency reliability), and data observed may not have been recorded consistently from one situation to the next (low intra-rater reliability). There was another concern that had to do with reactivity effects. This researcher believes that the trainers in the session may have altered their behaviors and even lesson plans to varying degrees in order to appear more actively involved in the process than they might ordinarily be. This is called the Hawthorne effect (Onwuegbuzie, 2003. p. 79). To reduce the possibility of this phenomenon occurring, the researcher hoped that by attending multiple sessions over time, it would become easier to evaluate overall content coverage exhibited by the trainers.

Threats to external validity

As in any study, population validity is a concern in that the sample may not have been generalizable. I am, however, not overly concerned here in this regard because I purposely chose districts that have a high proportion of English language learners and they in themselves should be representative of the general population considering that

such districts would have to enact a more rigorous plan than others with little to no significant proportion of English language learners. I should note that the purpose of the data gleaned from interviews is not so much to generalize about the population per say but to get at some of the nuances teachers have when reflecting on the training. Also, all trainers in the State of Florida are required to cover a number of pre-determined standards and cannot vary in what overall topics they must cover. Ecological validity is more worrying because while trainers must ascribe to a set of prescribed standards, there will be, I assume, variation in the settings and contexts of instruction. Some districts may have more resources than others and some districts may be better organized.

Threats to Legitimization

The purely qualitative phase of the study (phase III) were the interviews that were conducted post hoc. Thus, in terms of interviewing participants, one of the main internal validity concerns was ironic legitimization, which implies that participants will hold multiple realities of the same phenomenon. Another possible threat may have been illusory validity, whereby I believed there to be a relationship or pattern present between respondent's answers and other facets of the study when in fact there was not.

In regards to external validity, ecological validity was also a concern because participants will to a certain extent be coming from various parts of the county which range from rural to urban, affluent to relatively impoverished, and thus, will have different experiences in terms of their environments, conditions, and contextual experiences (Onwuegbuzie, 2003).

Sampling Scheme for Mixed Methods Study

The study incorporated a sequential design using a nested sample for both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). After observations were collected from Phase II (observations), a purposive sample was drawn to select 10 participants from those who completed the ratings scale.

Quantitative and Qualitative Instruments

A standardized coding instrument (observation rubric) was used as well as a closed fixed-response instrument (ratings scale). The rationale for the selection of instruments was that the responses from the coding instrument and questionnaire would enable the researcher to triangulate the findings through the reporting of mean scores and standard deviations as well as building confidence intervals around the descriptive statistics.

The development procedure for the rubric was initiated by first ascertaining what content areas the state requires trainers to cover in districts across Florida. It was determined that there are five general areas the state requires districts incorporate in their trainings. These are cross-cultural awareness, methods, curriculum, applied linguistics and assessment. I developed the standardized coding instrument with input from two professionals in the field of second language acquisition and by cross referencing *Florida's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Competencies and Skills*. 11th Ed., the *Florida Performance Standards for Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages* and the textbook *Empowering ESOL Teachers: An Overview Volume I and II* which districts provide in-service teachers in the 60 hour – Category II Empowerment

training sessions. In order to check for content and construct validity, I also obtained feedback from two experts in the field as to what should be retained, omitted, or modified.

The purpose of the observational rubric in Phase I was to determine the extent of variation between content area topics and general overall coverage by the trainer. This was determined based on a rating scale developed by myself that ranged from 0 – 5, where 0 indicated no coverage and 5 indicated full and complete treatment of a specific or general topic. The score of 3 was chosen to represent satisfactory coverage and was used to determine whether both specific content areas and district training sessions as a whole were accomplished satisfactorily. This researcher was responsible for scoring both the rubric and recording the ratings scale responses. Because this was the first time this rubric and questionnaire have been developed, the researcher cannot report score reliability using previous research.

The rubric consisted of a number of indicators or scores which varied per each area, so overall mean scores were calculated. For example, the content area “applied linguistics” contained seven indicators for a total of seven scores. The content area “assessment and evaluation” contained five indicators and five corresponding scores. In total the rubric consisted of 30 indicators. The survey also contained 30 indicators and overall mean scores per area were calculated in a similar fashion. The purpose of the survey in Phase II was also to produce another set of scores that were independent of my own in-class observations. By incorporating observations made by other teachers in the

trainings, it was hoped that these additional set of scores would contribute to the validity of the study.

Interviews contained standardized closed-ended questions that were formatted to allow insights that the quantified phases might not have obtained. The rationale for using closed-ended questions over open-ended ones was that closed-ended questions allowed me to transcribe the responses with more ease (Johnson & Christensen, 2004), and provided me with a sense of continuity across responses. It should be noted that there was some concern that the decision to include closed-ended questions over open-ended ones may have resulted in losing the types of responses that closed-ended responses are not able to capture. Interviews took approximately 20 to 30 minutes and were informal sessions at the schools where the participants worked. Examples of sample questions asked were as follows: (a) Was there any part of the training that you felt was overemphasized? (b) To what extent do you think Florida's approach to preparing teachers to instruct English learners is effective? The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed by me. Transcripts were sent to participants in a self-addressed, stamped envelope to provide opportunity for member checking. They were instructed to return the transcripts within two weeks or the researcher would assume the transcripts were accurate and satisfactory to the participants.

Field notes were also gathered in the qualitative phase of the study (Phase I - observations). The field notes were used to record accurately any descriptive observations of the training but also include as much reflective data as possible in order to record any feelings, hunches, possible problems and ideas related to the trainings (Bogdan & Biklen,

1992). Because the rubric focused primarily on the trainer's actions, the field notes were an important tool to record the participants' attitudes, reactions, and willingness to participate as well as the general atmosphere of the proceedings. After the sessions, written notes were transcribed onto a word processor to ensure clarity and to provide a means to categorical constructions in order to form reoccurring themes.

Procedures

A research protocol was submitted to the University of South Florida's Institutional Review Board for approval as well as to the districts in which I conducted the study. All participants in the study were assured anonymity and confidentiality via the Institutional Review Board. The trainers and participants were clearly informed that I was not working for the district in any research capacity. I was able to conduct the interviews within two months of the completion of district training sessions in order to avoid any issues of validity having to do with maturation and the history effect.

Research Paradigm and Design

The research paradigm for the quantitative aspects of the study is based on a post-positivist ontological view. This researcher acknowledges that reality is contextual and there is a multiplicity of realities and through them, one can try to understand phenomena within the social and cultural context of the participant's lives (Suri, 1999). Nevertheless, according to Mertens (2003), the researcher who accepts this view believes that while there is a multiplicity of perceptual realities, there is indeed one reality or truth that can be known to a certain extent. The qualitative research paradigm in this study is constructivist. The goal of the interviews was to provide a voice for those who speak

directly to issues that affect stigmatized and marginalized groups such as English language learners who do not have a voice (Waszak & Sines, 2003). The mixed-methods paradigm is pragmatic because the primary concern for using both quantitative and qualitative approaches is to determine what practical uses can be gained from using both methods (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). By combining the two approaches and allowing them both to refute and corroborate each other in varying degrees, the outcome of the study becomes the focus of the inquiry rather than the methods themselves. Essentially, the researcher agrees with Charles Sanders Peirce when he said, “let no method stand in the way of inquiry” (Maxcy, 2003, p.86).

The research design in the quantitative phases (Phase I and II) is descriptive. The goal of the two phases is to record scores gathered from observations and responses as accurately as possible in order to determine frequency and central tendencies. The qualitative research design is phenomenological because the focus of the interviews is to gain a better understanding of how the participants construct and make meaning out of the phenomenon being studied (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). By adopting a phenomenological stance, the researcher believes that it will be possible to assume as Johnson and Christensen (2004) suggest, a “commonality in human experience... (T)his commonality is called an essence, or invariant structure,” or “essential characteristic of an experience.” (p. 365). The design for this mixed methods aspect of the study is a partially mixed sequential dominant design. Although there are actually three phases of the study (the first two are quantitative, with the exception of the field notes, while the third is qualitative), one could view the study in terms of two dominant phases--quantitative and

qualitative, the former receiving greater emphasis. The purpose of the design is within-methods triangulation. It is hoped that by using a mixed methods approach, the researcher will become more confident with the interpretation of the results (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2005).

Interview responses and field notes will be analyzed by using the constant comparison procedure to compare code designations with a code list to avoid definitional drift. If this occurs, new codes that better match phenomena can be created. Categories will be created based on an investigative perspective where the researcher views “intellectual constructions” as a means to form the basis of category construction (Constat, 1992, pp. 257-258). Categorical construction will be justified on the basis of external verification where experts will be used to “verify and substantiate” a given set of categories (Constat, 1992, p. 259). Names given to categories will be based on an interpretive, hermeneutic approach where the researcher will try to put himself in the minds of the participants to create categories that best categorize responses (Constat, 1992). The researcher will create categories post priori.

Mixed Data Analysis

The following steps in the mixed methods analysis were undertaken. First, data was reduced in Phase I and II by computing the descriptive and inferential statistics. In Phase II and III, data was reduced using an exploratory thematic analysis so as to categorize responses into more easily understood themes. Second, by qualitizing the data into themes the researcher was able to compare responses from each phase again more easily and this allowed for an audit trail for legitimization purposes (Johnson &

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Christensen, 2004). Finally, data from all three phases was consolidated and displayed using chart, graphs, and tables.

Chapter 4

Results

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to report the findings of my study for all three phases. These again include data gathered and analyzed from observations using a rubric and field notes (phase I), from a survey of 50 participants (phase II), and finally from structured interviews with 10 participants (phase III). The analysis is primarily descriptive in phase I and II but inferential statistics are also used in phase II in order to determine statistical significance for possible differences in district and subject area coverage. Data from the observational rubric employed was solely descriptive because the sample was simply too small. Essentially my observations of each district constituted a sample of one, myself (n=1) per three districts. The statistical software SAS was used to compute the descriptive and inferential statistics for the observational rubric and surveys (SAS Institute Inc., 2006).

To give the reader a fuller understanding of those being studied, I included questions at the beginning of each survey which asked various demographic questions such as their age, teaching experience, and content they teach (see Table 1 on the following 2 pages). The majority of participants were for the most part between the ages of 21-30, 31-40 and 41-50 with an average of 16 people equally distributed in each age group. Most of the participants surveyed had taught either 1-3 or 4-10 years. Participants were overwhelmingly female with only 9 out of the 50 surveyed being male. They were predominantly White (36 out of 50) and spoke English natively (44 of 50).

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Table 1

Frequency distribution of survey participants and their score responses

Frequency	Age	CC	AL	CU	M	A	Total
15	21-30	3.9	3.1	3.4	3.2	2.9	3.3
17	31-40	3.8	3.2	3.4	3	3.1	3.3
15	41-50	3.4	3	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.9
3	51-60	4.5	4.2	4.2	3.8	1.9	3.7
	Experience						
17	1-3	3.9	3.3	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.3
28	4-10	3.7	3	3.3	3	2.8	3.2
2	11-15	3.8	3.2	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.8
1	16-20	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.5	4	4.3
2	21 +	2.6	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2
	Gender						
9	Male	3.6	2.8	3	2.6	2.3	2.9
41	Female	3.8	3.2	3.3	3.1	3	4
	Race						
36	White	3.6	3	3.1	2.8	2.8	3.1
5	Black	4.1	3.4	3.5	2.9	3.1	3.4
1	Asian	4.3	3.1	2.7	3.2	3	3.3
8	Hispanic	4.3	4	3.8	4	3.1	3.9

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Frequency	Language	CC	AL	CU	M	A	Total
44	English 1 st	3.7	3.1	3.2	2.9	2.7	3.1
6	English 2 nd	4.3	4	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.8
	Content						
4	Science	3.2	2.4	2.5	2	2.2	2.5
5	Math	3.6	2.7	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.6
5	Soc. Studies	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.2	2.5
5	English	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.4	3.9	4.2
8	ESOL	4.5	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.2	3.8
19	Elem. Ed.	3.9	3.2	3.5	3.1	3	3.3
	ELL Prop.						
6	less 5%	3.5	2.7	2.9	2.8	2.3	2.8
1	5-10%	3.5	3.9	3	3.7	4	3.6
3	10-20%	3.4	3	3.1	3.7	4	3.6
8	30-40%	3.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	3
11	50-60%	4.2	3.5	3.9	3.6	3.1	3.7
21	70-80%	3.7	3.2	3.2	2.8	2.9	3.2
	Major						
28	Education	3.7	3.1	3.3	3.1	2.8	3.2
18	Non-Ed.	3.8	3.2	3	2.8	2.7	3.1
4	Other	4.2	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.8

Note. CC = cross-cultural awareness, Al = applied linguistics, CU =curriculum, M = Methods, A = assess.

A good number of them were elementary teachers (19 of 50) with the remaining content subjects being almost equally distributed among the rest of the participants.

Interestingly, 64% of the participants surveyed taught in schools where the proportion of ELLs exceeded 50% and 21% of the 50 participants taught in schools with ELL proportions that exceeded 70%. Finally, most of those surveyed were education majors in college and had obtained a B.A. with nine of them holding a Masters degree and one with an Ed.S.

Phase I

The observational rubric I used to score trainer coverage consisted of five subject areas which again were: cross-cultural awareness, applied linguistics, curriculum, methods and assessment. Each subject area on the rubric was further broken down by a set of related sub-topics. Three of the topics, cross-cultural awareness, curriculum and methods had six sub-topics each, applied linguistics had seven and assessment had five. Average scores were calculated for each of the five subject areas based on the scores given for each area's sub-topics.

The scores I assigned for subject area coverage across all three districts were generally quite low. For example, an average score or mean was calculated for the area methods. In the district 1 training session methods received an overall mean score of 1.3 out of 5. In district 2, methods also received an average score of 1.3 and in district 3, methods received a 1.5. Thus, the overall score for methods in all three districts was 1.4. According to the scale I used, a 1.4 lies between brief and minimal coverage but closest to brief. Applied linguistics received a score of 1.6 in district 1, 1.6 in district 2, and 2.1

in district 3. The overall score for this area in all three districts was 1.8, which again lies between brief and minimal coverage. In fact, with the exception of cross-cultural awareness which had a combined mean of 2.4, representing close to satisfactory treatment, the other subject areas all fell far below what the scale considered fair or satisfactory. I scored assessment the lowest, assigning district 1 a 0.8 and the second district a 1.0 for each while in district 3, I assigned a 0.0. The total average score for assessment was 0.60. After sitting in 10 sessions, I was unable to observe the trainer provide any instruction in assessment to any noticeable degree. (see Table 2 and Figure 1 on following two pages).

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Table 2

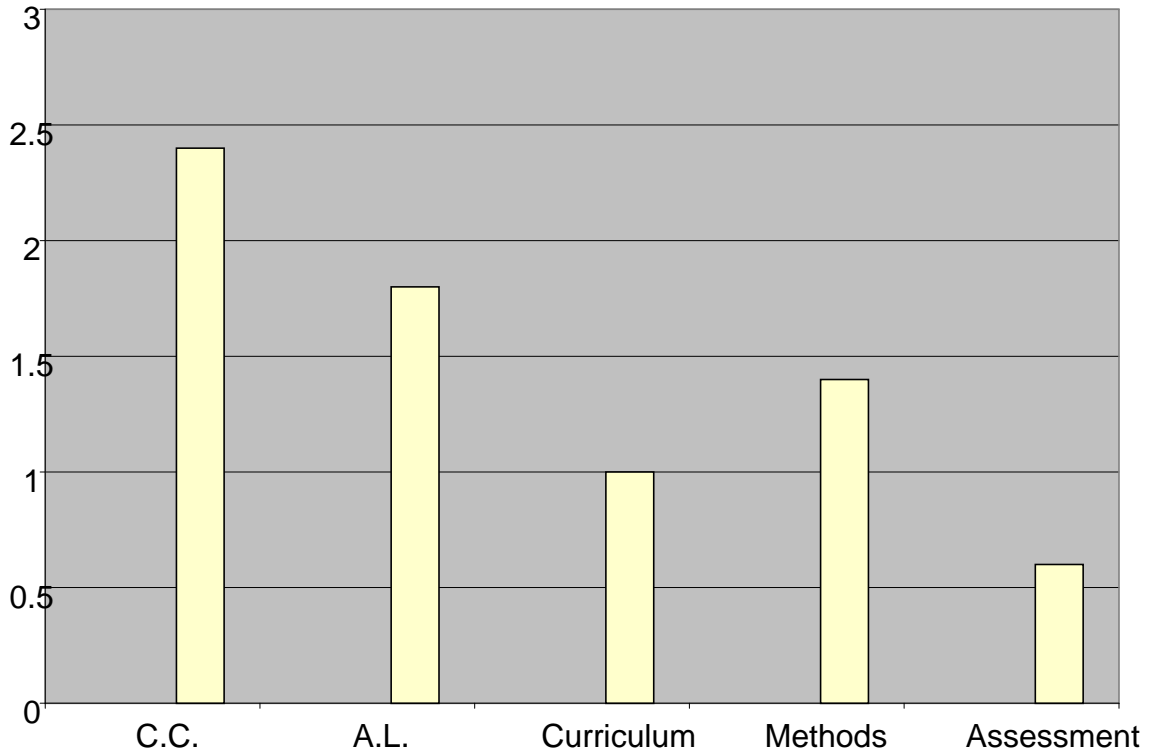
Rubric Mean Scores per District and across all Three Districts

Coverage area	District 1	District 2	District 3	Total
Cross-cultural Awareness	2.7	2.3	2.2	2.4
Applied linguistics	1.6	1.6	2.1	1.8
Curriculum	1.0	1.2	0.8	1.0
Methods	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.4
Assessment	0.8	1.0	0.0	0.6
Total	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.4

Note. Maximum score = 5.0

Figure 1

Rubric Mean Scores across all Three Districts



Note. Maximum score = 5.0

During the observations, field notes were taken throughout all 30 sessions observed during the trainings from all three school districts. These notes were recorded on a word processor and categorized into 16 separate themes. I then took the 16 themes and condensed them into seven larger themes which relate to each other in one way or another. The following is a description of these themes.

No Follow-Up

An overriding theme that observed frequently was this notion that the trainers were not following up on instructional points they were attempting to make and therefore, in my view, not teaching for understanding. Trainers used their district textbooks and supplement materials such as brief surveys, quizzes, and powerpoint slides to lecture and also provide for group work. Various activities ranged from group games such as cultural bingo and a session long game called Bafa Bafa which emphasized the feelings of cultural isolation to independent in-class reading tasks which almost exclusively used a strategy known as jigsawing. This is a strategy in which participants read separate chunks of material from each other and present their findings on posterboards to the class with the expectation that everyone would learn the topics presented from participants presentations.

Check-It-Off and Move-On

These techniques in and of themselves may have been sufficient if trainers had taken certain salient subjects and expanded on them in ways which participants could have better grasped their meaning and how they could be applied in realistic classroom settings. Instead more often than not, trainers simply moved from one topic to another in rapid fashion as if they were being pressed by time and needed to show that they covered everything they were directed to cover. This “check-it-off” mentality was particularly present in the third district in which I observed and confirmed by those I interviewed in that district. Indeed, the entire process of “getting through” material seemed very bureaucratically driven and exceedingly tiresome for the participants. Some examples I

witnessed were as follows on numerous instances, participants jigsawed reading material and spent time writing bullets on poster board paper. After they went down the list of items, trainers simply moved on to another activity and did not bother to expand on any of the points raised. A video was shown in all three districts called Victor which told the story of the difficulties of immigrant children assimilating into American society. In only one district was a worksheet handed out that went over issues raised in the story. In the other two districts, the trainers simply asked two or three questions about the video such as soliciting participants' impressions were and moved on. In district 3, the trainer had participants list the different stages of second language acquisition in groups and when they were done, simply moved on to another activity without a word spoken. In fact this pattern of moving on after an activity with no follow-up or de-briefing was quite common.

Impractical Classroom Applications

Another reoccurring theme found in my observations was that subjects being presented and taught were not necessarily ones which provided any tangible, realistic methods which could be incorporated into real-life classroom settings. The overemphasis on cross-cultural awareness issues created discussion that was overly theoretical in nature. Much of what was taught was theoretical and focused on attitudes and behaviors as opposed to specific methods or curricula. Teachers need to learn ways to differentiate their instruction so that they can modify lesson plans to teach ELLs in their classrooms. Unfortunately, I observed very little guidance in how to create differentiated instruction, and one wonders why trainers neglected to address this very important topic when it lies

at the heart of preparing teachers to work with ELLs (Gibbons, 2002). Perhaps one might counter this argument by claiming that differentiated instruction is discussed more in depth during other courses offered. However these other courses are not required of Category II teachers such as science and social studies instructors, and the Empowerment class in which I studied is the only opportunity they have to learn these valuable methods.

The delivery of the Empowerment class was such that an implicit acknowledgement must have been reached at some point by those who first designed these classes that the area of cross-cultural awareness would be emphasized over the other four areas. A good proportion of the materials that were provided to participants as well as direct trainer instruction was devoted to this area exclusively and I found quite clearly in my observations in all three districts, that of the five areas the Empowerment classes were supposed to have covered, cross-cultural awareness was emphasized the most. In fact all three counties focused on this area exclusively for the first third of the course and intermittently afterward. Little class time was allotted for the other five areas such as curriculum, methods, linguistics and in particular, assessment. Quantitative data from the participants' responses on the surveys seem to confirm my observations in this regard. Time and again trainers explicitly commented that the purpose of the course was to as "get you to empathize with the children." "That's what this course is all about," one trainer remarked from district 2.

Lack of Engagement

Another theme I observed was the lack of seriousness and personal involvement participants brought to the sessions. Often times, participants arrived late and left early.

Trainers allowed them one excused absence, but participants that I know of missed more than one session. Many of them talked idly in the back while the trainer lectured, and still others caught up on their grading and even browsed their laptops during the sessions. In district 1 in particular, participants were quite brazen about ignoring the trainer and there were times where I thought he would have to stop the class to scold them, though he never did even once. Part of the problem is the lack of accountability which surrounded the classes. There was no pass or fail criteria, nor was there any punishment for being late, leaving early or turning work in late. Participants were apparently given leeway as long as they were able to check off a number of required assignments. This observation was confirmed by participants' comments during the interviews.

One troubling aspect of these sessions I observed was the fact that all three districts managed to shave off the required 60 hours into shorter and shorter class periods. They did this by subtracting 18 hours of in-class instruction from the original 60 to be used for out-of-class assignments. This left just 42 hours of in-class instruction. The out-of-class assignments were then almost exclusively done in class, thereby creating circumstances in which the remaining hours devoted to explicit in-class instruction was reduced to even fewer hours. I found this to be more prevalent in district 2 and 3 and particularly in district 2 where approximately 25 hours of in-class instruction time was devoted to explicit trainer instruction.

Fears of Audits

A final theme was the priority trainers placed on making sure participants were able to comply with state audits. The subject came up so often in all three districts one

can only assume that there is a real concern on the part of those who supervise these trainings, namely the head ESOL coordinators for each district to avoid any unwarranted scrutiny. Trainers often brought up the need to keep a checklist of ESOL modifications in their gradebooks if auditors were to come into their classrooms (see Appendix D), and while this is required by all teachers my sense was that the trainers concern that teachers obtain the list superseded other considerations, namely that they were actually using them in class. In one district the trainer told them to say that pairing was not their only modification if auditors came into the room. He suggested shortly afterwards that participants should tell the auditors that they use graphic organizers based on Kagan's linguistic principles. He said "this is what you'll tell the auditors how you are differentiating instruction."

Much of the concern over audits may stem from the implicit acknowledgement on the part of district officials that state mandates regarding ESOL teacher trainings were subverted due to local bureaucratic decisions that modified the rules to fit their own local needs. An example of this may be the shaving-off of hours I witnessed in all of the three districts I observed. Such behaviors are not uncommon at the local level. A study conducted by Smith (1990) examining individualized education programs (IEPs) found that officials had "adjusted the mandated activities in response to day-to-day realities" (p. 8), and a "multiplicity of views and expertise by school professionals" had served to develop their programs in the absence of any empirical base" (p. 7). Rather than any psychological explanation such as paranoia, the fear of audits on the part of Florida

district officials may result from a concern by street-level bureaucrats that their decisions may come under the scrutiny of the state.

Phase II

Out of 60 training participants, 50 returned the survey distributed at the end of the final class session. The survey's structure paralleled the observational rubric, in containing items that corresponded closely with the areas' related sub-topics used as indicators in the observation rubric. The scores given by participants rating the trainer's coverage were much higher than my own scores. This difference was true for each district I studied, though most pronounced in district 1. The overall average score for all five subjects areas which the participants assigned on the surveys was 3.2, indicating fair or satisfactory coverage. This compares to my overall mean of 1.4. Large variances exist between the participants' scores on the survey and the observations' scores when one looks closely at individual areas. For instance district 1 participants assigned an average mean of 3.0 for assessment, while I assigned a 0.80. District 2 participants gave an average mean of 3.4 for curriculum while I assigned district 2 a 1.2 for the same area (see Table 3 and Figure 2 on following two pages for a comparison of total rubric and survey mean scores for all three districts). In some cases, rather high scores were given for areas by participants where I was unable to detect any coverage at all. For instance, the area assessment was barely covered by district 1 as shown by a mean score of 0.80 (barely registering as brief coverage), and yet participants gave this category a 3.0, indicating satisfactory coverage. In another instance, participants in district 2 gave the category curriculum a mean score of 3.4, indicating better than satisfactory coverage, yet I

assigned the same topic a 1.2, which again barely indicates brief coverage. A discussion of factors which may have led to these large discrepancies between participant's scores and my own will be addressed in Chapter 5.

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Table 3

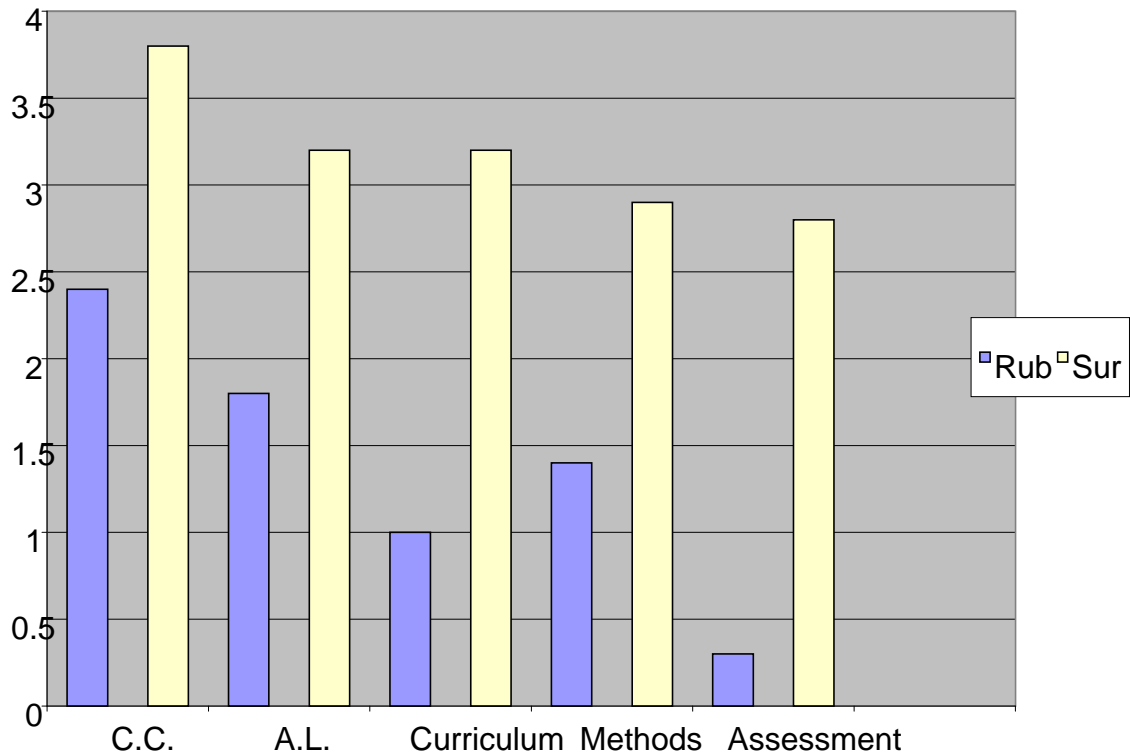
Comparison of Survey and Rubric Mean Scores across all Three Districts

Coverage area	Rubric means	Survey Means
Cross-cultural awareness	2.4	3.8
Applied linguistics	1.8	3.2
Curriculum	1.0	3.2
Methods	1.4	2.9
Assessment	0.6	2.8
Total	1.4	3.2

Note. Maximum score = 5.0

Figure 2

Survey and Rubric Means Comparison across all Three Districts



Note. Maximum Score = 5.0

Interestingly, there was a common element found between their scores and my own which I surmised would exist prior to conducting the study. I assumed prior to the study that coverage would favor the coverage area cross-cultural awareness and the participants and my own scores do bear this out. Survey scores show that participants gave this area an overall mean score across all three districts a 3.8, which was the highest of all the five areas from their surveys and it was also my highest overall average mean (2.4) for the five areas across the three districts.

To see if the emphasis on cross-cultural awareness was statistically significant, I conducted a dependent measures *t*-tests on difference scores between all pairwise comparisons of the five areas. The results showed that of the five areas, only cross-cultural awareness was statistically significant and mean scores were checked to confirm that the variable cross-cultural awareness consistently showed higher values than the other variables being compared. For example, when comparing coverage between cross-cultural awareness and methods, the pairwise *t*-test showed the highest significance in difference $t = 8.4$, ($p < 0.0001$). The other four comparisons including cross-cultural awareness indicated robust *t*- scores as well. Again none of the other comparisons showed statistical significance of difference when cross-cultural awareness was absent. I conducted a Bonferroni adjustment by dividing the alpha level (0.05) by the number of tests (10) which gave me a *p* value of 0.005 and the results were the same. With the exception of the pair curriculum and methods (which barely fell within the Bonferroni adjustment), all the pairs which included cross-cultural awareness had *p* values equal to or less than 0.0001 ($p < 0.0001$) (see following page for Table 4 Comparison of pair-wise differences across coverage areas).

Table 4

Comparison of Pair-wise Differences across Coverage Areas

Numbered differences	Coverage areas	<i>t</i> scores	<i>Pr</i> > <i>t</i>
1	cross-cultural awareness and applied linguistics	6.5	<.0001
2	cross-cultural awareness and curriculum	5.8	<.0001
3	cross-cultural awareness and methods	8.4	<.0001
4	cross-cultural awareness and assessment	6.4	<.0001
5	applied linguistics and curriculum	-0.8	0.44
6	applied linguistics and methods	1.6	0.11
7	applied linguistics and assessment	2.2	0.03
8	curriculum and methods	3.0	0.004
9	curriculum and assessment	2.8	0.006
10	assessment and methods	-1.2	0.23

Note: $P < .0001$ is statistically significant. All significant pairwise comparisons were checked to verify which variable had the higher mean value. In all four cases of statistical significance, Cross-cultural awareness had the higher value.

An ANOVA was performed to determine if the survey data may have indicated any difference in coverage among the three districts. (see Table 5 on the following two pages for ANOVA summary table illustrating relationship between districts' training coverage across five areas.). The results were analyzed using five separate one-way ANOVAS, between-groups design. The analyses did not reveal a significant effect for districts across any of the five coverage areas. This was confirmed by a Tukey's HSD test which also did not show any significant differences between districts across any of the five areas. This finding contrasted, however, with some of the qualitative data I gathered from my field notes which did find difference in district coverage and more will be discussed regarding this point later.

Using the responses from the demographic questions at the beginning of the surveys, I created a series of procedure statements in SAS to determine whether there might have been any noticeable difference in the participants' scores across the five coverage areas based on their demographic responses. No noticeable difference could be ascertained either by examining their mean scores per demographic response across the five areas or through a series of t-tests looking at specific variables such as teaching experience. Only gender indicated a noticeable mean but a t-test indicated there was no statistical difference for that particular variable and even if there had been, one would have to question its validity considering the distribution frequency of gender heavily favored women. Recall that of the 50 participants only nine were male.

Table 5

ANOVA Summary for Relationship between Districts' Training Coverage across Five Areas

Area 1 Cross-cultural awareness

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>Pr > F</i>
Districts	2	0.93	0.46	0.74	0.03	0.48
Within groups	47	29.56	0.62			
Total	49					

Area 2 Applied Linguistics

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>Pr > F</i>
Districts	2	0.83	0.41	0.33	0.01	0.72
Within groups	47	59.59	1.26			
Total	49					

Area 3 Curriculum

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>Pr > F</i>
Districts	2	3.57	1.78	1.60	0.06	0.21
Within groups	47	52.38	1.11			
Total	49					

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Area 4 Methods

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>Pr > F</i>
Districts	2	4.36	2.18	2.20	0.08	0.12
Within groups	47	46.57	0.99			
Total	49					

Area 5 Assessment

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>Pr > F</i>
Districts	2	3.71	1.85	1.04	0.04	0.36
Within groups	47	84.30	1.79			
Total	49					

Note. *P* < .05 is statistically significant

Phase III

Phase III consisted of interviews I had with 10 participants from all three districts. I interviewed three participants from districts 1, four from district 2 and three people from district 2. The interviews consisted of 12 closed-fixed response questions. I recorded their responses and transcribed them I then organized the responses into a number of thematic categories and later grouped them into several larger themes which I believe best characterized the respondents' views of the training. Many of the themes I found in my field notes were echoed by the participants in the interviews with a few exceptions.

Overemphasis on Cross-Cultural Awareness

Question three in the interview protocol asked participants which of the five areas they thought were covered by the trainers to the greatest extent. In every case, the participant interviewed indicated that cross-cultural awareness received the most coverage. Their responses in this regard confirm similar findings in my observational rubric's data, my field notes, and the participants' survey responses. Several participants found the emphasis on cross-cultural awareness to be beneficial. Some of them repeatedly said that it was the most useful aspect of the course and "a good reminder" of what they needed to remember. One respondent said that it "created awareness" and was beneficial for somebody like herself who "is not exposed to other languages on a day to day basis."

Curriculum was Redundant to Participants

Another broad theme I found in their responses was the notion that much of what they learned was redundant to them. Some said that they came in to the sessions already knowing what was taught to them. One respondent said, "It's hard for me to think of anything concrete I learned from the training that I did not already know." Another stated from district 1 that "strategies for ESOL were already very similar to the strategies we learn in special education. So there was a lot of repeat information for myself." Another respondent said that much of what was presented in class was material which had already been taught to him in college and said that the material was "very redundant." About half of the respondents said the trainings were "a waste of time" because they were already using reading / FCAT type strategies in class such as making use of pictures and graphic organizers. One should note that two of the respondents who claimed the material was redundant but did not graduate from college of education programs were participating in the alternative certification program (ACP) at the local university here in Tampa, Florida while they were attending the district ESOL training sessions.

With the emphasis in recent years on reading strategies within the framework of national and statewide high stakes testing, elements from both reading and ESOL best practices were likely to overlap (whether this is something the trainers could have avoided is debatable). Still, the fact that so many respondents voiced their frustration over this issue reveals that perhaps more could have been done on the part of the trainers to offer instruction that was more *specific to teaching ELLs* rather than offering generalized strategies that could be applied across many disciplines.

The fact that many participants in the Empowerment course were elementary teachers may have contributed to why teachers claimed the course was redundant. Elementary teachers are required to take the Empowerment course as part of a five course requirement and I found in the case of three of the teachers that the Empowerment course was the last of the five courses they were required to complete. There was apparently no sequence in which they had to take the courses and because it was the last of the five classes they were required to complete, it stands to reason that many of them may have believed the course to be redundant as the Empowerment course is meant to be an overview of the other five classes and would have included topics that previous classes had already covered.

Lack of Specificity

The general nature of the curriculum was a major issue raised by the respondents. With the exception of two respondents, everyone interviewed expressed dismay at not being provided specific instructions on how to work with ELLs. Aggravation over not having the appropriate tools to handle ELLs once they were mainstreamed into their classrooms may have varied according to grade level as the secondary teachers may have harbored stronger feelings of frustration as it is more difficult to work with ELLs with lower levels of proficiency in English at the secondary level than it is at the elementary level. One secondary teacher said he wished they had given him a “toolbox” in which he could “actually take back into the classroom and implement.” He asked, “What activities can I do as alternative activities, actual concrete ones because it’s hands on in my classroom and I’m not doing theoretical here?” Another person echoed this sentiment;

when asked what part of the training could have been given more attention, she replied, “mainly realistic lesson plans because we weren’t given enough tools in the classroom that we can use. It’s all stuff that sounds great but it’s not realistic.” Others said they wanted more “solutions.” They faulted the whole concept of lumping teachers together regardless of grade level or subjects they teach. One respondent said, “I wanted more solutions. I guess the whole fault with the course is it is addressing kindergarten teachers all the way up to 12th grade. I just wish it could have been more grade specific so I could have reading help for kids at this age.” A few respondents suggested they break down the trainings by subject area. One person said, “If it’s mathematics, say here is what is most effective. If it’s science then show what is most effective for science.”

Training Viewed As “A Waste of Time”

The perceived lack of specific instruction left many of the participants with the feeling that their experiences in the trainings were as they repeatedly said – “a waste of time.” An elementary school teacher said he did not “feel like he got a lot from the course” and that he did not think the one training prepared him. He stated that the trainings were drawn-out. “We just go in there,” he said, “I felt like we were just shooting the bullcrap. He (trainer) would just go off the top of his head and we’d get together and talk amongst ourselves.” Others were just as critical. A woman in district 2 said she thought the trainings did not prepare her adequately. She said, “I found it to be a waste of time. The only good thing I got out of it was I got three credits toward my certification.” When I asked another woman who teaches at the elementary level how useful she thought the training was, she replied, “definitely useless in every aspect.” When pressed why she

thought as such, she again returned to the notion that the trainings were too generalized, too theoretical, and not specific for her grade or subject. She said, “The lesson plans are unrealistic and you can not incorporate them into your classroom because you know, we’re supposed to teach things in 30 minutes and some of the things we learned here would take far longer.” Another woman said they would form groups and usually only she or one other did all the work. Another lamented that teachers would come and go when they wanted, and she felt like this was a “big distraction.” She stated, “I can not stand when I’m there - when I’m supposed to be there, and a lot of adults are wandering in whenever they feel like it and I feel like I’m doing more than them.” Another teacher said that they (the participants) were worse than her students when it came to completing classroom tasks.

Other themes included the notion that the paperwork participants had to complete for the trainings was overdone and led to confusion. Participants were asked to check off tasks to complete the training, but each district had their own list and none of the districts provided a syllabus. One participant said, “There was confusion about what was expected of us for the projects, when things were due, and where it was going. I felt like I was in the dark about what was happening.” Another teacher said she too felt angry why time was being wasted filling out paperwork that had to be completed and was unclear about when things were due and what the overall purpose of the checklists were.

Not all of the responses from the interviews were negative. As mentioned previously, there was a general consensus that the emphasis on cross-cultural awareness was beneficial as it led to participants being “reminded” of how important it is too

empathize with ELLs and it should be noted that the two respondents I interviewed from district 1 generally had a favorable impression of the training. They thought the treatment was even-handed and thorough. They were critical, however of the states' approach as both thought the trainings while good were generally a waste of time, believing that they should do away with the trainings altogether.

Summary of Results

It might be helpful at this point to summarize the findings from each phase. In Phase I, the descriptive data from my observational rubric produced very low scores indicating generally brief coverage for all five coverage areas with the exception of cross-cultural awareness which had an overall mean score of 2.4, approximating satisfactory treatment.

The field notes in Phase I produced a number of overarching themes, one of which was the notion that trainers were not following-up on their points and followed a "check-it-off" mentality in their rush to accomplish tasks. Another was that trainings did not provide participants with tangible, realistic methods or strategies that could be used in classroom settings. A third theme appeared to be an overemphasis on cross-cultural awareness. Other themes observed were the lack of seriousness and personal involvement on the part of participants and the widespread practice (by widespread, I mean across all three districts) of shaving off in-class instruction time by separating hours into out-of-class assignments and then later completing them in class. A final theme mentioned earlier from the field notes taken in Phase I was the priority trainers put on making sure participants were prepared for possible audits from state officials.

Phase II produced survey data that was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The results showed that participants scored the coverage by trainers in the trainings much higher than I did on the observational rubric, though participant responses on the survey mirrored the rubric's findings which scored the area cross-cultural awareness higher than the other four areas. An ANOVA showed no statistically significant difference in district coverage and a close look at mean scores found no difference in demographic responses such as age, or teaching experience and corresponding scores.

Phase III offered a number of themes which served to corroborate some of my findings in both the rubric and surveys. The responses on the interviews again confirmed that cross-cultural awareness was the most emphasized of all five areas, though participants occasionally argued that they be were happy to be "reminded" of the importance of feeling empathy and being sensitized to ELL issues. Many participants felt the trainings to be redundant as they said they already knew much of what was being taught to them. Related was the fact that many also said the trainings were not specific enough in terms of what they needed to know in realistic classroom-type settings, and they said repeatedly that as a result, much of their experience in these trainings was "a waste of time." Respondents in the interviews also said they wanted instruction to be geared toward their content areas and grade levels. Some respondents lamented over the behavior of their peers and resented trying while others came and went as they pleased. Finally, respondents in the interviews thought the paperwork could have been more organized and were confused about expectations.

A further analysis of the implications and consequences of these findings is in the next chapter, along with a discussion of recommendations. Many of these findings paint a dreary picture of state and district approaches to training teachers to work with ELLs. However, I am careful, however, not to suggest that the entire process of training teachers which now exists should be discarded. In many cases, a small change might be what is needed to improve a particular procedure, while in other cases, past practices will no doubt have to be revamped to both enhance the viability of these trainings and restore credibility to a process that so many teachers both dread and resent.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Recommendations

While I do not presume to be an expert in ESOL curriculum and instruction, I am confident that my research over the last three years investigating Florida's approach to training teachers who work with ELLs has provided me with an understanding of how state and district officials have attempted to create programs that serve to prepare teachers to instruct ELLs. In this last chapter I will first discuss issues and problems associated with the study's method and then progress to shortcomings found in the trainings. I will conclude each topic with recommendations. By providing recommendations I hope that policymakers, district ESOL coordinators and trainers may have an additional resource to reform their existing programs or plan new ones altogether.

Issues and Problems with the Study's Method.

To the reader, a large discrepancy which must be painfully obvious is how my own observational rubric's scores could have produced such low scores when fifty participants who attended the same trainings scored the same sessions considerably higher. Of course, it is altogether possible that my sense of the coverage was inherently flawed but I do not think so. Rather, I hypothesize that it comes down to a question of informed judgment versus uninformed judgment and the influence of two confounding variables: *social desirability response* and the *observer effect*.

I spent a large amount of time prior to the study accessing the manuals *Florida's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Competencies and Skills*. 11th Ed., and

the *Florida Performance Standards for Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages* which district ESL coordinators and trainers use to create and teach these courses. I also read and familiarized myself with the textbook *Empowering ESOL Teachers: An Overview Volume I and II* which districts provide in-service teachers in the 60 hour – Category II Empowerment training sessions. Participants in the sessions were not privy to this knowledge prior to taking the courses and were ignorant as to what fundamental subjects were to be included in the classes they took. Thus, even though they were informed educators in the sense that they were familiar with topics related to second language acquisition to some extent, they were indeed uninformed about many of the basic components that should have been covered in the sessions.

When I refer to the participants as being uninformed, I am not suggesting that they lack general knowledge of the many subjects raised during the trainings. In fact, many teachers expressed dismay that much of what was covered in the trainings was redundant to them. Rather, I am saying that these teachers were unaware that the trainers had five specific areas mandated by the state which they were required to cover in a sufficient fashion. For example, one of the areas trainers were supposed to have covered was assessment. In District 1, the trainer waited until the very end to discuss assessment and when he did, he only very briefly mentioned touched on the subject. Yet participants in that district assigned assessment an overall mean score of 3.0 out of a possible score of 5 compared to my mean score of 0.8. A score of 3 indicates satisfactory coverage and anyone observing the training sessions would have to take exception to such a high score when I know for a fact that the trainer barely if ever covered assessment. My point here is

that if the participants had been told coming into the sessions that the trainer would be covering assessment as one of the five main areas the course was to incorporate, their expectations would have been higher, and they possibly would have been less likely to score this area as high as they did.

Another issue pertaining to the validity of the survey scores was the conditions in which participants took the surveys. When I distributed the surveys to the participants at the end of the sessions, the trainers in all three cases remained in the room and observed the teachers as they scored the surveys. They were doing me a favor by allowing me to take time out of their class to have teachers fill out the surveys so I was hard pressed to ask the trainers to leave the room while the participants answered the surveys. Their presence in the room may have affected the scores.

Another possible explanation for the high scores participants provided in light of the trainers presence in the room may be attributed to the phenomenon known as “social desirability response bias.” Essentially social desirability refers to the “tendency of people to deny socially undesirable traits of qualities and to admit to socially desirable ones” (Phillips & Clancy, 1972, p. 923). Marlowe and Crowne (1964) developed a scale used by sociologists and others to determine if social desirability was present in the independent and dependent variables being studied. They argued that people who score highly on their scale of social approval are people who “conform to social stereotypes of what is good to acknowledge concerning oneself in order to achieve approval from others” (Marlowe & Crowne, 1964, p.27). For example, in their studies they found that

people who sought social approval gave favorable attitude ratings to boring tasks, set cautious goals and were susceptible to persuasion.

It is possible that there were participants in my own study who by their nature sought social approval in their actions and gave favorable scores as a result; this is particularly possible considering the trainers were standing in the same room watching them. Furthermore, my *own* presence in the room may have affected participants' responses being that they may have viewed me as an outsider knowing that I was a "researcher from the university" and not one of their own as the trainer was. They may then have given the trainer higher scores believing that by doing so it was socially desirable. Still I am not convinced that participants scored the areas out of some desire to seek social approval from the trainer.

Another possible explanation might be attributed to the *observer effect*. The observer effect hypothesizes that subjects in a study will alter their behavior with the knowledge that an observer is present (Zegiob, Arnold, & Forehand, 1975). According to Zegiob, et al., "informed observation increases the probability of positive behavior", and "... can exert a significant effect on the dependent variable" (p.512). In the case of my study, the dependent variable was the scores participants assigned to the survey and if the observer effect was present in the study the presence of the observer may have contributed to positive scores.

Whether the higher scores can be attributed to social desirability responses or the observer effect is difficult to determine. Another possibility is that participants were judging the training against other similar trainings they had attended and rated it in

comparison to other past trainings. Despite this possibility, the most satisfactory explanation is rooted in the construct of the survey itself. In my desire to create a survey that was an identical copy of my own observational rubric I gave participants a survey instrument that may have been too detailed and domain-specific for the average teacher to comprehend and respond to in a short period of time. Participants may have decided that the training was sufficient based on extraneous variables such as those I have mentioned, and they may have chosen a high number on the scale, and assigned each indicator the same score. The sizeable number of surveys where all scores were 4's and even 5's, suggest such a halo effect. In District 1 in particular, 5 surveys had five's assigned for every indicator.

Finally, the overall lack of engagement among the participants throughout the training sessions may have contributed to the skewed findings on the survey. It stands to reason that involvement in a class that is perceived meaningful would result in participants taking the time to accurately judge the efficacy of a course. Likewise, participants who find their experience to be a waste of time would be less likely to carefully consider their judgments.

Beyond how the surveys were administered and the construct of the surveys themselves, another possible weakness in the study may rest with the course that was studied. I chose only to study the Empowerment courses which were designed to be an overview of all five courses, and I did not study each of the five courses provided by districts in the state separately. For instance, one of the areas required by the state to be covered is methods, and all three districts I studied offer separate courses on methods as

they do for linguistics, assessment, curriculum and cross-cultural awareness. Essentially then, to conduct a more complete examination of the state's approach to providing training for in-service teachers working with ELLs, it would have been more thorough to have conducted a separate study of each course. To do so, however, would have required many more months of observation as well as a significant more amount of resources which would have resulted in breaching the scope of this study.

Let me move on now to a broader discussion concerning these Empowerment courses. There are four main areas I will examine beginning with the question whether these training were in any way realistic and useful to participants.

Practicality and Usefulness of Trainings

The findings in Chapter 4 revealed several participating teachers expressed frustrations over the trainings' impracticality, and lack of usefulness. In my own observations, I reached similar conclusions, that the classes had not provided tangible, realistic methods and strategies which could be easily transferable into the classroom. In the interviews I heard teachers voice such concerns, and two of the three trainers told me that they believed teachers who take the Empowerment course should also be taking the curriculum and materials courses. The trainer in district 3 said that she knew people who finish these courses and, as she stated, "still do not know what to do with José."

Much of the problem lies in the fact that many of the activities I witnessed in these classes only scratched the surface of meaningful ways to teach second language acquisition. Simulation games such as *Bafa Bafa*, and the *Titanic Tale* participants put cards on their foreheads with numbers or symbols and walked around in the classroom

indicating their social class or some other trait that set them apart from others.

Presumably these games are meant to teach participants that other cultures which seem different from their own must be respected and taken seriously. In district 3, the game Bafa Bafa took up an entire session and lasted close to two hours. A half an hour was spent just explaining how the game was to be played and when the game was over participants went home for the night. Other games included *Create a Culture* in which small groups of teachers wrote characteristics of a fictitious culture with its own name and geographic location. I witnessed this activity in all three training sessions and was dumbfounded when participants wrote down things like “everyone must drink cosmopolitans at 12:00 and nap at 1:00.” Trainers seemed to find these types of responses amusing and simply moved on to the next activity after the presenters had finished going down their lists. The trainer in District 1 was the only one who actually tried afterwards to explain why the game was played and its relevance to teaching ELLs. *At the Pasar* was an activity in all three trainings. In this activity, participants were given text of an unknown language and asked to decipher meaning by determining lexical patterns. Trainers made the point after the activity was concluded that ELL students are given similar chunks of text in their classes and may have no idea what they mean, and therefore teachers need to be cognizant of these possibilities.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that many of these games such as Bafa Bafa are widely used activities which have been proven effective. Bafa Bafa was originally designed by Gary Shirts for the U.S. Navy in the 1970’s and is considered one of the most powerful cross-cultural simulation exercises on the market and has had a long

history of success (Inglis et al., 2004). Furthermore, the point behind these activities was clearly to sensitize participants to other cultures they may encounter in the classroom, and in this regard these activities were successful in their aim; many participants did say later that what they learned from the course was “being reminded” to be sensitive to the plight of English language learners.

The trouble with the activities used in the trainings was not so much that they are meaningless tasks or should not have been used, but rather how much time and emphasis trainers placed on implementing them. With little time to address difficult topics related to second language acquisition, such as how to differentiate instruction these games stole time from other objectives of the course.

While these games occupied large segments of session time, much more time was devoted to having groups read chunks of text and then presenting to the class the main points of their readings. This type of “jigsaw” instruction was used in every district and in every class without exception. Many of the readings were scholarly articles from noted experts in the field of second language acquisition and were both interesting and important to the understanding of teaching ELLs. Again, the problem here was not that the jigsaw activities were worthless. Rather much of what participants were asked to read was theoretical and required little hands-on participation in which the teachers might absorb and internalize basic second language acquisition concepts, strategies and methods. Reading text in class and presenting may hold some value, but it seems far-fetched to expect that teachers will somehow be able to turn the difficult theories and concepts they briefly read in the training materials into structured lesson plans they will

use in their classrooms without some way to practice what they learned in classroom settings.

The third most common activity used in these training beyond games and reading text in class was teacher lecturing using powerpoint slides. Again the participants were left to absorb information passively with the expectation that they would somehow incorporate the information into their classroom lesson plans. If participants are to use what they learn in these trainings, they must begin to actively take what is taught to them by experimenting in real-life classroom situations *during* the trainings, collaborating with others by de-briefing, and having opportunities for repeated practice with feedback. Scholars have noted that collaboration is critical to the success of teaching for understanding because it contributes to increased feelings of ownership and enhanced capacity to solve complex problems (Clair, 1998; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Bird, & Warren, 1985). Without practice, professional development can easily fall into a pattern of teacher training preparation programs that are extended versions of the failed one-shot workshop model. As explained in Chapter 2, Meskill's (2001) study of "push-in" workshops demonstrated those participants who had role-played as trainers were not served well by the one-shot workshop model or the one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, Meskill argued that the "best model" is one that fits teachers' circumstances and employs a number of follow-up strategies. The current structure of ESOL mandates relies on a model that may be different than the actual one-shot workshop model in that it is carried over a number of weeks. Yet because there is no follow up after the course is completed, there is a sense that the trainings still adhere to the one-shot model concept, because

participants effectively have one chance to conceptualize what they need to know, and that is in variance with the literature on professional development.

Finally some participants in the interviews said that the materials were outdated and the trainers themselves said as much in conversations I had with them. Most of the materials used in the three districts were created around 1990, when the Empowerment courses were created in the wake of the consent decree. A review of the textbooks used in each district I studied confirms this fact. Instructional materials have not been updated in almost two decades.

The failure to update materials, provide training that emphasizes collaboration and follow-up strategies, and offer instruction that is practical and useful calls into question whether the State of Florida is complying with the consent decree. In chapter 1 of this study I outlined provisions of the consent decree which are articulated more specifically in the *Language Arts Through ESOL –A Guide For Teachers And Administrators: A Companion To The Florida Curriculum Frameworks For Language Arts* (1999). This document requires teachers who work with ELLs to be “qualified personnel”. Yet this study questions how one could be considered “qualified” in light of the inadequacies of the Empowerment course as delivered.

Recommendations for improved utility

First, policymakers should consider grouping teachers in these trainings by their subject areas and grade levels. There is a plethora of literature which exists that deals with content-based instruction for teaching English language learners, and districts should design courses which take advantage of these resources. By grouping instructors

together regardless of grade level or content they teach, trainers are limited to having to base their training curriculum on methods and strategies that inevitably lack specificity. If districts were to group teachers by their subject area and grade level, they then could offer instructors targeted strategies and methods and materials which teachers might find useful.

In Chapter 2, I discussed specific strategies that every teacher should know when working with ELLs. These strategies included pre-reading and pre-writing activities to develop schema in order to build associations between student experiences and what is being taught as well as introducing key vocabulary and employing thematic units prior to teaching required content (Egbert & Simich-Dudgeon, 2001; Short, 1995) This type of scaffolding mentioned here was not taught in any meaningful way during the three district training classes I attended, nor was content-specific instruction provided such as developing student awareness between everyday language and academic language in social studies and helping them understand what historical events are being presented (Schleppegrell, Achugar and Oteiza, 2004). As described in Chapter 4, a district 2 middle school teacher reported that he wanted a “toolbox” to take with him when he was done. A course that emphasizes content-based instruction for teachers working with ELLs would offer him such a toolbox and be more rewarding than the watered-down instruction in Empowerment.

Specificity is also required to give meaningful feedback. Each district I observed required the participants to create a modified lesson plan for ELLs. These lesson plans had the potential to be very effective teaching tools, but they failed to group participants

by subject area. In District 2, the trainer grouped participants by grade level i.e. elementary, middle or high school. In the high school group, teachers had decided to create a lesson which could be used for a computer literacy class, as one of the participants in the group taught computer literacy. But because the other four teachers did not teach computer literacy, they may have been able to plan modifications in general terms but were excluded both from being able to practice planning specific lessons tailored to their subjects, and also from providing appropriate feedback to the technology teacher attempting to practice new skills.

But even if these changes were made, a one-shot course is not enough. Districts could create a new content-based curriculum for teachers working with ELLs, and use the materials from the trainings to create a body of content-based instructional knowledge that would be made available to teachers to download. Districts could compile ideas for lesson plans into resource books which departments in schools could keep for teachers to access. It is simply asking too much of teachers who are already overworked and burdened by ever-increasing paperwork to presume that they can research their own specific ways to teach their ELLs in their classrooms. In such cases where there is an overwhelming majority of ELL students in a teachers' classroom, teachers might modify lessons on a consistent basis, but in cases where only a small minority of students in each class are ELLs, the chances of teachers making such an effort decrease, and it is the latter case in which most teachers in Florida find themselves.

If districts are unable to create such resources and make them readily available, the state could. Money could be used to create focus groups of ESOL staff and regular

content teachers who could work together in taking the lead in creating these types of resources by grade level and subject.

At the very least, the state and districts must update instructional materials. Florida districts continue to use most of their materials from the early 1990's. The materials need to be evaluated to determine if they are serving their intended purpose in combination with the consideration of the entire curriculum.

Little effort has been made to update the ESOL teacher training curriculum and the responsibility may lie with political will or a lack thereof. Curriculum is a fluid concept that changes according to a multitude of influences. As Tyack and Cuban argue (1995), watchwords in schools have shifted their emphasis from “excellence to equality, efficiency to empathy, unity to pluralism and then back again.” (p. 44). And along with these changes have come various programs of curricula that cater to these paradigm shifts. Any veteran teacher will admit that one fad replaces the next, and it is hard enough keeping track of what districts want teachers to emphasize from one year to the next. Yet the ESOL teacher training program remains stagnant and unresponsive to policy cycles and trends. One possible explanation is a point I made previously in this study which was that there is a lack of political will to take these types of programs seriously. Today, ESOL teacher training programs lie at the periphery of other programs which are deemed more important. High stakes testing and the subsequent large emphasis schools now place on reading strategies acquired through pre-packaged skill-based lesson plans now take center stage and result in narrowing our focus of other needed reforms (Dorn, 1998).

Unless a greater urgency affixes itself to these programs and the materials used in them, they will remain on the outskirts of policymakers' attention.

No Meaningful Accountability

In all three districts training sessions I attended, teachers often arrived late and left early. In District 1, teachers came 40-45 minutes late on more than one occasion. There was a sign-in sheet in every district, but participants were able to arrive and sign it at any time during the class. On three occasions, I saw participants signing in and stay for about fifteen minutes and then leave. Many arrived 30 to 45 minutes late, signed in and sat down. Many teachers were also often off-task as they spent time talking among each other and grading their own students' classwork. Other browsed the web on their laptops in the back of the class. In District 1, the participants were often so loud that I thought the trainer should have stopped the discussion and regained their attention but he simply talked over or through them. To make matters worse, some participants missed more than the one session that was allowed, claiming a variety of excuses which the trainers invariably accepted. I know of one case in district 2 where a young woman missed four sessions without any consequences.

Of course one might justifiably argue that instances of teachers arriving late and leaving early, talking loudly, being off-task and missing multiple sessions is more a reflection of the trainers' failure to impose sound classroom management practices than a fundamental flaw in how the trainings were designed. Nevertheless, there appeared to be no mechanism for trainers to hold teachers accountable for their actions other than a

checklist which was used to determine whether participants had satisfactorily completed the course.

The checklists partly contributed to a lack of accountability because inevitably the checklist left latitude for teachers to complete tasks any time with little worry that their participation on any single day would matter. There was never a daily graded quiz or any type of high stakes assessment held at any time during the sessions, nor was there any consequence for turning in work late. They simply needed to have everything signed off by the end of the class.

Recommendations for improved accountability

To bring more rigor to the process, I recommend that Florida districts create a set of statewide performance standards that consists of some form of testing (whether it be weekly quizzes or a pass/fail test at the end the class), or even a holistic assessment approach such as compiling a portfolio of their work. These standards should be published and clearly stated, leaving no doubt of what is expected of participants. Simply checking off activities leaves too much room for individual trainers to bend the rules as I saw so too often. Once teachers understand that they will be held accountable for what is taught to them, I believe the types of behavior I witnessed will cease, and participants will take the classes more seriously.

I mentioned in chapter 2, loosely-coupled bureaucratic systems which allow for degrees of creative insubordination can often be advantageous (Weick, 1976), but they also allow room for individuals to bend directives to fit local needs to the detriment of those needing reform the most (Haynes & Licata 1992). For example, all three districts

managed to shortchange the amount of in-class instructional hours teachers are required to take. Clearly these actions are contrary to what the Decree and state has mandated, yet the practice continues unchecked. More state oversight is needed to ensure that directives are not subverted by local officials. Along with a clearly defined set of performance standards that includes some sort of high stakes test, I recommend the state play a more active role in overseeing its districts' ESOL teacher training programs. It is simply not acceptable to claim that districts have met the requirements for state approval to run these ESOL training programs simply because districts submitted and had their yearly plans approved. One might recall the distinct concern trainers and no doubt district coordinators held regarding teachers being audited in their classrooms after they had completed the trainings. I suggest the state take an active role in overseeing these classes *after* their plans have been submitted by auditing the training sessions themselves!

For instance, the state should look into how districts are choosing their trainers. It was not clear what the criteria were for individuals to become trainers. One of the trainers I observed was an assistant principal at the time and a fluent Spanish speaker but according to him, had no training in ESOL pedagogy beyond what the district provided him prior to conducting the training. I confirmed this by asking the ESOL coordinator for the particular area he was stationed in. She told me she had trained him personally but it was unclear how comprehensive the training he received was. To avoid these types of circumstances, I suggest trainers be chosen based on a set of prescribed qualifications that adhere to acceptable ESOL pedagogical training techniques and are state approved. If these qualifications already exist, then it is the state's responsibility to ensure districts are

complying with them. Furthermore, there should be a system to evaluate the trainers themselves. I suggest a system be implemented much like that used in universities where student/participants are given evaluation forms to judge trainer/teacher efficacy. Without such a system, trainer competency is judged solely by their immediate superiors who may not be in the position to make objective judgments.

Beyond the scope of the trainings per se the state could include an ESOL modification category in the Florida Performance Measurement System (FPMS). FPMS is a rubric principals use to evaluate all Florida teachers during the year). Adding ESOL skills to the FPMS would give principals a way to check if teachers were modifying their lesson if ELLs were present in the room, and it would send the message to teachers that the principal can hold them accountable for having a modification system. Participants in the trainings could be made aware of this possibility as well, and it may make them more willing to participate. Currently, now participants in the training understand that there is no one who will ever check to see they are making any modifications after they leave the training, with the exception of a small chance that a state auditor will observe a classroom.

A companion to the tool for principals would be a formalized system that allows district ESOL professionals to observe teachers in content classes to evaluate their use of ESOL pedagogy. I have never seen or heard of ESOL district supervisors, checking instructional practices for ESOL modification, and ESOL experts could supplement the observations of principals and assistant principals.

When teachers understand early on that there is no mechanism for them to be held accountable for ESOL modification, it quickly becomes less of a priority to take an active interest in ESOL-related professional development. To my knowledge, the only accountability measure which checks if teachers are making modifications is a yearly self-reporting instrument given to them during the year by their schools ESOL coordinator. In Appendix D, I have included an actual checklist given to teachers in one district with identity information redacted (Anonymous, 2006; Anonymous, 2007). These self-reporting instruments are worthwhile but it is laughable to think that teachers will take the required time to incorporate ELL modified lessons in their curriculum if the self-reporting checklist is the only way the districts are holding them accountable.

Many of my suggestions may seem punitive versus persuasive, and this would be true. Indeed, the testing component I mentioned coupled with a prescribed set of standards tied to rewards and punishments may seem more in line with the approach states have taken under No Child Left Behind. Yet the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) has expressed strong support for No Child Left Behind, believing as they say that the law will “ensure that ELLs academic achievements are taken into account, while providing some flexibility to states in how they are held accountable for helping ELLs” (National Council of La Raza News Release, 2006, p.1). The specifics regarding why La Raza’s has chosen to support NCLB may differ from mine in many respects but we would both agree perhaps on the need to hold policymakers, district supervisors, and the trainers accountable. Street-level bureaucrats can not be allowed to bend regulations and

rules to fit their constituencies. Persuasion is not an effective tool under such circumstances.

Over Emphasis on Cross-Cultural Awareness

Of the five areas the state requires when districts teach the Empowerment courses, cross-cultural awareness received the most attention, dominating time as shown by a variety of measurements used in this study. In all three districts, cross-cultural awareness was emphasized to such a degree that it was not until the last three or four sessions that the trainers finally turned to the other four areas; time distribution meant that workshop leaders taught the main issues associated with applied linguistic, methods, curriculum and assessment in the space of approximately 6-8 hours!

Moreover, the treatment of cross-cultural awareness never went past superficial and mundane. For instance, trainers discussed how various cultures differed in grooming, gestures, health and family ties but never attempted to teach participants how to take these understandings of difference and tailor them to create lesson plans that take advantage of diverse student backgrounds. Moll (1992) and Sleeter (2005) have written extensively on the importance of using student backgrounds to create thematic units and other types of authentic assessment to evaluate performance, and build on background knowledge, yet none of these ideas ever seeped into the discussions. Nor did the important subject of how immigrants attempt to assimilate into American culture and the blocked opportunities they face in lieu of today's de-industrialized landscape. Furthermore, the perceptions of race never entered the discussion in any meaningful way, nor did any discussion of class or gender. Instead, the trainers seemed content to gloss

over cultures in superficial ways and were content to talk about Japanese wedding ceremonies versus western ones, or the importance of not showing Muslim children the bottoms of shoes.

No one would deny the importance of teaching instructors the relevance of cross-cultural awareness. A cross-cultural awareness course should be made available to in-service teachers. Today more than ever, teachers need to be sensitized to appreciate and respect other cultures so they will be more willing to create inclusive lesson plans that activate their students' intrinsic interests and improve classroom participation and student learning. We should not discourage these types of classes in any way shape or form. I simply want to caution that these culture courses should not become the overarching focus of ESOL pedagogical training as it seems to be in the Empowerment course. If the Empowerment course is to serve as an overview course representing each of the five areas related to second language acquisition, then each of those five areas should be *equally* represented. Yet, I can not suggest or recommend here that districts attempt to equally represent each of the five areas within the framework of one course. I do not subscribe to the notion that one course can adequately accomplish all that it is designed to do within the time frame allotted. Instead, I believe the state and districts should eliminate the Empowerment course and create a new model from scratch.

Creating a New Model

I have no doubt the ESOL professionals in our state would like to see every Category II teacher take all five courses as the elementary, English and language arts do, and should I might add continue to do. But, a five-course requirement for Category II

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teachers would certainly require a greater commitment of time and effort and increase what resentment already exists if teachers had to take considerably more hours than is required at present. What I recommend then is to prioritize the curriculum for this group in such a way that emphasizes the critical aspects of instruction which teachers desperately need.

A curriculum and materials course is an essential component that can not and should not be watered down. Teachers need concrete tools they can apply in the classroom. This was a suggestion voiced by participants, the trainers themselves and even the head ESOL coordinator in District 2's west region. Teachers should have 60 hours of instruction in curriculum and materials as well as another 60 hours in methods. Within this 120 hour framework, trainers should incorporate the other three areas where appropriate. For example, it would not be difficult to introduce cross-cultural awareness during a curriculum and methods course because the two are inherently intertwined. It strikes me as odd that cross-cultural awareness is taught separately as if it was an island onto itself. Curriculum modified for English language learners is at its heart cross-culturally sensitive. This is true also for assessment and linguistics which also can and should not be separated from a curriculum course.

Some might claim that it is already difficult to ask many in-service teachers to take the 60 hour Empowerment course let alone a course with double the hours. Yet I mentioned in Chapter 2 that one of the chief architects of the consent decree, Peter Roos has bemoaned the fact that the state considers teachers to be adequately trained after only 60 hours of taking Empowerment. Instead he has argued that only those who have the full

300 hours should be considered adequately prepared. If we are to take what he says as valuable advice, then the 120 hours I am recommending should be viewed as a necessary burden.

Once the 120 hours of specific curriculum and methods instruction is made available, policymakers and district officials then need to provide teachers specific and targeted resources. This means giving them realistic activities that can be used in the classrooms after they leave these trainings. It is not useful to be spending time in lectures on obscure subjects I witnessed in the trainings such as the linear nature of English versus parallel constructions found in Semitic discourse, or having a group present to the class the main arguments embedded in the Supreme Court decision *Plyer v. Doe* (1982) which struck down a state statute denying funding for education to children who were illegal immigrants. These are interesting subjects but take precious time away from other information more crucial for teachers to obtain in a short period of time. A curriculum / material and methods course would bring the focus back to the tangible and pragmatic.

One must remember that the point behind providing teachers with practical tools is to help them improve the way they teach ELLs. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, ELLs in Florida generally continue to do poorly in school on achievement indicators and their drop-out rates remain unacceptably high. By improving instruction for these children teachers are doing their part to ensure that these children have better opportunities to stay in school and prepare for college. Empathy and sensitivity are important components of instruction when working with ELLs, but just as important is the acknowledgement that these trainings should be providing teachers with realistic, everyday strategies that they

can carry into the classroom so that the student themselves are achieving at levels appropriate to their particular circumstances.

Yet any change in policy must be accompanied by a sincere effort on the part of policymakers to communicate with teachers why there are good reasons for taking these courses. If teachers buy into the idea that districts are providing them with needed resources, the policy will carry more authority, and teachers will be more apt to support them (Floden, 1987). Even so, the state and districts should offer incentives or rewards to teachers who complete the 120 hours. As it stands now, teachers who take the Empowerment course are offered nothing.

I recommend that districts offer teachers a stipend for taking the 120 course based on similar hourly rates teachers receive in the hundreds of workshops taken during yearly summer breaks. To fail to offer a financial incentive is tantamount to saying that we expect teachers to make sacrifices but do not value their effort enough to compensate for it. Teachers are savvy people and may conclude that if a commitment is not made to reward their effort, then they in turn will not take a vested interest in ESOL related professional development..

The idea of providing money to teachers who participate in professional development programs is not new. A study conducted in 1988 surveyed teachers in the District of Columbia public school system and found that teachers believed a stipend was necessary to increase involvement and taking professional development courses during the summer was seen more positively than taking them after school in the evenings (Holmes et al., 1988). Teachers in the study supported *released time* where teachers could

take professional development classes during the week while substitutes covered their classes. The same study also found that teachers were enthusiastic about receiving college credit for their participation in the trainings. In line with this, I would also suggest that districts in the State of Florida form stronger partnerships between their local universities and professional development ESOL teacher training programs. One such program is the partnership between California State University at Fresno and Balderas Elementary which offers reduced tuition credit to teachers who might seek a degree in the university's masters program (Tellez & Waxman, 2005).

I should note that the State of Florida did at one time have a system in which universities partnered with districts to assist in training and teachers *were* provided stipends as well as college credit for participation in training classes. After the consent decree was signed in Florida, it was the universities who initially delivered the ESOL in-service training classes in most districts. For instance, the University of South Florida operated a program during that period called MERIT or Multicultural Educational Resources, Information and Training. The program screened trainers, provided syllabi, and helped districts with training and development. The University also assisted in training teachers through an intensive two-week institute held during the summers where they received stipends for participation. Over time, the district which partnered with the University of South Florida looked to people who completed the training to run the trainings internally and this trend would recur throughout the state (Evans, personal communication, July 10, 2008).

The pattern of districts in Florida essentially going-it-alone in recent years is unfortunate as ESOL departments in Florida universities have an endless wealth of resources which should be tapped as they once were. The state and local districts should once again consider returning to the past system of working closely with universities and offer teachers financial incentives as well as college credit. Indeed, it is not as if there are not enough resources available to provide teachers with incentives and support to take these trainings seriously. But to do so, policymakers must prioritize ESOL professional development. In the end, much of the responsibility to garner this support lies with district administrators. On this topic, another study conducted in 2002 concluded that “Highly skilled administrators demonstrated a higher level of resourcefulness in developing greater levels of capacity for their districts...” (Turchi, Johnson, Owens & Montgomery, 2002, p.16). Administrators did this by securing money from state grants, Title I funds, and private donations and by prioritizing their own spending procedures to make room for district professional development programs. Undoubtedly, there are many district administrators here in Florida with these same skills mentioned in the study Yet while one county school board I am familiar with has accepted millions of dollars from programs such as the Gates Foundation, they still are unable or unwilling to find the money to compensate teachers financially for attending the ESOL teacher training programs. One wonders what message this behavior sends to teachers who must sacrifice their time and money to attend these classes with nothing in return except the knowledge that they have completed the course within the required two years of being hired and will, therefore, be able to renew their teaching license. And while this may be a powerful

incentive to make teachers attend these courses, it is in no way one which could ever hope to encourage meaningful participation.

Summary of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the overall efficacy of Florida's approach to ESOL in-service teacher training programs. Using a mixed methods approach, over a five-month period I quantitatively and qualitatively recorded my own observations and teacher participant perceptions as well as those I interviewed from three separate district training classes over a five month period. The overall results generally painted a negative picture of how these trainings were conceived, designed and conducted.

A number of themes emerged from the data which I believe served to answer my original research questions. The first question asked if the ESOL in-service district training sessions adequately cover the five main content areas the state requires, and the findings showed that only the area cross-cultural awareness received a satisfactory treatment and if anything the area may have been overemphasized. My second question asked what the perceptions of teachers were in terms of the coverage, depth, and utility of in-service district training sessions, and here the responses were almost overwhelmingly negative. Both this researcher and the teachers I interviewed expressed dismay that there had been a lack of follow-up on topics raised in the courses which had been reinforced by a check-it-off mentality that seemed to pervade the sessions. There was as well a sense that the trainings were not realistic or what teachers needed in a practical sense.

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The notion that the classes were not practical arose from the observation that too much time was spent on games, reading text-in class, listening passively to powerpoint lectures and having to skim through outdated materials. In one of my recommendations, I suggested that trainers consider grouping teachers by subject area and grade level and provide content-based materials which are modified to ELLs. These materials could then be made accessible to teachers on the internet, or at the school level. I also strongly recommended the districts update their materials.

I furthermore found from my observations and interview responses that there was a lack of teacher accountability in these trainings as many of them would leave early, arrive late, talk loudly and be off task. I suggested the state consider creating a system of statewide performance standards. I also suggested the state consider creating a way for principals to record ESOL lesson modifications on the FPMS and suggested that ESOL administrators be given the green light to do walk-throughs on a spontaneous basis with a resulting observation record.

Finally I called for replacing Empowerment courses altogether with a 120 hour curriculum / material methods course, which would then incorporate the other three areas, (linguistics, cross-cultural awareness and assessment) into the course. I cautioned, however, that districts should still consider retaining culture courses as it is crucial teachers become sensitized to other cultures, values and beliefs. To get teachers involved and participate meaningfully, I suggested that districts communicate with teachers the reasons why they should take such classes and offer financial and professional incentives and a way to receive college credit.

Reforming the way ESOL teacher training programs are implemented will take more than good ideas and effort. It will require a willingness on the part of policymakers to take a vested interest in making sure these programs are as good as they deserve to be. Too often bureaucrats place a greater emphasis on stability and traditional procedures (Larson & Ovando, 2001) and remain unwilling to reevaluate the relationships which exist between those in the dominant class and those who seek equity (Cummings, 2001). I am afraid this may be the case here in Florida. The state has used the ESOL teacher training programs as a way to justify its policy of mainstreaming children for close to 20 years now, and yet year after year too many of these children fall through the cracks of our system, destined to be wage earners and fodder for the post-industrial age. The ESOL bureaucracy in Florida continues to represent an “iron cage” that remains entrenched and, in my view, a major impediment to reform. It is ironic that the very institution which was created to bring reform to the thousands of ELLs who required help in the early 1990’s is the same one that may be standing in the way of needed reform some two decades later.

There are a variety of different instructional methods that exist to teach ELLs. The ESOL model widely used in Florida is but one. Other models such as dual-language or two-way immersion programs exist by the hundreds in states such as Arizona, New Mexico, California, and Connecticut, including nine schools right here in Florida (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2007). There are also a growing number of programs called newcomer academies which are usually self-contained schools that operate in secondary schools and serve ELLs for the duration of the day. They are designed to provide a crash course in English but also offer sheltered instruction in content classes which enables

students to earn credits and avoid falling behind (Short, 1998). Many schools also operate sheltered content classes within their schools where ELL students are clustered together into regular content classes and teachers are trained to use a variety of visual aids, physical activities and the environment to teach content (Freeman, 1988).

With so many interesting and exciting programs available to policymakers perhaps the state and local districts should begin to consider that while the ESOL model may be effective in certain schools and in certain circumstances, other models mentioned above can be just as effective. The state should look at providing compensatory programs for ELLs through a variety of ways rather than the cookie-cutter approach it has until now undertaken.

During the course of this study I came up against numerous roadblocks created by local ESOL district administrators. In one large district I observed, every trainer except one refused to let me observe their training session, though I assured them of their anonymity through an approved protocol. The head of the district's ESOL department in that particular district was polite but extremely unhelpful, and if I had not known certain individuals in certain departments, there is a question whether I could have conducted my study at all. It is clear to me now why they were so reluctant to let me in, *must* know that their system of training is in dire need of reform. In the end, the complacent approach policymakers have shown toward a program that deserves greater attention cannot continue indefinitely, and my sense is that the changing demographic nature of our school age population will force policymakers to reevaluate their priorities. Until that time, however, the status quo cannot and must not continue to exist, and yet it does year after

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year to the detriment of everyone who has a stake in seeking meaningful reform. It is high time to ask ourselves whether we are truly living up to the spirit of the consent decree as it was intended some twenty years ago, or whether we will continue to be satisfied to go through the bureaucratic motions, which seem to sustain and benefit the livelihood of everyone except those who matter the most – our nation's children.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Scoring Rubric Used in Observations of In-Service District ESOL Training Sessions

According to Florida's Department of Education in the Office of Academic Achievement Through Language Acquisition (OAALA), Category II Instructors – social studies, mathematics, science and computer literacy, as well as counselors and administrators are required to complete three semester hours, or 60 in-service credit points in order to receive the endorsement in English to Speakers of Other Languages.

The five areas required by the State of Florida to be covered for the endorsement are listed below.

#1. METHODS OF TEACHING ESOL

#2. APPLIED LINGUISTICS

#3. ESOL CURRICULUM ACROSS CONTENT AREAS

#4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

#5. CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS

Appendix A (Continued)

Scoring Guide

- 0= (Zero)** Trainer does not discuss topic / no coverage whatsoever
- 1= (Brief)** Trainer very briefly mentions topic / cursory coverage
- 2= (Minimal)** Discusses topic but does not go beyond superficial explanation and offers little time for practice either independently or collaboratively
- 3= (Fair)** Discusses topic somewhat in depth and offers teachers limited opportunities to practice what has been taught either independently or collaboratively
- 4= (In depth)** Discusses topic in depth. Trainer follows up with instruction that ensures understanding by giving ample time to teachers to work independently *and* collaboratively. Teachers are then given a chance to apply what they learned in a meaningful way
- 5= (Superior)** Trainer discusses topic in depth, allows for ample time to practice both independently and collaboratively and returns to topic often and in different contexts to ensure understanding. Teachers are given a chance to apply what they learned in a meaningful way.

Appendix A (Continued)

On the following pages are a list of indicators that served to generate the scores. The indicators are grouped by each of the five general areas trainers are to cover according to Florida State guidelines. The indicators were created based on cross-referencing and choosing the common elements found among the *Florida's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Competencies and Skills, 11th Ed.*, the *Florida Performance Standards for Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages* and the textbook *Empowering ESOL Teachers: An Overview Volume I and II* which districts provide in-service teachers in the 60 hour – Category II training sessions.

Appendix A (Continued)

Indicators for Area #1. applied linguistics

1a. The trainer discusses knowledge of language principals such as phonology, and semantics and discusses first and second language acquisition theories as well as issues related to literacy development (Competencies 1, 2, 8 - Standards 5, 6, 9, 10 – Textbook sections 5, 6, 7).

Indicator #1. Identifies concepts and characteristics of phonology, morphology, semantics and syntax as they relate to language acquisition

- a. ____ final average score (I.1) ____
- b. ____ score 1
- c. ____

Indicator #2. Identifies and compares the sociolinguistic language functions of social and regional varieties of English and identifies historical processes that influenced development of English language

- a. ____ final average score (I.2) ____
- b. ____ score 2
- c. ____

Indicator #3. Identifies the principals, characteristics and terminology of first and second language acquisition theories (e.g., Krashen’s natural order hypothesis, the input hypothesis, language experience approach, the psycholinguistic model, and whole language instruction)

- a. ____ final average score (I.3) ____
- b. ____ score 3
- c. ____

Indicator #4. Identifies factors influencing, and characteristics of, bilingualism

- a. ____ final average score (I.4) ____
- b. ____ score 4
- c. ____

Indicator #5. Identifies different types and stages of second language acquisition

- a. ____ final average score (I.5) ____
- b. ____ score 5
- c. ____

Indicator #6. Identifies the influence of cognitive, affective, and social factors on second language acquisition

- a. ____ final average score (I.6) ____
- b. ____ score 6
- c. ____

Indicator #7. Identifies the different stages associated with literacy

- a. ____ c. ____ final average score (I.7) ____
- b. ____ score 7

Appendix A (Continued)

Indicators for Area #2. methods of teaching ESOL

2a. Trainer identifies instructional methods and strategic strategies that promote second language acquisition through content-area instruction (Competency 6 - Standards 6, 7, 11- textbook sections 5, 6, 7, 8).

Indicator #1. Identifies metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective strategies (e.g., Total Physical Response for beginning stages, the natural approach, communicative approaches and language experience approach)

- a. ____ final average score (II.1) ____
 b. ____ score 8
 c. ____

Indicator #2. Identifies appropriate ESOL strategies and modifications for content-based instruction for various proficiency levels (e.g., includes instruction for the elementary, middle and high schools)

- a. ____ final average score (II.2) ____
 b. ____ score 9
 c. ____

Indicator #3. Recognizes major leaders in the field of ESOL methodology and important instructional approaches to language theories as found in language education professional organizations and major professional publications related to ESOL

- a. ____ final average score (II.3) ____
 b. ____ score 10
 c. ____

Indicator #4. Applies essential strategies for developing and integrating the four language skills of listening comprehension, oral communication, reading and writing and provides examples (e.g., building background knowledge, scaffolding instruction, before, during, and after reading and writing strategies, cooperative group work)

- a. ____ final average score (II.4) ____
 b. ____ score 11
 c. ____

Indicator #5. Identifies methods for developing literacy for ELLs with limited literacy in their first language

- a. ____ final average score (II.5) ____
 b. ____ score 12
 c. ____

Indicator #6. Identifies content-based strategies for creating a multicultural curriculum that is inclusive of diverse populations

- a. ____ b. ____ c. ____ final average score (II.6) ____

Appendix A (Continued)

Indicators for Area #3. ESOL curriculum across content areas

3a. Trainer discusses knowledge of curriculum, curriculum materials and resources (Competency 4 - Standards 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 22- textbook sections 6, 7, 8).

Indicator #1. Identifies appropriate curricular adaptations according to language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing taking into account basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency skills (CALP)

- a. ____ final average score (III.1) ____
 b. ____ score 14
 c. ____

Indicator #2. Identifies supplemental resources that address cultural, ethnic and linguistic differences including ones that increase comprehension of text and context for ELLs

- a. ____ final average score (III.2) ____
 b. ____ score 15
 c. ____

Indicator #3. Identifies appropriate instructional technology (e.g., computer-assisted language learning (CALL), commercially available ESOL software)

- a. ____ final average score (III.3) ____
 b. ____ score 16
 c. ____

Indicator #4. Identifies experiential and interactive literacy activities for ELL students by matching instructional approaches with language theories (e.g., semantic mapping, TPR, language experience approach)

- a. ____ final average score (III.4) ____
 b. ____ score 17
 c. ____

Indicator #5. Identifies content-based ESOL approaches to instruction (e.g., using the “CALLA Approach”, creating both content and linguistic objective in the creation of lesson plans, employing differentiated instruction)

- a. ____ final average score (III.5) ____
 b. ____ score 18
 c. ____

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Indicator #6. Adapt items from school curricula to cultural and linguistic differences of Florida's ELL population (e.g., projects that use resources of community and student's home life)

- a. ____ final average score (III.6) ____
- b. ____ score 19
- c. ____

Appendix A (Continued)

Indicators for Area #4. cross-cultural awareness

4a. The trainer identifies, exposes, and reexamines cultural stereotypes relating to ELLs and uses knowledge of Florida's cultural characteristics to enhance instruction (Competency 3 - Standards 2, 3, 4, 18 – textbook sections 3, 4).

Indicator #1. Trainer applies ethnolinguistic and cross-cultural knowledge to classroom management techniques

- a. ____ final average score (IV.1) ____
- b. ____ score 20
- c. ____

Indicator #2. Trainer identifies political and social trends that affected the education of ELLs including legal precedents and federal laws

- a. ____ final average score (IV.2) ____
- b. ____ score 21
- c. ____

Indicator #3. Identifies teacher behaviors that indicate sensitivity to cultural and linguistic differences

- a. ____ final average score (IV.3) ____
- b. ____ score 22
- c. ____

Indicator #4. Identifies different sociolinguistic language functions (e.g., formal, informal, conversational), and culture-specific, non-verbal communications (e.g, gesture, facial expressions, and eye contact)

- a. ____ final average score (IV.4) ____
- b. ____ score 23
- c. ____

Indicator #5. Identifies levels of cultural adaptation and ways participation, adjustment and learning can be affected by cultural differences

- a. ____ final average score (IV.5) ____
- b. ____ score 24
- c. ____

Indicator #6. Identifies ways to learn about student's culture to enhance understanding and be able to plan appropriate lessons

- a. ____ final average score (IV.6) ____
- b. ____ score 25
- c. ____

Appendix A (Continued)

Indicators for Area #5. assessment and Evaluation

5a. Trainer discusses knowledge of assessment focusing on evaluation of instructional outcomes that recognize the effects of race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and religion on the results (Competency 9 –Standards 14, 15, 19, 20 – textbook section 9).

Indicator #1. Identifies appropriate alternative Assessments that measure ELL performance (e.g. authentic assessment in the form of portfolios)

- a. ____ final average score (V.1) ____
- b. ____ score 26
- c. ____

Indicator #2. Design appropriate tests for assessing progress and achievement of ELLs by constructing ESOL listening, speaking, reading and writing test items

- a. ____ final average score (V.2) ____
- b. ____ score 27
- c. ____

Indicator #3. Identify examples of cultural and linguistic bias in tests

- a. ____ final average score (V.3) ____
- b. ____ score 28
- c. ____

Indicator #4. Identify Statewide assessment data as well as district and school based data to inform teacher decisions about placement and progress

- a. ____ final average score (V.4) ____
- b. ____ score 29
- c. ____

Indicator #5. Adapt content-area tests to ESOL levels appropriate to ELL students

- a. ____ final average score (V.5) ____
- b. ____ score 30
- c. ____

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Appendix A (Continued)

It was necessary to make a table showing where the scoring indicators fall within the text used by trainers in the sessions in order to better locate where particular coverage areas could be found. For example, the coverage area METHODS can be found in sections 5, 6, and 7 in the text. Below is the guide the researcher created to assist him in scoring more reliably.

Guide to locating Indicators in text/sessions

	METHODS	CURRICULUM	LINGUISTICS	CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS	ASSESSMENT
SECTION 1					
SECTION 2				#2	
SECTION 3				#1, #3, #4, #6, #7	
SECTION 4					
SECTION 5	#1, #4, #5		#1, #3, #4, #5, #7		
SECTION 6	#4, #7	#4	#1, #3		
SECTION 7	#4	#4	#2, #6		
SECTION 8	#1, #2, #6	#1, #3, #5			
SECTION 9					#1-5
SECTION 10					
SECTION 11					
SECTION 12					

Appendix B

Questionnaire for Florida In-Service ESOL District
Training Participants

I am conducting a study which is intended to evaluate Florida's district in-service ESOL training programs. **Your views regarding your recent participation in this training are a critical part of this evaluation.** In order to ensure this occurs, I would like to ask you to take a moment to answer the following brief survey and *30 questions*. **Answering these questions is voluntary. Your responses will be kept confidential.** When you are done please place the questionnaire in the self-addressed, pre-stamped envelope and mail it back to me. Thank you. I very much appreciate your cooperation!

Contact:	Ronald D. Simmons, Jr. University of South Florida Doctoral Candidate College of Education 2007
Phone:	(813) -857-5175
Return Information:	Ronald D. Simmons 4703 Bay Vista Ave. Tampa, Fl. 33611

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Appendix B (Continued)

Survey administered to participants at end of sessions

Please state your age _____

How many years of experience do you have teaching? _____

What is your race/ethnicity?

What is your first language? _____

What is the content area in which you are certified to teach?

Would you characterize your school as having a large number of English language learners, an average number or a small number?

What was your major in college/university? _____

What was your most recent degree? _____

Scoring Guide: Scores refer to the trainer's overall coverage of material in the sessions you attended

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 0 = (Zero) | - no coverage whatsoever |
| 1 = (Brief) | - very briefly mentioned topic |
| 2 = (Minimal) | - minimal coverage and had little time to practice topic |
| 3 = (Fair) | - discussed topic and offered some time to practice but did not teach for understanding |
| 4 = (In depth) | - topic discussed in depth – offers time to practice independently and collaboratively – taught for understanding |
| 5 = (Superior) | - topic discussed in depth – ample time to practice – teachers allowed to apply what they learned in a meaningful way |

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Appendix B (Continued)

<p>A.) cross-cultural awareness <i>To what extent did the trainer</i></p>
<p>1. Identify teacher behaviors that demonstrate sensitivity to cultural and linguistic differences? Score: _____</p>
<p>2. Apply cross-cultural knowledge to classroom management techniques? Score: _____</p>
<p>3. Identify social-language functions (formal, non-formal) and culture specific, non-verbal communication (e.g., gesture, facial expressions, eye contact)? Score: _____</p>
<p>4. Identify ways to learn about student cultures to enhance understanding and better plan lessons? Score: _____</p>
<p>5. Identify political and social trends that affect English language learners including legal precedents and federal laws? Score: _____</p>
<p>6. Identify levels of student adaptation, learning, and adjustment that can be affected by cultural differences? Score: _____</p>

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Appendix B (Continued)

B.) methods of Teaching ESOL <i>To what extent did the trainer</i>
7. Identify the use of various cognitive strategies such as the natural approach or language experience approach? Score: _____
8. Identify appropriate ESOL strategies for content-based instruction for various proficiency levels? Score: _____
9. Apply essential strategies for developing language skills such as listening comprehension, reading and writing? Score: _____
10. Recognize major leaders in the field of ESOL methodology and approaches to language theory found in professional organizations and publications? Score: _____
11. Identify methods for developing literacy for English language learners with limited literacy skills in their first language? Score: _____
12. Identify content-based strategies for creating a multicultural curriculum? Score: _____

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Appendix B (continued)

C.) ESOL curriculum Across Content-Areas <i>To what extent did the trainer</i>
13. Identify ways to adapt curriculum according to language proficiency in listening, listening, speaking and writing? Score: _____
14. Identify supplemental resources that address cultural differences? Score: _____
15. Identify appropriate uses of technology including media to assist in instruction? Score: _____
16. Identify interactive and experiential literacy activities such as semantic mapping - (venn-diagrams), total physical response, and cooperative learning activities? Score: _____
17. Identify content-based ESOL approaches to instruction? Score: _____
18. Adapt items from school curricula to cultural differences of Florida's English language population (e.g., projects that make use of resources from the student's home life and community)? Score: _____

Appendix B (Continued)

D.) applied linguistics <i>To what extent did the trainer</i>
19. Identify concepts and characteristics of phonology, morphology, semantics and syntax related to language acquisition? Score: _____
20. Identify historical and sociolinguistic language functions of English? Score: _____
21. Identify the principals and characteristics of first and second language acquisition (e.g., Krashen's natural order hypothesis –the input hypothesis) Score: _____
22. Identify factors influencing, and characteristics of, bilingualism? Score: _____
23. Identify different types and stages of second language acquisition? Score: _____
24. Identify the cognitive and social factors on second language acquisition? Score: _____
25. Identify the different stages associated with literacy? Score: _____

Appendix B (Continued)

E.) assessment and Evaluation <i>To what extent did the trainer</i>
26. Identify appropriate alternative Assessments that measure English language learners' performance (e.g., authentic assessment in the form of portfolios)? Score: _____
27. Design appropriate tests for assessing achievement by constructing ESOL listening, speaking, reading, and writing test items? Score: _____
28. Identify examples of cultural and linguistic bias in tests? Score: _____
29. Identify state, district and school based data to inform teacher decisions about placement and progress? Score: _____
30. Adapt tests to ESOL levels appropriate to English language learners? Score: _____

Appendix C

Closed-Response Interview Protocol

Question 1

Describe your educational background and how long you have been teaching?

Question 2

Describe the school where you work? What percentage of the students are English language learners? Do you have English language learners in your classroom? If yes, describe any issues you had to confront due to the presence of ELLs in your classroom?

Question 3

Of the five areas the trainer covered: Cross-cultural awareness, linguistics, methods, ESOL curriculum and assessment, which do you think was covered to the greatest extent?

Question 4

Was there any part of the training that you felt was overemphasized and could have been covered in less time?

Question 5

Was there any part of the training that you felt should have been given more attention?

Question 6

Is there anything you would change about the training or do differently?

Question 7

During the training did you have enough chance to practice what you learned in groups collaboratively?

Question 8

How would you describe the usefulness of the training to you as a teacher?

Question 9

Can you describe how adequately the training prepared you to instruct ELLs in your classroom?

Appendix C (Continued)

Question 10

Can you describe how you may or may not use what you learned in the training in your classroom?

Question 11

To what extent do you think Florida's approach to preparing teachers to instruct English language learners is effective?

Question 12

Were the materials used in the training useful to you and did you read through the materials thoroughly or skim through them?

Appendix D

The following three pages are the actual ESOL Self-Reporting Checklist Used by one of the districts I observed (see pages 173 & 174).

Using the ESOL Strategies Checklist SB801112

The ESOL Strategies Checklist is an invaluable tool for the classroom teacher. The checklist provides guidance for planning lessons, suggestions for breaking down cultural barriers, ideas for incorporating best practices, and multiple suggestions for appropriate methods of assessment. In addition, the checklist is a quick means of effectively recording the modifications and strategies implemented in your classroom for ELL (English Language Learner) students. In a time where individual classroom accountability is increasing, the ESOL Strategies Checklist is representative of each classroom teacher's efforts to assist his/her ELL students.

What's New!

The ESOL Strategies Checklist has been reduced to a front-side only, one page document! Additionally, the ESOL Strategies Checklist has an "SB" number located on the bottom left hand corner of the document. The assignment of an "SB" number emphasizes the significance of the checklist, thereby resulting in procedural changes.

- The ESOL Strategies Checklist is an official document that may be audited by the State of Florida.
- Each teacher is required to maintain an ESOL Strategies Checklist *for each class period roster on which an ELL student appears. (ELL students are easily identified by the "*" next to their names.)*
- Each teacher will be required to turn in their completed copies of the ESOL Strategies Checklist at the end of the year with their grade book inserts.
- School sites must maintain the collected checklists for a five-year period of time.

How Do I Use the ESOL Strategies Checklist?

1. Make a copy of the ESOL Strategies Checklist for every class period in which an ELL student appears on your class roster. *(ELL students are easily identified by the "*" next to their names.)*
2. Maintain the ESOL Strategies Checklist in your grade book where you are able to readily refer to it.
3. Remember, each ELL student's needs are different. Mark only the appropriate strategies and modifications implemented to meet the needs of ELL students in your classroom throughout each quarter.

Is the ESOL Strategies Checklist Sufficient for Accountability Purposes?

NO! The ESOL Strategies Checklist provides minimal evidence for accountability. It is recommended that you maintain a portfolio for each ELL student in your class. The portfolio should include samples of teacher created materials that illustrate the modifications of assignments and assessments. Also, the portfolio should include samples of student work from the commencement of the academic year through the conclusion.

**PROGRAMS FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENTS
ESOL STRATEGIES FOR 2006 - 2007**

TEACHER: _____ SUBJECT: _____

LEP STUDENT: _____ GRADE: _____

DIRECTIONS: Check (✓) the teaching strategies that you have used with the LEP student indicated above. This form, or the Teacher Plan Book, must be utilized to document ESOL strategies. One form needs to be filled out for each student by each teacher.

I. CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS AND UNDERSTANDING

Report Card Periods

1	2	3	4	
				Provided biographies of significant men and women from different cultures
				Applied cross-cultural knowledge when developing and using classroom management techniques
				Used teacher behaviors that indicate sensitivity to cultural and linguistic differences
				Provided active support and encouragement of cultural differences, such as culture-specific non-verbal communications, gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact
				Identified specific characteristics of U.S. culture
				Compared and contrasted features of U.S. culture with those of other cultures
				Identified elements indigenous to all cultures (Ex.: education, family, religion)
				Showed, through displays, pictures, and reading materials, people of all cultures
				Provide opportunities for students to share experiences and personal stories, stressed similarities among students

II. INSTRUCTIONAL/ESOL STRATEGIES

Report Card Periods

1	2	3	4	
				Implemented use of Heritage Language Dictionary in the classroom on a daily basis
				Set small, attainable goals for students
				Began lessons with a review and ended lessons with a summary Identified and selected appropriate printed and media materials
				Implemented thinking skills such as: • predicting • observing • questioning and reporting techniques • categorizing • sequencing (oral, written, pictorial) • classifying • summarizing
				Modified appropriate instructional program to meet the needs of ESOL students by: • concrete first, then abstract • relating to the student's • use of visual representations • reducing non-essential details • using media materials, manipulatives experiences • developing schema (background knowledge necessary to understand content) • checking word choice and sentence order
				Checked for content comprehension with: • drama • experiments • learning logs • dialogue journals • role play • reading logs • writing headlines • story summaries • strip stories • cloze exercise • illustrations • LEA
				Used "Pre" Activities such as: jigsaw, Total Physical Response (TPR), demonstrations
				Reinforced study skills such as: • timelines • mapping/flow charts • outlines • underlining • researching/graphing/Venn diagrams • highlighting • problem solving
				Utilized instructional approaches to address language learning styles by: • thematic approach • semantic webbing • illustrations • map • student experience • use of realia • small groups • pair work • cooperative learning • learning centers
				Provided multi-level ESOL activities for individual, small group, and whole group instruction by utilizing peer tutors, volunteers or aides, flexible scheduling, appropriate room arrangement, and assessing external resources.
				Identified ESOL specific classroom management techniques for a multi-level class by choosing group leaders, arranging rooms according to teacher/student responsibilities, utilizing audio-visual materials, giving positive feedback, and using time wisely.

II. INSTRUCTIONAL/ESOL STRATEGIES

Report Card Periods

				Clarified directions and assisted him/her with assignments, wrote assignments and page numbers on the board, or provide a syllabus wrote instructions and problems using shorter and less complex sentence structure
				Guided students in preparing individual card files of science, mathematics, and social studies vocabulary
				Explained special vocabulary terms in words known to the LEP student, providing pictures, gestures and realia to illustrate new words and terms
				Spoke using intonations and pauses, stressed caregiver speech: slower and simpler, emphasized extension and elaboration, modeled speaking and questioning techniques for students
				Facilitated field trips
				Labeled parts of the classroom, furniture and materials in English
				Provided visual context clues, and check comprehension throughout lesson when presenting material orally

III. ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION OF THE LEP STUDENT

Report Card Periods

1	2	3	4	
				Constructed alternative assessments for the LEP student using a variety of modalities including, but not limited to, listening, speaking, reading and writing assessments
				Conducted oral interviews/reports, daily observations/checklists, dictations, demonstrations, drawings/other graphics, open book quizzes and the use of a tape recorder/bilingual education paraprofessional to respond to test items
				Adapted content area tests to the appropriate language level of the LEP student (pre-production, early production, speech emergence and intermediate fluency)
				Had student demonstrate his/her comprehension by performing tasks, promote interviews, role playing and readers' theater
				Developed teacher made assessments

This form is to be filled out by every teacher that has contact with an LEP Student. (this includes Music, Art, and P.E.)

About the Author

Ronald D. Simmons, Jr. is a doctoral candidate at the College of Education at the University of South Florida. He has coauthored an entry in the Praeger Handbook of American Schools and been inducted in the Eleventh Edition of *Who's Who Among American Teachers, 2006-2007*, *The National Deans' List 2006-2007* and is a member of the *Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society*. Mr. Simmons presently teaches a social foundations course at the University of South Florida and continues to teach history full time at a large urban Title I high school. Mr. Simmons' experience living in Japan prior to returning to college as a graduate student, coupled with time spent working in a Title I school has served to ferment a strong passion for social justice in American public education. Mr. Simmons hopes to continue his research and teaching in the future.