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Programs for Language Minority Students at TBR Community Colleges:

A Study of Factors Affecting Design

A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

by

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August 2019

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ABSTRACT

Programs for Language Minority Students at TBR Community Colleges:

A Study of Factors Affecting Design

by

Caitlin Chapman-Rambo

This purpose of this study was to determine to what extent programs for language-minority students at TBR community colleges adhere to the recommendations contained in the Conference on College Composition and Communications 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers and to investigate the factors beyond these professional recommendations that influence administrative decision-making about these programs and their designs. This study contained a survey sent to individuals at all 13 community colleges in the Tennessee Board of Regents system and follow-up interviews with 5 survey respondents from different institutions.

Analysis of the results of the study indicates all TBR community colleges across the state are utilizing the CCCC's 2009 recommendations to some degree but that no single institution has fully implemented every recommendation. Additionally, the survey showed that, across the system, the most followed recommendations are those related to classroom practices. Other areas assessed including placement, available resources, administrative decisions, and instructor qualifications were all implemented in decreasing order. The least followed recommendations are those concerning recruitment of learners into the program.

Results also show that other factors beyond professional recommendations which influence the design and delivery of programs for language minority students include financial or budgetary considerations, administrative considerations beyond budget, misconceptions or a lack of knowledge about language minority students, the presence of experienced or dedicated ESL faculty, partnerships between offices on campus, the local, state, and national political climate, and an understanding that no program can meet the needs of all learners. These conclusions yield a number of considerations useful to individuals looking to implement or improve services for language minority students at their institution.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my husband Bill for always helping me stay focused and keeping my coffee cup full; to my mom and dad, Cindy and Gary Chapman, for never letting me quit but knowing when not to ask about my progress; to Harper and Hayden for making me more determined to finish than ever; and to Sadie for being by my side through all the writing and revisions. I couldn't have done it without you all. Thank you.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 amended rules for legal immigration to the United States by dismantling the quota system of immigration and giving preferential treatment to incoming immigrants with familial ties already within the United States (Jasper, 2008). Since this change to immigration policy, large-scale immigration to the United States has expanded substantially (Louie, 2009). Census and survey data show that the number of non-native English speakers living in the United States increased 158% between 1980-2010 (Ryan, 2013), and that percentage continues to grow. The 2014 American Community Survey of language use in the United States estimates that over 21.1% of the population of the United States speaks a language other than English at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). While a number of states such as Florida, California, Texas, and New York have long been home to sizeable populations of non-native speakers of English (NNS), the recent trend of growing NNS populations can be observed nationwide, not just in a select few states. For example, the 2014 American Community Survey estimated that, while the NNS population in Tennessee is not increasing as rapidly as the national average, nearly 400,000 Tennesseans over the age of five spoke a language other than English at home. This is an estimated increase of almost 40,000 speakers in a three-year period (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).

As the number of NNS in the United States has grown, children whose first or home language is not English have become a “substantial presence” (p. 35) in all levels of the American public education system (Louie, 2009). As Kanno and Cromley (2013) explained, linguistic minority students are the most rapidly growing segment of the K-12 school population

in the United States. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the percent of K-12 public school students enrolled in programs of NNS increased from 8.7% in the 2002-2003 school year to 9.2% in the 2012-2013 school year (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). This growth, however, is not spread evenly among the states; though Tennessee is not currently classified as a state with a high growth rate of English Language Learners (ELL), six of the ten states that experienced the most growth in non-native speaking students between 2000-2012 in K-12 schools border Tennessee, so it is reasonable to anticipate that Tennessee could experience similar growth in the near future (Horsford & Sampson, 2013).

A number of terms for this growing population of students for whom English is a second or subsequent language are currently in use, including non-native speaker (NNS), English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Learner (ELL), second language speakers (L2), and language or linguistic minority. This study will primarily use the term “language minority” to refer to this group of students. August and Shanahan (2006) explained that “Language minority refers to individuals from homes where a language other than the societal language is actively used, who therefore have had an opportunity to develop some level of proficiency in a language other than the societal language” (p. 21). This study will adopt “language minority” for these students because of its inclusivity; it includes both immigrants and native-born speakers, it fits individuals at all fluency levels equally well, and it recognizes the first or native language as a potential benefit (rather than a hindrance) to the student. In addition, this term works best for this study because it is sufficiently broad to encompass all the groups identified by the other terms listed above.

With the expansion of the number of language minority students enrolled in American public schools, the need for quality English as a Second Language (ESL) education at all levels,

from K-12 to post-secondary to adult education has also grown. In a review of changes in the field over a 15 year period from 1985-2000, Lightbown (2000) suggested that, in response to this need, second language acquisition and teaching theorists have improved educational outcomes through study of such diverse topics as the myriad factors that impact language acquisition, minimum qualifications for ESL instructors, distinct methods for improving the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and the most effective approaches to content delivery. In more recent years, second language acquisition separated from linguistics into a distinct field of research, and scholars have experimented with a variety of methods for teaching second language skills to individuals of all ages (Gass, 2013). Ellis (2015) observed that a rich body of research and theory has emerged, reinforcing the idea that the process of learning a second language differs drastically from learning a first language and must be taught as such.

For K-12 schools in all states, many of these evidence-based suggestions are incorporated in state standards for ESL. Albers and Martinez (2015) noted that a total of 36 states including Tennessee have already adopted or plan to adopt the most recent set of World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Development (ELD) standards by the 2016 school year. These standards are founded on a theoretical framework that emphasizes the communicative purpose and function of language in an academic context and serve as curriculum guides for ESL programs across Tennessee, establishing placement procedures, lesson content and preferred delivery methods, and assessment procedures (World-class Instructional Design and Assessment, 2012). This helps administrators ensure that K-12 ESL classes in Tennessee and other states adopting the standards maintain curricula grounded in theory and taught by properly credentialed teachers using methods that will allow students the greatest chance to progress in their language studies. Similarly, school systems in states that

adopt standards for ESL such as WIDA can verify that their students are making progress through a variety of standardized exams that measure students' performance on a variety of testable objectives (World-class Instructional Design and Assessment, 2012).

As Kanno and Cromley (2013) explained, “if ELLs are rapidly increasing in number in K-12 schools, we can expect them to be a growing presence in postsecondary education (PSE) as well” (p. 89). Because it is not required for institutions to count them, it is difficult to know exactly how many language minority students are currently enrolled at American institutions of higher education. As Harklau and Siegal (2009) noted, colleges and universities are not required to request or report students' home language use. Further, students have become increasingly less likely to volunteer information about their race and ethnicity (Harklau & Siegal, 2009). However, what is known for certain is that “language minority youth form an increasing percentage of students in the secondary school ‘pipeline’ to college” (Harklau & Siegal, 2009, p. 27). While the exact number is difficult to track since virtually no research into the college patterns of language minority students exists (Kanno & Harklau, 2012), it is clear that the number is growing as the language minority populations in both K-12 schools and the nation grow.

Language minority students at the post-secondary level are a considerably diverse group which includes visiting international students, recent permanent immigrants, students born abroad who immigrated at some point during their K-12 education, and students born in the United States who speak a language other than English at home (Llosa & Bunch, 2011). Students in this final group are described as Generation 1.5 students, highlighting their unique position between first generation and second generation immigrants (Roberge, 2009). Different types of institutions attract students with different motivations and skill levels. Four year universities and

research institutions are most likely to enroll visiting international students with strong educational backgrounds (Institute of International Education, 2015). Because high tuition prices and restrictive admissions policies can be barriers to enrollment, those language minority students most likely to have weaker English language skills, including recent permanent immigrants and Generation 1.5 students, are more likely to enter higher education at the community college level (Hodara, 2015).

This variety of enrollment patterns of language minority students suggests that it is extremely difficult to propose one single model of ESL education for all institutions of higher education. While organizations such as WIDA provide for a fairly standardized experience for language minority students at the K-12 level, at the post-secondary level programs for language minority students are much less uniform. Language minority students, even those who have graduated from an American high school, may face a number of language-related obstacles while pursuing a post-secondary degree (Hodara, 2015). However, programs, services, and course progressions to assist language-minority individuals vary greatly by institution. Many institutions enroll language minority students into the same developmental reading and writing courses they offer to native speaking students with deficiencies in their reading and writing skills. Other institutions offer dedicated ESL classes for language minority students. Even among institutions that offer a dedicated ESL curriculum, there is still considerable variety in the type and number of courses in the typical ESL sequence. This variation is especially great at the community college level. Mellow and Heelan (2015) noted that “this diversity is evident in the organization structures within which ESL programs operate on community college campuses, ranging from non-credit only to full-fledged departments with tenured faculty” (p. 275). Mellow and Heelan (2015) observed that this variation in the structure and content of ESL programs at the higher

education level is problematic as the kind of assistance a language minority student receives often has less to do with what is most likely to ensure the student's future success in college-level courses and more to do with the institution at which he chooses to enroll.

In response to both the increase in the number of language minority students enrolled at higher education institutions and diverse needs of language minority students, in 2001 the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) issued a Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers. Updated in 2009 and reaffirmed by the CCCC in 2014, this set of recommendations covers issues such as ideal class size, methods of assessment, plagiarism, teacher preparation, course placement, assignment design, and effective methods of teacher response to student work (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2014), and, like the WIDA standards adopted by Tennessee for K-12 ESL programs, they are based on second language acquisition and second language teaching theory. Recognizing that different language minority populations have different needs, the CCCC position statement also places heavy emphasis on the need for ESL course instructors and program administrators to research the populations in their service areas to provide adequate and appropriate services to those groups.

Since these recommendations are grounded in theory and constructed with maximizing the potential of individual learners in mind, in an ideal world all programs designed for language minority students at the post-secondary level would reflect these best practices. However, recommendations such as these are certainly non-binding, and wide variations in college-level ESL writing programs exist not only from state to state but also between institutions in the same state regulated by the same governing body. Program administrators often must balance a number of competing interests when making decisions about what programs and services to offer

language minority students, and as a result programs rarely reflect all the recommendations made by the CCCC and researchers in the field.

Problem Statement

The number of language minority students enrolling in Tennessee community colleges is on the rise, even though the lack of research makes it difficult to determine the extent of the increase. Once these students enroll, it is important that they have the curriculum and support they need to succeed. The fields of English language teaching and second language acquisition have been dedicated to discovering best practices for instruction at various levels. This research has led directly to evidence-based standards such as WIDA at the K-12 level and the CCCC 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers at the post-secondary level. Despite the availability of research and these recommendations, administrators at the community college level in Tennessee have substantial latitude when designing programs and must understandably weigh multiple considerations when making decisions regarding writing program content and design. Because of this latitude, ESL programs at these post-secondary institutions across Tennessee still show considerable variety in structure, curriculum, staffing, size, placement, and a number of other areas, with some programs aligning more closely with national recommendations than others. At the present, little research attempting to measure these differences has been done. Similarly, there is also little research attempting to explain why administrators choose specific program designs or whether or to what degree administrators consider research-based recommendations from professional organizations like the CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers when making decisions about programs at their institutions. Therefore, the purpose of this study will be to examine the extent to which programs for language-minority students at TBR community colleges adhere to the

recommendations contained in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers and to investigate the factors beyond these professional recommendations that influence administrative decision-making about these programs and their designs. This study will use a mixed methods approach guided by the following research questions.

Research Questions

1. In what ways do TBR community college programs for language minority students follow the recommendations contained in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers?
2. What variations exist in the way different TBR community colleges incorporate these recommendations?
3. What factors affect the design and delivery of language minority programs at TBR community colleges?

Significance of the Study

This mixed methods study explores the relatively common issue of how to best structure classes for language minority students at the higher education level from the relatively uncommon perspective of considering the myriad factors that influence administrators who must make these decisions. As such, it fills gaps in the existing literature since most studies approach this issue quantitatively, attempting to measure and compare student performance in various course formats to determine which should be implemented. Multiple groups may benefit from reexamining this issue through an administrative lens. These groups include administrators implementing or redesigning programs for language minority students at the higher education level and English language teaching and second language acquisition researchers and practitioners who have never considered such issues from a perspective other than their own.

Recommendations from this study may inform all parties involved about the gap that exists between theory-based recommendations and how those recommendations are ultimately implemented. As a result, this study may effectively lay the groundwork for more practical recommendations and more purposeful decision-making in the future.

Definition of Terms

This section provides definitions of terms that are used throughout the study.

Language minority program: For this study, this term will be used to refer to any curriculum designed specifically to support students for whom English is not a first language. This includes both courses specifically labeled as ESL and sections of non-ESL courses designated specifically for language minority students.

Language minority student: This term “refers to individuals from homes where a language other than the societal language is actively used, who therefore have had an opportunity to develop some level of proficiency in a language other than the societal language” (August & Shanahan, p. 21).

Scope of the Study

This study focuses only on writing programs for language minority students at Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) community colleges. It does not cover writing programs designed for native speaking students unless those programs also regularly enroll language minority students. Similarly, this study does not cover programs for language minority students not explicitly designed to improve writing skills. For example, programs that help language minority students get involved with on-campus organizations would be beyond the scope of the research at hand.

Delimitations and Limitations

Delimitations

One delimitation of the study is that it focuses solely on community colleges in Tennessee. It does not include community colleges outside the state or four-year public or private institutions within the state. In addition, not all community colleges in the state are represented by the study data. While I sent surveys to individuals at all campuses, I only received survey data for 10 institutions. I conducted interviews at 5. Another delimitation of this study is that it focuses exclusively on the way faculty and administrators perceive the language minority programs at their institutions without exploring student opinions or perspectives. While the purpose of the study was to determine the degree to which institutions are implementing recommendations designed for student success, the study did not measure or compare student outcomes or interview students about their preferences or experiences. This study focused on understanding why programs for language minority students are constructed the way they are and not on how students perform in individual programs.

Limitations

This study also has several notable limitations. One limitation is that the study relies on voluntary participants. In the quantitative portion of the study, a survey was distributed to all employees at an institution who make decisions about programs for language minority students at that institution. The interview guide for the qualitative portion of the study was developed based on the results of the survey, so the interviews are limited by a reliance on the perspectives and opinions of the survey respondents. Further, the survey is also limited by the willingness of the participants to be truthful, even if it means speaking critically of the institution at which they are employed.

Another limitation of the qualitative portion of study is researcher bias and subjectivity. As an employee at a TBR community college who works with students who are non-native English speakers, my own work in the field naturally affected the way I interacted with the interview participants and the ways in which I interpreted the data I gathered during this portion of the study. While I tried to be as objective as possible, my own experiences making decisions about ESL programs at my institution influenced the way I understood and coded the data I collected from others who have been in my position.

As a result of this methodology of the study, it is also limited in that the results cannot be generalized to other programs, institutions, or states. Because this study focuses solely on the decision-making processes of administrators of writing programs for language minority students in TBR community colleges, the results are not applicable outside of that group.

Overview of the Study

Chapter 1 includes an introduction to the study, a statement of the problem, a list of the research questions that guide the study, an explanation of the study's significance, definitions of important terms, and the delimitations and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 is a review of research related to the growth of the population of non-native English speakers in the United States, Second Language Acquisition research and recommendations, language minority students and the role of the community college, and recommendations from the Conference on College Communication Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers. Chapter 3 covers the research methodology and design with an explanation of the sampling methods, recruiting protocols, data collection methods, and data analysis methods for both the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study. Chapter 4 will describe the findings of the study, and Chapter 5 will include a summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

As the number of individuals in the United States who speak languages other than English at home grows, so will demand for educational opportunities for this group. While the public K-12 education system has addressed this problem in a somewhat uniform way due to national legal mandates, the higher education response to these changing demographics has been varied. If the goal is to provide the best possible education to members of all demographics including non-native speakers (NNS) of English, then much can be learned from a study of how programs for students in this group are structured at various institutions across the state. Similarly, it is also important to understand why these colleges chose to make the program design decisions so that factors other than research recommended best practices that impact educational design can be identified.

This literature review was designed to accomplish the following objectives: (a) describe the growth of the number of language minority individuals living and going to school in the United States over the 20th and 21st centuries; (b) explore the variety of difficulties non-native speakers of English face when learning a second language through a discussion of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research and recommendations; (c) explain why the issue of educating language minority students is especially important at the community college level given the traditional role of the community college within higher education; (d) examine the various ways community colleges have traditionally approached the task of educating language minority students; and (e) discuss the recommendations presented by the Conference on College

Composition and Communication Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers and their basis in previously discussed literature.

Growth of NNS Population

Tracking the growth of the language minority or non-native English speaking (NNS) population in the United States over the last century is complicated as no single set of data showing this growth exists. However, the trend among existing data sets generally shows that NNS are increasing as a percentage of the population. There are two main sources of historical data related to the growth of this population. The first of these is the United States Census data, and the second is data accumulated by the K-12 education system.

Census Data Related to Language Use and Its Limitations

The United States Census Bureau has collected language use data in some way since 1890; however, the exact questions asked by the census have changed over time, which makes comparing growth between censuses difficult (*Frequently asked questions*, 2015). Censuses taken from 1890-1910 simply asked whether or not a person could speak English. For those who answered no, a follow up question asked which language they spoke (*Historical language questions*, 2015). In each of these years, data indicate that about 4% of the population could not speak English (Siegel, Martin, & Bruno, 2001). From 1920-1970 (except for 1950 when no questions concerning language use were asked), censuses generally asked foreign-born individuals to provide their “mother tongue” or native language if not English. The differences in the phrasing of the questions asked during these years make comparing data difficult. For example, the 1930 census asked foreign born individuals what language they spoke before coming to the United States, but the 1940 census asked respondents to provide the language spoken at home in earliest childhood (*Historical language questions*, 2015). Additionally, data

for different groups are reported differently each year. Some censuses only report language use for foreign born white residents while others report language use for all foreign born individuals.

Chapter 7 of the 1930 U.S. Census report explained:

Although information as to ‘mother tongue’ – that is, the language of customary speech in the home prior to immigration – was secured for all persons of foreign birth, it has been tabulated only for white persons, since most persons of each of the other races speak one characteristic language. (United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1933, p. 341)

These two sets of questions asked from 1890-1910 and 1920-1970 limit understanding of the growth of the non-English speaking population because they exclude individuals born in the United States and individuals with partial English proficiency from the count (Siegel et al., 2001).

Since 1980, the U.S. Census Bureau has collected language use data using a standardized set of three questions related to language use: “Does this person speak a language other than English at home? What is this language? How well does this person speak English (very well, well, not well, not at all)?” (*Historical language questions*, 2015). Siegel et al. (2001) explained that these more specific questions became a necessity as legislation aimed at accommodating individuals who cannot communicate in English became more prominent because of the recognition that an individual’s inability to communicate in the common language can hamper access to employment, transportation, medical and social services, voting, and children’s participation in schooling. This change in census questions points to a larger change in the way the US government approached its responsibilities to individuals living in the country who do not speak English (Siegel et al., 2001). For example, this language data is used to determine bilingual election requirements under the Voting Rights Act and to allocate funds to schools with large populations of language minority students (*Language use*, 2015).

The data collected by the Census Bureau since 1980 show growth in the number of individuals who speak a language other than English at home. According to Ryan (2013), in the 1980 census, 23,060,040 individuals over the age of 5 reported speaking a language other than English at home. This represented 10.9% of the population over the age of 5. In 1990, the number of individuals over the age of 5 who reported speaking a language other than English at home rose to 31,844,979. This represented 13.8% of the population. By the 2000 census, the number of individuals who reported speaking a language other than English at home was 46,951,595 or 17.9% of the population (Ryan, 2013). After 2000, the collection of this data moved to the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is an ongoing survey that gathers data from households monthly and uses that data to make projections about the population as a whole on a yearly basis. The 2005 ACS projected 19.4% of the population spoke a language other than English at home. In 2010, the ACS projection was 20.6% of the population. For 2015, the ACS estimated that 21.5% of the population, or 64,716,079 people, spoke a language other than English at home. The number of individuals who report speaking a language other than English at home has continued to climb from 1980 with 10.8% of the population to the most recent estimate of 21.5% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

Much census data, as well as other data collected by government entities, tends to underrepresent certain populations. Brownrigg and de la Puente (1992) identified a number of barriers to enumeration including “high incidence of residential mobility, irregular housing, motives for concealment such as undocumented immigration status or illegal conversions of garages and back rooms into housing units, languages other than English, limited literacy, [and] fears of outsiders” (p. 2). Saville-Troike (2006) described a survey of the parents of preschool students conducted by a rural California school district to determine future need for ESL

program. In this study, the researcher found that parents often reported speaking English at home even though they could only answer the questions asked by the researcher when they were presented in Spanish. This suggests that “their linguistic misrepresentation was likely motivated by fear that lack of English would trigger further questions about their US citizenship” (Saville-Troike, 2006, p. 11). Interviews by O’Dowd (2010) showed that one weakness of the census is that it relies on individuals to self-report data about themselves and their household. Often undocumented residents are reluctant to report this data or answer the census because they do not want people to know they are living in the country illegally (O’Dowd, 2010). While the U.S. Census Bureau (2012) estimated an almost 95% accuracy rate in the most recent decennial census in 2010, it also estimated that 16 million individuals were not accurately counted. Further, this same Census Bureau report noted that, “because ethnic and racial minorities disproportionately live in hard-to-count circumstances, they too were undercounted relative to the majority population” (United States Census Bureau, 2012, Variation by Characteristics section, para. 8). O’Hare, Mayol-Garcia, Wildsmith, and Torres (2016) compared 2010 census data with birth, death, and immigration records and found that the undercount rate for Latinos was 7.1%, which is much higher than the rate for the population as a whole. They also estimated an undercount of greater than 5,000 Latino children in Tennessee in the 2010 census (O’Hare et al., 2016).

Education Data Related to English Language Learners

Just as new kinds of legislation caused the U.S. Census Bureau to change the questions it asked about language use in 1980 to track the growth of the NNS population in the United States, legislation also prompted the K-12 education system to begin gathering data about NNS which provided a second method for observing the growth of NNS over recent years. A policy

summary by the National Council of Teachers of English (2008) explained the legislation related to NNS in the K-12 system as follows:

In 1968, the Bilingual Education Act (Title VII) acknowledged the educational challenges faced by ELLs and allocated funds to support their learning. Title VII was amended and reauthorized a number of times, and in 2002, the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act (Title III of NCLB) replaced the Bilingual Education Act (BEA). NCLB requires that schools report adequate yearly progress (AYP) for four subgroups of students, one of which is ELL students. (p. 3)

According to Klein (2016), No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was repealed in December 2015 and replaced with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which will take full effect in the 2017-2018 school year. To make ELL students a priority, this change moves ELL accountability from Title III to Title I where accountability measures for all student populations are housed. As a result by the third year of enrollment in K-12 public schools, the test scores of ELL students will count like the scores of students in the population as a whole.

Since this legislation related to NNS students in K-12 schools requires tracking the performance, it also, by default, requires tracking the population of ELL students served by funded programs (BEA) or enrolled in K-12 public schools (NCLB) which creates a method for observing growth in the NNS population. Here again, these sources of data probably do not give a complete picture of the actual population growth among all populations. However, these figures help demonstrate a trend of growth over time. For example, in a summary of reauthorizations and amendments to the Bilingual Education Act, Stewner-Manzanares (1988) noted that only 27,000 students were served by BEA funded programs in 1969. However, according to research conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, "The percentage of public school students in the United States who were English language learners was higher in school year 2012–13 (9.2 percent, or an estimated 4.4

million students) than in 2002–03 (8.7 percent, or an estimated 4.1 million students)” (Kena et al., 2016, p. 92). Combined, these sources show that the number of language minority students enrolling in K-12 public education programs in the United States has increased both in the short term and since the beginning of programs designed for these learners.

Second Language Acquisition Research and Recommendations

The issues facing students learning a second language go well beyond placing commas or conjugating verbs, and understanding these issues requires an understanding of the complex linguistic, psychological, and social aspects of second language development; the combined study of these fields and the use of these studies to provide classroom recommendations and best practices are the domain of second language acquisition (SLA) research and theory (Saville-Troike, 2006).

Foundations of Second Language Acquisition Research

The study of SLA as an independent discipline began primarily as a challenge to behaviorist theory, which treated all language formation, both first and second language (L1 and L2), as a process of conditioning and habit formation (Ellis & Shintani, 2014). The first challenge to this behaviorist perspective came in 1959 with Chomsky’s review of Skinner’s *Verbal Behavior* (Chomsky, 1959). Chomsky suggested that L1 learning did not occur through repetition of behavior but rather in the learner’s mind. Further Chomsky suggested human ability to learn language is driven by a natural born capacity for language. These suggestions sparked the first substantial inquiries into second language in the 1960s when researchers first began to investigate how L2 acquisition differs from L1 acquisition (Meisel, 2011) and whether second languages are acquired through behavioral habits or mental processes (Ellis & Shintani, 2014).

Early research into SLA emerged from the conflicting views of behaviorists like Skinner and mentalists like Chomsky. As Johnson (2004) explained, behaviorism suggested that learning a language was the process of habit formation. Therefore, knowledge of a first language was a source of interference that caused errors in the second language as the old habits interfered with the new ones. Mentalists or those who promoted a cognitive theory of SLA generally believed that learning a language was a cognitive process rather than a behavioral one and that learners of a second language draw on an innate language learning ability and create various errors while progressing toward a correct target. This meant that to mentalists errors come from sources beyond the L1 (Johnson, 2004). Many of the SLA studies from the 1960s and 1970s explored issues related to this debate, including the types of errors second language learners make and what caused them (Ellis & Shintani, 2014).

Findings from this stage of SLA research tend to confirm aspects of the mentalist view of language development. For example, Corder (1967) studied the errors of second language learners and found that they have a “built-in syllabus” that determines the order in which they will acquire certain structures. Thus, Corder suggested that language teachers allow this innate internal structure to dictate language learning. Hatch (1978) found similar results with naturalistic learners, or learners who acquired language through exposure rather than instruction. She found that these learners also acquired certain grammatical morphemes in a fixed order and that learners acquired mastery of specific structures gradually and that this gradual acquisition was marked by a series of transitional phases where errors gradually become closer to the target. Richards (1971) studied several kinds of errors found in the production of ESL learners, and found that errors were developmental or intralingual in nature. They resulted from a learner with

limited experience attempting to either prove or disprove hypothesis about the target language, not from interferences from the native language.

The next major wave in SLA research focused on the role of input in language acquisition. All language learning requires input in the target language, but in the 1980s SLA researchers began to explore the role of input and interaction in facilitating interlanguage development (Ellis & Shintani, 2014). This research resulted in an updated version of the cognitive tradition of SLA known as the information processing paradigm (Johnson, 2004). Two of the most important information processing theories are Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis and Long's (1983) interaction hypothesis. Krashen's input hypothesis is the fourth hypothesis of a larger theoretical framework and suggested that "humans acquire language in only one way – by understanding messages, or by receiving comprehensive input. We progress along the natural order by understanding input that contains structures . . . that are a bit beyond our current level of competence" (p. 2). In other words, Krashen's theory posited that humans learn a second language by being exposed to and comprehending language that is slightly more difficult than the current level of mastery. Krashen also suggested that this hypothesis explains a phenomenon known as the silent period in which children who move to a new country and are faced with learning a new language are often reluctant to speak for several months. Krashen claimed that during this period children are "building up competence by listening, via comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1985, p. 9). Krashen suggested that as a result of ignoring the silent period in adults language teachers often create anxiety around the process of second language learning. In Krashen's model, output plays no role in language development, so this anxiety is unnecessary and counterproductive to language learning.

Another important information processing theory to emerge during this stage of SLA research is Long's (1983) interaction hypothesis which is a response to Krashen's assertion that input is the sole mechanism of language acquisition. While Long agreed with Krashen that comprehensible input was a necessary component of language development, his hypothesis also emphasized the necessity of interaction. Long's theory explained it was the use of language to solve problems or negotiate meaning, especially through conversation, that led to progress in language development. According to Long, both input and output are required for language acquisition. Pica (1987) extended the interactional hypothesis by emphasizing the social relationship between the individuals involved in face-to-face conversation. She suggested that participants who acknowledge their "unequal linguistic proficiencies in the second language, but nevertheless see themselves as having equivalent status with regard to meeting their needs and fulfilling their obligations as conversational participants" (p. 4) provide the ideal opportunity for the kind of interaction that promotes language development.

While Long (1983) and Pica (1987) emphasized the necessity of socialization in L2 acquisition, they did not study how the content of the conversations themselves impact acquisition. Sociointeractional theories, such as Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, view interaction between speakers as more than just a source of input. Rather, these theories view "learning not as something that happens as a result of interaction but as taking place within interaction itself" (Ellis & Shintani, 2014). Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory is primarily a theory of cognitive development, so its fundamental principles related to the developmental analysis of, social origin of, and role of sign systems in the human mental processes are not specific to language study (Johnson, 2004). However, two of Vygotsky's concepts, the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) have been applied

to language acquisition study. The MKO is an expert in a subject, someone who has a better understanding or a greater level of skill than the learner in a specific area or concept. While this individual can be an older adult, it does not need to be (Oxford, 2017). The ZPD is integrally related to the MKO. Vygotsky (1978) defined the ZPD as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). Vygotsky saw the conversations that learners have with MKOs as a form of scaffolding that helps the learner maximize his or her own knowledge while acquiring new forms. Vygotsky’s ZPD has been compared to Krashen’s input hypothesis. Dunn and Lantolf (1998) addressed this comparison and explained that comparing the two concepts is impossible because the ZPD is a metaphorical location in which a learner and an MKO co-construct knowledge while in Krashen’s theory external input slightly above the learner’s current level is presented to the learner to help him/her acquire new language skills.

SLA and Classroom Practices

Much early SLA research focused on the process of learning as researchers hoped that understanding cognitive processes would lead to more effective L2 teaching practices (Ellis & Shintani, 2014). However, SLA researchers have also focused on the act of instruction itself. Most of these studies are focused on determining the effectiveness of specific classroom practices, and this research has helped determine current second language teaching techniques or methods. In the first such definition of the terms related to language teaching, Anthony (1963) defined an “approach” as an accepted set of premises related to the nature of language, teaching, and learning and a “method” as a strategy for presenting language based on the approach. Richards and Rogers (2014) expanded on this definition, describing a method as a “systematic set

of teaching practices based on a particular theory of language and language learning” (p. 3). New language teaching approaches or methods often emerged based on a new desired result for language students (i.e. reading proficiency versus oral proficiency) and fall out of favor once the goals of language instruction change or the method proves to be ineffective (Jin & Cortazzi, 2011).

Historical methods. The oldest method of language teaching is known as the grammar-translation method or the classical method. According to Kim (2008) this method originated in 18th and 19th century Germany and was modeled on the traditional method for teaching classical languages like Latin and Greek. Celce-Murcia (2014) explained that this method emphasized translation of sentences from the native language to the target language, study of grammar rules, and memorization of vocabulary. Since Greek and Latin were often taught as academic subjects rather than languages to be used for communicating, under this method of language instruction there was no emphasis on speaking or listening (Kim, 2008). Instead, instructors or courses using the grammar-translation method hoped to produce students who could read literature written in the target language and who would benefit from the mental stimulus involved in language learning (Richards & Rogers, 2014). The grammar-translation method was the dominant language teaching method in Europe and the United States from the 1840s to the 1940s, and it is still utilized in some countries and for specific purposes today (Zhou & Niu, 2015).

In the mid-to-late 19th century, European reformers began to see a need for increased oral communication among speakers of different European languages and recognized that current language teaching methods were not ideal for creating conversational fluency. This shift in the goals of language instruction led reformers to question and oppose the grammar-translation method in search of a way to produce greater spoken proficiency. This Reform Movement, as it

was known, advocated new ideas related to language teaching including an emphasis on spoken language and oral teaching methods, the idea that students should hear the language before they see it in print, the belief that grammar should be taught inductively, and a desire to avoid translation (Richards & Rogers, 2014). The teaching method that resulted from the Reform Movement is known as the Natural Method. The Direct Method, which is the most widely used form of the Natural Method, is an attempt to make second language learning mimic first language learning (Jin & Cortazzi, 2011). Supporters of this methodology thought that a second language could be taught without any translation or use of the student's native language by using demonstration, pictures, or mime to convey the meaning of new vocabulary words. As a result, the one guiding premise of the Direct Method was that no translation was permitted in the classroom (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). According to Richards and Rogers (2014), there were many limits and drawbacks to the Direct Method. One was that it required a native-speaking instructor, and the classroom was entirely teacher-focused. Student success depended largely on that instructor's abilities. Further, it was not firmly rooted in applied linguistic theory, which led more academically-minded members of the reform movement to question its validity. Finally, the method was often inefficient as it required instructors to perform a variety of movements and actions to get students to gather the meaning of a word when a simple translation would have been much more direct (Richards & Rogers, 2014).

In the United States, the need for effective language teaching techniques escalated with World War II, and the U.S. government commissioned second language researchers to develop a teaching method that would help learners quickly gain conversational fluency. The result was the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), otherwise known as the Army method (Richards & Rogers, 2014). Scheuler (1944) explained that the goals of the program were to teach students to

speak a language fluently and accurately with near native pronunciation and comprehend with near perfect accuracy the speech of native speakers. With these two primary goals in mind, the curriculum omitted almost all reading and all writing. According to Scheuler, students had both presentation and practice classes. In the presentation classes, instructors presented new material in the form of dialogues to the class. The practice class consisted of drill and modified drill of the dialogues introduced in the presentation sessions. While it varied based on college, Richards and Rogers (2014) suggested that participants in the ASTP studied up to 60 hours every week for six weeks at a time. This intensity of study combined with the Army's highly motivated students often yielded impressive results. While the ASTP only lasted two years, the results it produced led researchers to attempt to incorporate some tenets of the method for use in the civilian world (Levy, 1945).

The Soviet launch of Sputnik in 1957 renewed interest in language teaching and learning in the United States, and the subsequent National Defense Education Act of 1958 increased funding for training language teachers and developing language teaching materials (Richards & Rogers, 2014). The Audiolingual Method, which drew heavily on both the Army Method and the similar Aural-Oral approach developed by Charles Fries, was the result of this endeavor. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) explained that, unlike the Direct Method, the Audiolingual Method was rooted heavily in linguistic theory, especially structural linguistics and behaviorism. As a result, the audiolingual methods draw heavily on the concept of contrastive analysis, or attempting to predict difficulties students will have in the second language based on interference from the first language, and instructional procedures associated with the method are repetitive, focused on developing a set of behaviors in students. Jin and Cortazzi (2011) described a typical audiolingual lesson as one that begins with an instructor presenting dialogue containing target

features students will be expected to master including grammatical structures, pronunciation, intonation, stress patterns and vocabulary. From there, classroom practices include students mimicking the pronunciation and intonation of the dialogue, students memorizing the dialogue, and students practicing language patterns through substitution tables. According to Richards and Rogers (2014), audiolingual methods were popular through the 1960s but declined for several reasons. These include the frequent inability of students trained using the audiolingual method to apply the techniques learned to actual conversation in the target language and the shift in linguistic theory away from behaviorism resulting from Chomsky's research discussed earlier in this chapter.

Chomsky (1959) asserted that language must be more than a series of memorized behaviors since people write and comprehend sentences that they have not rehearsed every day. As a result, he determined that language must be a product of rule formation rather than of habit formation. In other words, people must use their own mental processes to intuit the rules of the language they are acquiring. The Cognitive Code Approach was a response to this increased emphasis on the role of human cognition in the language learning process (Larson-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Demirezen (2014) explained "the term 'cognitive-code' indicates any conscious attempt to organize foreign language teaching materials around a grammatical syllabus so as to make way for meaningful practice and practical use of language" (p. 310). This makes the Cognitive Code approach a strong reaction against the Audiolingual Method with this behaviorist techniques. Celce-Murcia (2013) described the Cognitive Code approach as one where emphasis is on giving students the ability to use the language. To do this, Cognitive Code uses individualized instruction where the learner maintains responsibility for his or her own learning. In a Cognitive Code classroom, perfection in grammar or pronunciation is viewed as

unattainable; rather, errors are understood to be an essential part of the learning process and should be used constructively. According to Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011), the Cognitive Code Approach generated a lot of interest in the 1970s, and many teaching materials including both inductive and deductive grammar lessons were developed with this approach in mind. However, no single method ever emerged from the Cognitive Code Approach and, as a result, interest in the approach declined.

Alternative or humanistic methods. Since the 1960s, a number of alternative or humanistic approaches to language teaching have been developed, and although most of these methods are not widely practiced, they are still influential in informing the way instructors think about linguistic theory (Jin & Cortazzi, 2011). These methods include The Silent Way, Desuggestopedia, Community Language Teaching, Total Physical Response, and The Natural Approach. According to Jin & Cortazzi (2011) these approaches, while vastly different in terms of the techniques they employ, all “pay great attention to feelings and self-actualization (as part of the ‘whole person’); to communication that has personal meaning for learners; to class atmosphere, peer support and quality of interaction by encouraging friendship, cooperation and mutual responsibility between learners” (p. 568).

The Silent Way is a method developed by Gattegno and named for the premise that instructors should be silent as much as possible in the language learning classroom (Gattegno, 1972). Before venturing into the field of foreign language teaching, Gattegno was a curriculum designer for reading and mathematics programs, and his language teaching method borrows many of the same materials, including color-coded charts and Cuisenaire rods (Richards & Rogers, 2014). His philosophy of learning is based primarily on his observations of the way children learn. From these observations, Gattegno concluded that learning is a self-directed

process in which individuals use skills and tools such as perception, awareness, cognition, imagination, intuition and creativity to create knowledge (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). According to Celce-Murcia (2013), in the Silent Way classroom students and instructors are only allowed to use the target language. Cuisenaire rods of various sizes and colors are used to introduce language concepts which the teacher may model only once. Students then take over the class discussion and must attempt to recall and reproduce what has been said. Instead of speaking, instructors will point to color-coded charts designed to teach vocabulary or pronunciation to direct students toward correct answers. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) noted that instructors in a Silent Way classroom often use hand gestures or mime to elicit responses from students rather than speaking and that students are encouraged to self-correct errors or correct the errors of their peers which helps the instructor of the course maintain silence as much as possible.

Like The Silent Way, Desuggestopedia, originally known as Suggestopedia, is another of the humanistic approaches to language teaching. Georgi Lozanov, originator of the Desuggestopedia method, believed that psychological barriers such a fear prevent students from learning a second language as effectively (Lozanov, 1978). The goal of Desuggestopedia, then, is to accelerate learning by “desuggesting the psychological barriers learners bring with them to the learning situation” (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p. 78). According to Richards and Rogers (2014) the most prominent features of the method are “the decoration, furniture, and arrangement of the classroom, the use of music, and the authoritative behavior of the teacher” (p 100).

Community Language Learning (CLL) is a byproduct of a general teaching strategy called Counseling Learning; both were created by Charles Curran, a Jesuit priest with a

background in Counseling and Clinical Psychology (Celce-Murcia, 2013). Curran (1976) found that adult learners are often intimidated by the learning process and fear that they will perform inadequately and look stupid in front of their peers. To combat this, Curran's method casts instructors as language counselors and students as clients. Larson-Freeman and Anderson (2011) explained that a language counselor is not someone who is trained in psychology, but rather a person who understands the difficulties of learning a second language, the fears students have about language learning, and methods to help students, or clients, turn negative energy into positive feelings. Richards and Rogers (2014) described a common CLL classroom activity in which a student whispers a message he would like to communicate to the group to the instructor in the native language, and the instructor provides that student with the correct pronunciation in the target language. The student then repeats the pronunciation given by the instructor into a tape recorder so that only the student speaking the phrase in the target language is recorded, not the instructor giving the student the pronunciation and vocabulary. Students in the group take turns speaking messages into the tape until a completed conversation exists. This illustrates how CLL reduces student anxiety by removing the possibility of error while producing speech.

Another approach, known as Total Physical Response (TPR), was developed by James Asher based on observations of child language acquisition; TPR attempts to teach language through physical actions (Asher, 1977). The goal of a TPR classroom is ultimately to produce learners who can produce spontaneous speech that can be understood by a native speaker, so writing and reading tasks are secondary to listening and, later, speaking tasks (Richards & Rogers, 2014). Under this method, instructors give commands in the target language. Then the instructor models a physical response to those commands. For example, the instructor may say "stand up" in English, then model the action of standing up for the students. The instructor will

then give the command again, and students will stand up. Students are not encouraged to speak in TPR classrooms; the assumption is that students will begin to speak once they feel comfortable enough to do so. Once students are proficient enough to speak, instructors in a TPR may give a student a command to give a student another command (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

Current methods. While methods discussed up to this point still have some impact on approaches to second language teaching in classrooms today, most of them are no longer practiced entirely or exclusively. Current second language classrooms are dominated by three main approaches: Communicative Language Teaching, Task-based Language Teaching, and Content-based Instruction (Richards & Rogers, 2014).

In the late 1970s to early 1980s, the field of second language teaching began a shift from an approach focused on linguistic structure to one dedicated to developing communicative competence (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Hymes (1972) coined the term “communicative competence” and identified four essential components of communicative competence: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Hymes suggested that up to that point, language courses had been primarily concerned with linguistic competence. In other words, language teaching had been focused on making sure students understood rules associated with grammar, vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation, morphology, and semantics. He suggested that to be fluent in a language, learners needed to also focus on the other elements of communicative competence, which include things such as understanding when to speak, choosing appropriate utterances based on context, producing oral and written texts in different modes or for different situations, and recognizing and repairing communication breakdowns before they inhibit understanding. Communicative

Language Teaching, then, is language instruction that aims to develop in learners all four areas of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is not like other methods in that it does not have a single set of prescribed classroom techniques (Larson-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). A number of researchers have focused on this ambiguousness associated with CLT. For example, Harmer (2003) suggested that “the problem with communicative language teaching (CLT) is that the term has always meant a multitude of things to different people” (p. 289). Similarly, Spada (2007) explained that the answer to the question of what CLT is depends on the person giving the answer. Littlewood (2011) identified several problems associated with defining CLT, including two differing versions, weak and strong, that have different underlying assumptions and a confusion about whether every activity in a CLT classroom must be “communicative” in nature. Richards and Rogers (2014) further explained that there is not a universally accepted text or authoritative model for CLT which has led to a variety of classroom approaches that fall under the CLT umbrella.

Despite these issues, CLT is still enormously influential in today’s language classrooms. Lightbown and Spada (2013) explained that CLT is primarily based on the idea that language mastery requires not just knowledge of structures and forms but also of functions and purposes; therefore, the CLT approach in the classroom places emphasis on communicating meaning through interactive experiences rather than memorizing and repeating isolated grammatical forms. Larson-Freeman & Anderson (2011) reported several additional underlying principles of CLT classrooms. For example, whenever possible, instructors in CLT classrooms make use of authentic language, or texts not specifically produced for the purpose of language teaching like newspaper articles. In addition, CLT curriculum also contains liberal use of language games

because, like real communicative events, games require an exchange of information (Larson-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Further, when playing a game, the speaker also receives immediate feedback on whether or not his or her message has been communicated. In a CLT classroom the instructor's role is to facilitate and encourage communication, and often this requires instructors to create tasks, like games or role play scenarios that students must perform (Larson-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

Because of its use of tasks in the classroom, CLT is often closely linked to another popular approach known as task-based language teaching (TBLT), which was developed based on CLT principles (Littlewood, 2007). TBLT "aims to develop learners' communicative competence by engaging them in meaning-focused communication through the performance of tasks" (Ellis & Shintani, 2014, p. 135). Many proponents of TBLT see it as a logical extension of CLT (Willis & Willis, 2007). Richards and Rogers (2014) explained that the "task" is the essential unit of organization and curriculum in TBLT, so understand exactly what constitutes a task is essential to understanding TBLT's aims. In one of the earliest definitions, Nunan (1989) defined a task as any classroom activity "which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form" (p. 10). Ellis (2003) explained that tasks should meet four criteria: 1) Learners engaged in the activity should be focused on meaning instead of form, 2) the activity should contain some kind of information "gap" that learners must navigate, 3) Learners should rely on their own knowledge to complete the task rather than being taught the vocabulary or structures necessary to perform it, and 4) The task should have a goal beyond simple conversation. According to Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011), one difference between CLT and TBLT is that the activities in a CLT classroom are often designed to practice one specific

language structure or function. However, a task-based activity might not function on a specific function or form. Instead, it may require students to use all the language resources available to them to accomplish the outcome desired from the task.

Another classroom approach based at least in part on CLT principles is known as Content-Based Instruction (CBI) or Content-Based Language Teaching (CBLT). In CBI, the syllabus is organized around the content students will learn in the course rather than around linguistic features (Richards & Rogers, 2014). Lightbown (2014) defined CBLT as a combination of instruction in an academic subject and a new language. According to Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) the “content” in CBI can be a theme that engages the interest of the learners or an academic subject that learners are required or motivated to learn. Snow (2017) noted that both theme-based and subject-based models of CBI are popular in ESL and EFL classes of all levels and settings. Richards and Rogers (2014) explained that the growth in the popularity of these courses has occurred for a number of reasons. One of these reasons is that CBI courses apply the CLT principle of authentic communication in a way that fills the real-world needs of students. In a course where learning the content is just as important a goal as practicing language, there are plenty of opportunities for real communication.

All of these methods of instruction developed and explored by SLA researchers have been designed as approaches to dealing with the unique set of language concerns encountered by non-native learners of a language (Hyland, 2003). Instead of focusing strictly on developing pedagogical responses to the learning challenges facing L2 students, some researchers have chosen to study these differences between L1 and L2 students learning English directly. For example, in one of the first well-known reviews of studies comparing first and second language writers, Sylva (1993) found that “L2 writing is strategically, rhetorically and linguistically

different in important ways from L1 writing” (p. 669). These difficulties vary based on the circumstances, personality, learning style, proficiency level of each individual student and can be cognitive, social, cultural, or linguistic in nature (Whong, 2011), and because of these differences, the educational needs of L2 students differ from those of L1 students (Sylva 1993).

Issues related to language are those most likely to be addressed by an ESL instructor or course, and they are the ones students are most aware of in themselves. Hyland (2003) explained that students are best equipped to identify their language-related difficulties and that students often identify inadequate grasp of grammar rules and vocabulary as their main barriers to English proficiency. Hinkle (2015) confirmed that these students are correct about their own limitations and explained “at present, research has clearly and unambiguously demonstrated that L2 writers’ skill level in vocabulary and grammar disadvantage the quality of their formal prose” (p. 80). Hinkle’s assertion (2015) is supported by decades of research that indicate that not only is there significant difference between the texts produced by native speakers and non-native speakers, but that those differences also persist even after years of language learning and result in simple texts containing primarily conversational language features (Carson, 2001; Ferris & Hedgecock 2005; Hinkel, 2011; North, 1986). Because writing is such an important part of the higher education curriculum at all levels, it is also these textual differences that lead language minority students to struggle in their post-secondary careers (Hinkel, 2011).

Language Minority Students and the Role of Community Colleges

According to Mellow and Heelan (2015), community colleges are uniquely American institutions that emerged and grew to prominence as the role of higher education in the United States expanded over time; as the country became less agrarian and more urban, higher education became necessary for larger segments of the population. After World War II the President’s

Commission on Higher Education, also known as the Truman Commission, reexamined the structure of higher education in the United States and formally recommended both improving access to and equity in higher education and expanding the role of community colleges (Gilbert & Heller, 2013). Gilbert and Heller (2013) added that while no specific legislation based on the Truman Commission report was ever passed, “Truman Commission’s vision of expanded access, the development of a comprehensive system of community colleges, and a vastly more involved federal government has largely come to pass, though not necessarily in the time or manner the Commission members intended” (p. 438). Despite this lack of targeted legislation, Mellow and Heelan (2015) noted that rapid social changes throughout latter half of the 20th century changed the gender, racial, and socioeconomic make up of higher education.

Historically, community colleges have filled many diverse roles in the American system of higher education. Writing at a time when the number of community colleges in the United States was growing faster than at any time before or since, Prokopec (1979) explained these functions as preparing individuals for advanced study at a four-year college or university, providing training for a specific occupation, providing general education, providing career guidance services, offering a venue for continuing education, and providing services to the community. While community colleges have not abandoned these early roles, Bragg (2001) suggested that community college missions need to change to fit the rapidly changing American higher education landscape and fill needs created by increasing economic inequality in the country as a whole. Because of the number of often competing missions they attempt to balance, community colleges have been termed “the contradictory colleges” (Dougherty, 1994).

The 1,462 community colleges currently operating in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2017) work to increase access, especially for low-income, minority, and other

underserved populations. Schudde and Goldrick-Rab (2015) explained that “through open-access and low costs, community colleges aim to reduce inequality in educational opportunity by increasing postsecondary access . . . as access to higher education expands, all social classes benefit in terms of educational attainment” (p. 30). According to the most recently released data by the American Association of Community Colleges, in the 2014-2015 academic year, community colleges enrolled 45% of all undergraduates including 62% of all Native American undergraduates, 57% of Hispanic undergraduates, and 52% of black undergraduates (American Association of Community Colleges, 2016). While the cost of obtaining a college degree is increasing nationwide, College Board (2016) showed that community colleges remain the most affordable option. Average community college tuition for the 2016-2017 academic year was \$3,520 compared to an average of \$9,650 for in-state tuition at public four-year institutions, \$24,930 for out-of-state tuition at public four-year institutions, and \$33,480 for private four-year institutions. Kanno and Harklau (2012) found that language minority students are more likely to come from low-income families, and this lack of financial resources often limits college choices to public colleges within commuting distance of home. Further, Harklau and McClanahan (2012) noted that cost also becomes a deciding factor in college choice if a student’s legal status affects his or her eligibility for in-state tuition rates. Because of these financial considerations, the community college system is the mostly likely route through which non-native speakers of English will pursue postsecondary education (Mellow & Heelan, 2015).

Because of their open-access admissions policies, community colleges also devote substantial resources to providing developmental or remedial education to those students who lack the educational foundation to perform college-level work (Adams, 2011). Bailey and Cho (2010) explained that most students who enroll in an open-access institution are asked to take a

placement test of some sort. Based on a student's scores on this test, he or she is labeled as either ready for college-level coursework, or in need of some kind of remedial or developmental coursework before moving to college-level courses. Depending on the specific model of remediation adopted by the school, students can be assigned to up to five levels of developmental coursework. A student assigned to this level of remediation would need to complete up to five semesters of courses before even beginning the pursuit of a degree or certificate (Bailey & Cho, 2010). Mellow and Heelan (2015) argued that developmental education is the mechanism through which community colleges equalize "the opportunity for underprepared students to be successful and to achieve the American Dream" (p. 181).

Various studies of community colleges indicate that most students who enroll require some developmental coursework, and while the numbers vary somewhat, sources universally report that the number is high. For example, Bailey (2009) noted that as many as 65% of students who enroll in community colleges nationally will take at least one developmental course. Adams (2011) placed that number at 60%. Mellow and Heelan (2015) reported that 70% of community college students take at least one developmental class and further explained that, of these students, only 25% of them will graduate within 8 years and only 22% will complete a gateway course in the designated subject area within 2 years. Because of the prevalence of student need for developmental education and the predictions that can be made about the eventual matriculation of students who are not "college ready" when they enter the community college, Hodara and Jagers (2014) asserted that developmental education may unintentionally "stratify educational opportunities within higher education" (p. 247) because it limits access to college-level curriculum for students still enrolled in developmental courses. Because of often poor

outcomes, community colleges have begun to experiment with ways to improve developmental outcomes including accelerating remediation and imbedding remediation (Edgecombe, 2011).

These issues that native-speaking students have with developmental coursework are amplified in non-native English speakers who have all the challenges of mastering subject material with an added obstacle of comprehending that material in a second language (Blumenthal, 2002; Thomas & Collier, 2002). Non-native or ESL students, even those who graduate from American high schools, often test as “college ready” and complete degrees at percentages even lower than their native speaking peers. For example, in one of the earliest studies of language minority students in community colleges, Belcher (1988) found that only 16% of students who enrolled in ESL classes at Miami-Dade Community college completed those courses successfully and, further, that only 3% of language minority students who enrolled at the college graduated within 8 years. Patthey-Chavez, Dilon, and Thomas-Spiegel (2005) tracked the progress of students enrolled at nine community colleges and two universities over eleven years. They found that less than 3% of students who placed into beginning ESL went on to pass the two required college-level English classes. This contrasted with native-speaking students who placed into developmental writing, as 22% of students in this group passed college-level courses. Wilkins et. al (2012) found that 53% of native-speaking 11th grade students in one Texas school district were prepared to read college-level texts, but only 4% of non-native English speaking 11th graders could comprehend those same texts.

Curriculum for Language Minority Students in Community Colleges

According to Hodara (2015), at the community college level, institutions generally have one or two options available for non-native speakers who are not ready to complete college-level work: placement into developmental writing programs designed for native speakers and

placement into a dedicated ESL curriculum. Hodara (2015) further explained that all community colleges typically “offer developmental reading and writing courses to students who do not have college-level reading and writing skills” (p. 244) while colleges with a large enough population of non-native English speakers “may also offer English as a second language (ESL) coursework designed specifically for students in the process of learning English” (p. 244) . These two tracks differ in a number of important ways, and in order to understand the potential impacts of each on language minority students who are placed into them, it is first important to understand ways in which these programs are similar and ways in which they differ.

Developmental English classes are basic skills or remedial classes designed for students who are native English speakers but are not adequately prepared for college-level writing courses. As a result, these classes are primarily focused on developing a student’s writing skills. Aiken et. al. (1998) listed the primary subjects of a developmental writing course as “(a) paragraph and essay structure and development, (b) sentence structure, and (c) grammar usage and mechanics” (p. 219). Charlton (2013) recommended a broader developmental writing course focused heavily on language use skills like grammar and syntax, essay writing skills like developing thesis statements, paragraphing, revising, and using documentation styles, and the critical thinking skills necessary to generate college-level content. Most of the assignments in a developmental English class are written or build to a written finished product. Because of some research that suggests longer sequences keep students from persisting toward graduation, in recent years there has been a push to shorten the number of developmental classes students require (Mellow & Heelan, 2015). Hodara and Jaggars (2014) explained that this often includes accelerating the sequence by embedding the basic writing course in with the first college-level composition course. At the community college level, ESL courses are those designed specifically

for non-native speakers who are not adequately prepared for college-level writing courses. Instead of focusing entirely on writing skills, these classes often focus on improving reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. While many of the graded assignments will be written texts, these classes will generally have a wider variety of graded assignments (Hodara & Jaggars, 2014).

There are several similarities between the two curriculum tracks. For one, both are designed to teach the basic skills required to excel in college-level writing curriculum. One major similarity is that both course sequences are generally non-credit-bearing. Further, both course sequences may come with negative stigmas for those enrolled in them (Holten, 2009). However, there is some research that suggests that these feelings may be stronger for ESL courses, especially considering the high percentages of students who enroll in developmental English at most community colleges (Lawrick & Esseili, 2015).

Crandall and Shepard (2004) explained that there are also differences between these two course trajectories. They are taught by instructors with different qualifications. Most developmental English instructors have a background in English literature; depending on state and institutional requirements, many developmental instructors have only a bachelor's degree in English with little explicit pedagogical training (Boroch et al., 2010). Most ESL courses are taught by someone credentialed in ESL in some way, which usually requires a master's degree or graduate certificate (TESOL International Association, 2018). Crandall and Shepard (2004) also noted that these two classes draw their curriculum and methods from different theoretical backgrounds. Developmental writing curriculum is grounded primarily in theories of rhetoric and composition pedagogy. ESL courses draw on the foundations of SLA research presented earlier in this chapter. As a result, instructors of ESL courses may adopt one or more of the methods or

approaches discussed earlier in this chapter as part of the curriculum while developmental courses draw on a completely different set of theoretical underpinnings and classroom techniques (Hodara, 2015). According to Bunch, Endris, Panayotova, Romero, and Llosa (2011), ESL courses are also typically offered in longer sequences than developmental courses. While the length of sequence may also be a barrier to students enrolled in ESL courses as it is with students who enroll in developmental writing (Hodara, 2015), many language minority students need this additional time before they find themselves in “mainstreamed” classes where they must compete with native speaking peers (Patthey-Chavez, Dillon, & Thomas-Spiegel, 2005).

While determining which track a student takes might seem straightforward, it is not always as simple as enrolling non-native speakers in ESL courses and native speakers in developmental writing. In fact, course placement at the community college level is a unique challenge with a number of potential consequences for students who are incorrectly placed. For one, L2 or NNS students are a more diverse group than those outside the field often imagine. Di Gennaro (2012) noted that L2 students enrolled at U.S. institutions of higher education may range from international students with previously earned advanced degrees, to immigrants primarily educated in the United States, to students who studied English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in English-speaking institutions. Students from different educational backgrounds have different language difficulties, and as a result they often score differently on placement tests and benefit from different curriculum (Di Genarro, 2012).

Recommendations of the 2009 CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers

As a response to the growing number of language minority students on campuses nationwide and the increasing need to distill the tenets of SLA research into a document that could guide policy and program creation, in 2001 the Conference on College Composition and

Communication (CCCC) issued a Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2001). Updated in 2009 and reaffirmed by the CCCC in 2014, this set of recommendations is divided into six main parts that discuss issues important to ESL classrooms and programs at the college level (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2014). The statement was produced in collaboration with and has also been endorsed by other professional organizations in the field including the TESOL Second Language Writing Interest Section and the TESOL International Association (TESOL International Association, 2010). Each of the six parts of the 2009 CCCC document will be summarized and briefly discussed below.

Part one: General statement. Part one of the document explains the rationale behind its production. This rationale has two parts. The first part is that the number of second language writers enrolled in technical colleges, two-year colleges, four-year institutions, and graduate programs across the United States has increased, especially as many schools have purposefully attempted to increase enrollment of diverse populations. The second part of the rationale behind the document's production is the diversity of the population of second language writers on these campuses. These students are diverse not only in that they come from many different language backgrounds. They are also diverse in that they include "international visa students, refugees, and permanent residents as well as naturalized and native-born citizens of the United States and Canada" (CCCC, 2009, Part One, para. 2) as well as individuals who have various levels of education and writing experience in their native languages and English. Because of this diversity of experience, Part One of the CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers ends with five suggestions for writing teachers and writing program administrators. These include: 1) recognizing the presence of second language writers in the classroom, understanding their needs,

and developing practices that meet them, 2) preparing teachers to work with second language writers, 3) offering and requiring certain graduate level coursework for instructors working with second language writers, 4) learning more about the issues second language writers experience in various classroom contexts, and 5) including the experiences of second language writers in research.

Part two: Guidelines for writing and writing-intensive courses. This section offers suggestions for organizing, staffing, and planning curriculum for writing courses for second language writers. It divides recommendations into the following categories: class size, writing assignment design, assessment, textual borrowing, teacher preparation, and resources for teachers.

Class size. The CCCC recommends a maximum class size of 20 students per class when both second language and native language writers are enrolled in class. When the class is composed of entirely second language writers, the CCC recommends a maximum class size of 15.

Writing assignment design. The CCCC makes four recommendations about writing assignment design in this section. The first of these is that instructors should avoid assignments that require students to have a pre-existing understanding of a specific culture or its history. The second is that instructors should avoid writing topics that require students to write about topics that may be potentially sensitive for students from non-Western cultures. These include “sexuality, criticism of authority, political beliefs, personal experiences, and religious beliefs” (CCCC, 2009, Part Two, para. 2). The third recommendation in this section is that instructors should give students multiple prompts or options for writing that would allow them to

successfully complete the assignment. The final recommendation is that expectations for each assignment should be clearly stated and not left open to individual interpretation or discretion.

Assessment. In this section, the CCCC recommends that instructors evaluate student texts based on a variety of aspects including topic development, organization, grammar, and word choice. Further, instructors should look for areas in which a text succeeds rather than focusing solely on errors. Additionally, instructors should assess texts using a rubric that clearly delineates the criteria for assessment. Echoing the previous section, this section of the text suggests that placement and exit exams should avoid prompts that contain cultural references second language writers may not understand. Finally, this section refers instructors to the CCCC Position Statement on Writing Assessment for general best practices for assessing all student writing.

Textual borrowing. This section explains that second language writers face unique challenges when it comes to incorporating source texts into their own writing. The first of these is that conceptions of ownership of ideas are different in each culture, which may influence the way some second language writing students use source texts. In addition, second language writing students often mimic the sentence patterns and vocabulary from source texts during the process of learning to craft sentences on their own. Additionally, second language writers may be more likely to borrow chunks of text from sources because they lack the vocabulary to recast the passages in their own words. Instructors can help second language writers avoid plagiarism by teaching and regularly reinforcing the concepts of textual ownership and proper citation practices as they exist in the United States. It is also important for instructors to consider a student's cultural and educational backgrounds and experience and confidence in writing in English before accusing a student of intentionally plagiarizing.

Teacher preparation. The CCCC recommends that any writing course containing second language writing students should be taught by an instructor who is trained specifically to work with these students.

Resources for teachers. Institutions should provide resources for instructors who work with second language writing students. These resources may include textbooks, readers, and reference materials. In addition, teachers should be offered incentives to receive professional development related to teaching second language writing students.

Part three: Guidelines for writing programs. This section of the document provides recommendations related to various kinds of writing programs. Given that this study focuses entirely on community colleges, only the sections of the document relevant to programs at community colleges will be summarized here.

First-year composition. This section is divided into two recommendations. The first is related to placing students into the appropriate class, and the second involves whether or not students receive credit for taking courses.

Placement. Decisions about placement should not be made based on race, first language, nationality, immigration status, or scores from standardized tests of general language proficiency. Instead, students should be placed into courses based on their writing proficiency after a careful evaluation of multiple writing samples. Institutions should offer multiple placement options including mainstreaming, basic writing, and second language writing. For residential second language writing students, institutions should use Directed Self-Placement, or the practice of allowing students to use guidance from an advisor to choose which placement option is most appropriate for them.

Credit. Institutions should offer credit-bearing sections of the first-year composition course for second language writing students. Courses that serve as a prerequisite to first-year composition courses should fill foreign-language requirements.

Writing centers. Writing or tutoring center employees should receive training in working with second language writing students since writing centers are often integral to the success of these students in their writing-intensive courses.

Part four: Guidelines for teacher preparation and preparedness. This section of the document recommends that all writing instructors should receive explicit training in working with both native and non-native speaking writers; it identifies four broad categories of pedagogical assumptions that all writing instructors at all levels, in all contexts should consider.

Cultural beliefs related to writing. Writing teachers should be aware that second language writers may come from backgrounds which have different beliefs related to “individuality versus collectivity, ownership of text and ideas, student versus teacher roles, revision, structure, the meaning of different rhetorical moves, writer and reader responsibility, and the roles of research and inquiry” (CCCC, 2014, Part 4, para. 2). These differences in belief can impact a student’s performance in a writing course based on American conceptions of these ideals.

Assignments. Instructors who teach writing should learn how to recognize any implicit cultural assumptions in an assignment and learn to design assignments for second language writers that include clear directions and culturally sensitive prompts.

Building on students’ competencies. Writing instructors should be taught to recognize the strengths and skills second language writers already have so that they can teach students to use those strengths as a bridge to become proficient in new tasks.

Response. Second language writing instructors should approach giving feedback in steps, first looking for those features of the text which are successful and then identifying a manageable number of skills for improvement. Instructors should also make use of tools beyond written comments such as conferencing and rubrics to make feedback more effective.

Sustaining the conversation. Ideally, training for working with second language writers should not come in the form of one-time workshops or guest lectures. While one training session is better than none, instructors will be best prepared for the issues they will face working with second language writing students if training and instruction are on-going throughout their careers.

Part five: Considering L2 writing concerns in local contexts. This section of the document recommends that colleges develop a better understanding of the language backgrounds of the students that enroll at their institutions. This section identifies three ways a college can approach this task.

Building awareness of local multilingual populations. Institutions should make an effort to learn about the multilingual communities that live near the campus. This is beneficial in two ways. First, it helps instructors prepare for the kinds of language backgrounds student who enroll in the college are likely to have. It also provides the college with a potentially untapped group of students who may be encouraged to attend the institution.

Collecting information on language use and language background. Institutions should survey and keep a record of results related to language use among non-native speakers. Again, knowing about student backgrounds can help instructors prepare.

Encouraging cross-institutional collaborations. Institutions should collaborate with secondary schools whose students often enroll in the institution to create smooth transitions for all students, including second language students.

Part six: Selected bibliography. This section includes a partial list of sources consulted by the CCCC in creating the recommendations contained in this document. Many of these sources have been discussed elsewhere in this literature review.

Summary

The number of non-native speakers of English enrolling at all levels of the American education system is increasing, even in states that have not traditionally been home to large communities of immigrants. Because of their open access admissions policies and lower tuition rates, community colleges are the path through which many of these non-native speakers will pursue post-secondary education. Most community colleges now place non-native speakers into non-credit bearing developmental or remedial courses designed for native speakers. For those institutions that offer specialized English as a Second Language courses, decades of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research offer suggestions for curriculum and course design. The Conference on College Composition and Communication's Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers distills much of the most current SLA research into recommendations that institutions can adopt.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which programs for language-minority students at TBR community colleges adhere to the recommendations contained in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers and to investigate the factors beyond these professional recommendations that influence administrative decision-making about these programs and their designs. This study uses a mixed methods approach guided by the following research questions.

1. In what ways do TBR community college programs for language minority students follow the recommendations contained in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers?
2. What variations exist in the way different TBR community colleges incorporate these recommendations?
3. What factors affect the design and delivery of language minority programs at TBR community colleges?

Research Design

This study employs a mixed methods design. Since mixed methods emerged as a form of inquiry in the late 1980s (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) it has been defined in a number of different and often-conflicting ways. In an attempt to reconcile this conflict, Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007) incorporated those varying definitions into the following attempt at a consensus definition: "Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research

approaches . . . for the purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (p. 123). This study is also influenced by Greene’s (2007) definition of mixed methods as research that offers a researcher “multiple ways of seeing, hearing, and making sense of the social world” (p. 20). This definition helps explain my motivation for choosing mixed methods. In this study the quantitative data serves as a method for interpreting or “seeing” the qualitative data. More specifically, the results from the quantitative survey allow me to group the qualitative data for interpretation in meaningful ways. These groupings allow me to see patterns in the qualitative data that would not be perceptible without the quantitative portion of the study.

While it was once met with some degree of controversy and criticism, some researchers including Bryman (2006) have suggested that mixed methods research “has come to be seen as a distinctive research approach in its own right” (p. 97). Others, including Creswell (2011) have noted that the use of mixed methods is growing steadily in a number of fields at least in part because of the flexibility it offers researchers. Choosing mixed methods offers a number of advantages for researchers. Perhaps the most important of these is that “a combination of both forms of data provides the most complete analysis of problems” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 21). Choosing a mixed methods design also allows the strengths of one method of inquiry to offset the weaknesses of another, giving the researcher more data to analyze and helping researchers answer questions that cannot be completely answered by either qualitative or quantitative methods of inquiry alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

I chose mixed methods for this study for several different reasons. The first is that the two methods would answer different research questions. Bryman (2006) explained that one reason researchers choose mixed methods is because quantitative and qualitative research excel at answering different kinds of questions. This study has research questions that can best be

answered using different methodologies. I used the quantitative portion of this study to answer Research Question 1 and 2 and the qualitative portion to answer Research Question 3. For this study, mixed methods is advantageous because the quantitative data itself does not fully address all of the research questions without the qualitative data and vice versa. The quantitative portion of the study gave me the context through which I could interpret the qualitative results.

Quantitative data from the survey provided the best way for me to determine what kinds of questions need to be asked during interviews and effectively group the data gathered through the qualitative interviews.

Design of the Study

This study contains one quantitative strand and one qualitative strand with an interactive level of interaction between them. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) explained that “an interactive level of interaction occurs when a direct interaction exists between the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study” (p. 64). This study used a qualitative priority, which means that the quantitative strand played a more minor role in the study than the qualitative data. The study also used sequential timing with the quantitative strand occurring first. I gathered and analyzed the quantitative data before proceeding on to the qualitative strand. In mixed methods research “mixing is the explicit interrelating of the study’s quantitative and qualitative strands . . . it is the process by which the researcher implements the independent or interactive relationship of mixed methods study” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 66). For this study, I mixed or combined data during the data collection stage. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), “mixing during data collection occurs when the quantitative and qualitative strands are mixed during the stage of the research process when the researcher collects a second set of data. The researcher mixes by using a strategy of connecting where the results of one strand build to

the collection of the other type of data” (p. 66-67). In the case of this study, the collection and analysis of the quantitative survey study built to the collection of the qualitative interviews.

The specific mixed methods approach this study adopted is known as embedded design. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) described an embedded design as one “in which one data set provides a supportive, secondary role in a study based primarily on the other data type” (p. 67). For this study, the quantitative strand came first sequentially. This strand both informed Research Questions 1 and 2 and supported the qualitative strand (Research Question 3) by helping determine the structure, content, and participants of the interviews. More specifically, reviewing the quantitative data helped inform the structure and content of the interviews because, after reviewing the quantitative data, I was already somewhat familiar with the basic design of the ESL program for each school participating in the study. I was able to ask questions specifically designed to elicit why the representatives of the institution choose the specific program design they reported in the quantitative survey responses since I already knew where the programs excelled and where they struggled to meet recommendations. Further, the quantitative surveys helped me identify the individuals who participated most directly in making decisions about the programs at their respective institutions, and these are the individuals I selected for follow-up interviews. In addition, the results of the qualitative strand provided a way to group and compare institutional programs being studied. Based on the qualitative data I gathered, I was able to group institutions into those with low to moderate adherence to the CCCC recommendations and those with moderate to high level of adherence. These groupings based on the results of the qualitative survey will provide a meaningful framework through which the results of the qualitative interviews can be analyzed and compared.

Quantitative Study

The purpose of the quantitative portion of this study was to explore the both the degree to which community colleges within the TBR system incorporate the recommendations contained within the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers and to examine how much variation exists between these programs at various institutions. Quantitative methods were appropriate for this portion of the study because the quantified results allowed me to group schools by the degree to which they comply with the CCCC recommendations. Additionally, having quantitative data allowed me to more easily determine which recommendations received the highest degree of compliance and which were the most likely to not be implemented across all institutions participating in the survey. This information assisted in formulating the questions I asked in the qualitative interview portion of the study. I collected this information using a researcher-designed survey based on the contents of the CCCC 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers.

Instrument Development

Due to a lack of a relevant instrument for evaluating writing programs for language minority students, the data for the quantitative portion of this study came entirely from respondents' answers to a researcher-designed survey which was administered electronically (Appendix A). This survey had three parts. The first part asked respondents to provide basic information about the school and the school's ESL programs. For example, this section asked respondents to estimate to the best of their knowledge how many students enroll in ESL courses at the institution. The second section of the survey consisted of Likert-type scaled questions based on the recommendations contained within the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers and was designed to assess the degree to which these

recommendations have been implemented in each school's program. Each item in this section was keyed to a specific research-based recommendation provided in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers. Questions in this section were developed by identifying suggestions within the 2009 CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers that could be implemented in the community college environment. Then, I developed a question for each one of these recommendations that would allow respondents to report the degree to which their institution meets this recommendation. Questions in this section of the survey all assessed institutions in at least one of the following areas, though some questions assess more than one area: administrative decisions, available resources, classroom practices, instructor qualifications, placement, and recruitment. The final section of the survey asked respondents for information about their own involvement in the ESL program at their institution. This includes specifying their individual role within their institution's program and indicating how much involvement they have in making decisions about the structure of the program. This information helped me identify which respondents would be able to provide the most helpful information for the qualitative portion of the study.

Before administering the survey to these individuals participating in the study, I verified the content validity of the instrument by sending both the survey and the copy of the 2009 CCCC recommendations to an expert panel. This panel consisted of individuals with experience in the field who are employed at a community college outside the scope of this study and are therefore not participants in the study. I asked this panel of experts to first look at the CCCC recommendations and determine which of these recommendations have relevance to the community college environment. I then asked these individuals to determine whether or not the survey would allow respondents to accurately report what happens at their individual institutions in relation to all the

relevant recommendations. Changes were made to clarify questions in instrument based on this feedback from the panel before I administered it to study participants.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was limited to administrators, staff, and faculty (both full-time and part-time) whose work relates to programs for language minority students at each of the 13 community colleges in the TBR system. This included upper-level administrators in charge of academic affairs, English department chairs or deans, ESL program directors, full-time faculty members and adjunct instructors who teach ESL, and any other employees of the college who work directly with institution's ESL programs. There were two reasons for surveying such a wide group at each institution. First, having corroborating responses from several individuals improved the reliability of the quantitative data. In addition, casting a wide net during the quantitative portion helped to ensure that I interviewed the individual most closely associated with making decisions about ESL services during the qualitative portion. The individuals who received the survey were identified through a search of faculty and staff directories available through each institution's website or via phone call to the institution's general information phone number if no online directory existed. In the event that an institution had no separate, specific ESL program, surveys were distributed to administrators in charge of academic affairs, English department chairs or deans, and full-time English faculty members since these are the individuals who would most likely oversee and deliver services to ESL students in the absence of a specific program. Because surveys were distributed electronically via campus email, every identifiable member of the population received a survey and had the option of participating.

Data Collection

Electronic surveys were emailed to the institutional email address of all faculty and staff members who participate in some way in programs for language minority students at each institution. This included upper-level administrators in charge of academic affairs, English department chairs or deans, ESL program directors, full-time faculty members and adjunct instructors who teach ESL, faculty in adult education programs that house basic ESL instruction programs, and any other employees of the college who work directly with the institution's language minority programs. The survey was distributed electronically and administered entirely online since members of the study population are spread across the state. The email that contained the link to the survey introduced the purpose of the study, and the first screen of the survey itself was an informed consent document. Timestamps were recorded for individuals who consent to the survey. The responses to the survey itself were anonymous, but the survey contained a section where individuals were able to supply optional identifying information if they chose to be considered for the interview portion of the study. Only those individuals who provided this information were considered for interviews in the qualitative portion of the study. These individuals were asked to complete a second informed consent form before being interviewed.

From a review of the public directories I generated a list of 391 individuals from 13 community colleges in Tennessee to receive my survey. I included on this list individuals at each college whose job description indicated that they might have some involvement with language minority students. More specifically, I chose individuals based on the job descriptions listed for each in the public directory. I first looked for a separate ESL department at each institution. If such a department existed for the institution, I included every member on the list of survey

recipients. If no such department existed, I included each member of the institution's English faculty instead since ESL programs are most commonly housed in English departments. For each institution, I also included deans or vice presidents of student and academic affairs, directors or coordinators of international education and study abroad programs, learning support professors, directors of institution tutoring services or writing labs, completion coaches and academic advisors. Because each institution within the TBR system is structured differently, I intentionally cast a wide net knowing that most of the individuals who received the study would not actually be the target recipients for the study. As a result, I anticipated that I would have a low response rate for the study. Studies were distributed via email. After two weeks, I resent the survey to those individuals who had not yet responded. In total, I received 33 completed surveys, for an overall response rate of 8.4%. Those 33 responses represent 11 of the 13 community colleges in the system.

Data Analysis

Data from the quantitative portion of the study were used to answer Research Questions 1 and 2, provide a method of meaningfully grouping institutions participating in the study to facilitate analysis of the qualitative data gathered in the second strand of the study, and inform the questions asked in the qualitative, interview driven portion of the study. The first four questions of the survey were used to group the institutions for comparison purposes. These questions all asked about the size of the institution and the size of the program at each institution, and this information was useful for comparing programs of similar size. Schools were not assigned to one distinct group, however. This data was used to compare schools across a variety of groupings including by population and size of program.

The next 25 statements on the survey asked respondents to rate whether a statement described his or her institution, described his or her institution somewhat, or did not describe his or her institution. These questions were keyed to the recommendations contained in the 2009 CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers. I used the results from these questions in two ways. First, I determined an average “score” for each school. To do this, I assigned one point for each “false” answer, two points for each “not entirely true or false” answer, and three points for each “true” answer. Points were totaled for each survey and then averaged to find a mean score for each institution on all questions. If multiple surveys existed for each institution, the mean scores of each participant from the institution were averaged to achieve one score for each institution. From these averages, I got overall picture of how closely each institution adheres to the recommendations in the 2009 CCCC Statement -- institutions with a higher score demonstrate an overall higher level of engagement with non-native speaking students, and institutions with lower scores are less engaged with this group of students. I interviewed individuals at high-scoring institutions about what factors enabled or required such a high level of engagement with the ESL population. Similarly, I interviewed individuals at low-scoring institutions about programs for ESL students have been a relatively low priority for the institution.

In addition to scoring each institution, I used respondent data from the 25 items in part two of the survey to determine a score for each question as well. To do this, I again used the scoring system where I assigned one point for each “false” answer, two points for each “not entirely true or false” answer, and three points for each “true” answer. I used this scale to tally the total points for each question. I divided by the number of respondents for question to find a mean score for each time. Since each item in this part of the survey is keyed to a specific

recommendation in the 2009 CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers, looking at the data this way helped me determine which recommendations are most frequently and least frequently followed across all the institutions participating in the survey. The questions with the highest score correspond to the most followed recommendations and the lowest scores correspond with the least followed recommendations. Ranking the recommendations this way helped me know what questions to ask interviewees about the programs at their institutions.

Qualitative Study

The purpose of the qualitative portion of the study was to learn more about what factors affect the decisions administrators make about programs for language minority students at their institutions. This portion of the study aligns with Research Question 3. Qualitative methods best fit this portion of the study because they allowed me to obtain more detailed, nuanced responses from a smaller number of individuals.

Population and Sample

The sample for the qualitative portion of the study was selected from the respondents to the survey. I chose those individuals for the interview portion of the study from the pool of respondents who indicated a willingness to participate in the interview portion of the study by providing identifying information in the survey. I further narrowed the pool by looking for individuals who indicated a direct involvement in decision-making processes related to the programs at their respective schools based on their responses to Part Three survey questions. Respondents who indicated no direct involvement in the decision-making processes were not considered for interviews. In order to select which individual to interview from each institution, I classified all the respondents to the survey from each school who reported direct involvement in decision-making from highest priority to lowest priority. To do this, I ranked each respondent

based on his or her response to the survey question about direct involvement in decision making. Respondents that reported the highest degree of involvement in making decisions related to the school's ESL program were ranked as highest priority for interviews. Respondents who indicated little involvement in the decision-making process were considered lowest priority. I chose an individual to interview by reaching out to the highest priority candidates first and moving down the list until someone at each school consented to an interview. Since all individuals involved in the ranking reported some degree of involvement in decision-making, any interview with an individual on this list would generate information that is useful for analysis regardless of rank; rank merely determined which individual is approached for interview first. These interviews were conducted either by Skype or by phone and employed an interview guide that was developed after the quantitative results had been analyzed since these interviews were designed to ask questions about that data.

Data Collection

The primary method of data collection for the qualitative portion of the study was interviews with individuals involved in making decisions about ESL programs at the institutions participating in the study. These interviews were primarily unstructured in that one goal of the qualitative portion of the study is to gain an understanding of unique issues and situations at each institution that may have affected decision-making. These issues were more likely to emerge when the interviewee has more control over the discussion. However, I also used a brief interview guide to begin the discussion and to ensure that all interviews retain some degree of uniformity. The specific questions for this interview guide were developed from the responses on the quantitative survey, but they generally focused on the interviewee's perceptions of programs at his or her institution. Before interviews began, participants were given a second informed

consent form to review and sign. Interviews were recorded to ensure accuracy, and after each interview I transcribed the recording and reviewed it for accuracy. Participants were given the opportunity to review the transcript of their interview for accuracy, and at this time they were also able to add or clarify information. Participant privacy was ensured by referring to interviewees by only their job titles and removing identifying markers from participant language before quoting directly from interview transcripts. Transcripts and audio files were encrypted and will be stored on a removable hard drive for the required amount of time.

Data Analysis

The qualitative portion of this study seeks to answer the Research Question 3: What factors affect the decisions administrators make about the design and delivery of language minority programs at TBR community colleges? As Patton (2015) observed, “because each qualitative study is unique, the analytical approach used will be unique” (p. 522). For this study, I chose to let the research question being answered by the qualitative portion of the study serve as a guide for my data analysis procedures. Saldana (2015) suggested that:

Epistemological questions address theories of knowing and an understanding of the phenomenon of interest. Aligned research questions might begin with: ‘How does...?’, ‘What does it mean to be ...?’, and ‘What factors influence ...?’ These types of questions suggest the exploration of participant actions/processes and perceptions found within the data” (p. 71).

Based on this description, the research question that controls this portion of the study is epistemological in nature, and therefore, according to Saldana (2015), can best be analyzed using “Descriptive, Process, Initial, Versus, Evaluation, Dramaturgical, Domain and Taxonomic, Causation, and/or Pattern Coding” (p. 71) techniques.

Based on this information, after completing the interview transcripts and reviewing them for accuracy, I read through them in their entirety to get a “feel” for the data before I began

coding. Then I applied a process that Charmaz (2014) calls initial coding. Initial coding is a “first cycle, open-ended approach to coding the data” (Saldana, 2015, p. 115) that can incorporate other methods such as In Vivo Coding and Process Coding. I selected this method because it is flexible enough to allow for a wide variety of codes, which was necessary when processing information from multiple different interviews. Additionally, while Initial Coding is appropriate for all qualitative studies, it works especially well for interview transcripts (Saldana, 2015).

Once I completed this first cycle coding method, I moved to second cycle coding. Saldana (2015) explained that second cycle coding methods “are advanced ways of reorganizing and reanalyzing data coded through first cycle methods” (p. 233). While second cycle coding is not always required in qualitative research, in this study it was particularly important because of the large number of first cycle codes. The second cycle was where patterns among the various groups identified by the quantitative portion of the study began to emerge. Focused Coding, Axial Coding, and Theoretical Coding are the second cycle coding process most commonly used as a follow up to Initial Coding (Saldana, 2015).

CHAPTER 4
ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which programs for language-minority students at TBR community colleges adhere to the recommendations contained in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers and to investigate the factors beyond these professional recommendations that influence administrative decision-making about these programs and their designs. As Chapter 3 describes, this study incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to answer the following research questions:

1. In what ways do TBR community college programs for language minority students follow the recommendations contained in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers?
2. What variations exist in the way different TBR community colleges incorporate these recommendations?
3. What factors affect the decisions about the design and delivery of language minority programs at TBR community colleges?

The first section of this chapter focuses on analysis of the quantitative survey data, while the second section contains analysis of the qualitative data from interviews with selected participants. The primary function of the quantitative study was to provide information about the programs to inform the qualitative interviews.

Quantitative Study

Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question #1. In what ways do TBR community college programs for language minority students follow the recommendations contained in the CCCC’s 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers?

To answer this question, I used the survey responses to calculate a mean score for each question in the survey that corresponded with one of the professional recommendations in the CCCC’s 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers. One point was awarded for every “false” answer, two points for every “not entirely true or false” answer, and three points for every “true” answer. The total of points each question received was divided by the number of respondents who answered the question to determine a mean score for each question. All questions had mean scores above 1.0 which indicates that all recommendations are utilized to some degree across the colleges in the TBR system. The highest mean score for any question was 2.48, indicating that none of the assessed items were ranked as “true” by all respondents. This shows that none of the assessed recommendations are in place universally across all institutions in the system that participated in the survey. The lowest mean score was 1.20, and the median score for the data set was 1.98. Mean scores for each of the questions are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: *Means Scores of Survey Questions*

Question #	Question Text	Mean Score
5	My institution places students into writing courses based on their writing proficiency.	2.48
6	To help students avoid plagiarism, instructors teaching ESL courses at in my institution teach and reinforce U.S. expectations for borrowing and citing source material.	2.36

Table 1 (continued)

Question #	Question Text	Mean Score
7	When evaluating student essays, instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution consider various aspects including topic development, organization, grammar, and word choice.	2.33
8	When evaluating student essays, instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution focus on successes in addition to errors.	2.32
9	Instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution are formally trained and prepared to address the needs of second language writers.	2.25
10	My institution provides resources (including textbooks and readers) for faculty teaching ESL.	2.24
11	My institution employs enough faculty to teach ESL courses.	2.24
12	My institution actively recruits members of multilingual populations in our service area.	2.20
13	Instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution design writing assessments that do not require substantial background knowledge of one specific culture.	2.20
14	My institution offers a variety of placement options (including mainstream classes, basic writing classes, and ESL classes) for non-native speakers of English.	2.20
15	Instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution take a student's cultural and educational background into consideration when suspecting the student of plagiarism.	2.04
16	Instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution provide students with multiple prompts or multiple options for completing assignments.	2.04
17	My institution collects data related to language use and language background of enrolled students.	1.92
18	ESL courses at my institution are offered for credit.	1.92
19	My institution provides resources (like dictionaries and grammar handbooks) for second language learners.	1.84
20	ESL courses at my institution satisfy developmental writing requirements.	1.80
21	My institution offers enough ESL classes.	1.76

Table 1 (continued)

Question #	Question Text	Mean Score
22	Tutors at my institution have received training on working with second language writers.	1.76
23	My institution limits the number of students in an ESL class to 15 or fewer.	1.68
24	My institution offers incentives for or otherwise encourages instructors teaching ESL to attend workshops on teaching second language writing.	1.64
25	Aside from ESL classes, my institution offers enough services for language minority students.	1.63
26	My institution allows students to choose which course is right for them through directed self-placement.	1.52
27	My institution offers faculty development sessions to help non-ESL faculty learn to work with ESL students.	1.52
28	My institution collaborates with local secondary schools and secondary school teachers to identify language minority students and help them transition to the community college.	1.20

Each question in this section of the survey was designed to assess the participating institutions in at least one of the following areas of practice: classroom practices, placement, available resources, administrative decisions, instructor qualifications, and recruitment. Classroom practices includes questions related to choices teachers in the classroom make including what kind of writing assignments to create, what lessons to plan, and how to address issues unique to language minority students such as the relationship between culture and plagiarism. The placement category includes questions that assessed questions related to how students are assessed and assigned to courses. Available resources refers to questions related to the availability of services beyond classes including ESL materials in the library, tutoring, and resources for non-ESL faculty. The administrative decisions category contains questions related to choices made about programs outside the classroom including the number of faculty members to hire, the number of courses to schedule, and whether or not courses are offered for credit.

Instructor qualifications questions assessed the formal training of the instructors of record for ESL courses and the availability of professional development for those instructors to continue improving their skills. Recruitment questions assessed the efforts institutions made to identify and enroll language minority students. In total, five questions assessed classroom practices, three addressed placement, six assessed available resources, nine measured administrative decisions, four assessed instructor qualifications, and two measured recruitment. Mean scores for each assessment area across all institutions are listed in Table 2.

Table 2: *Means Scores by Assessment Area*

Assessment Area	Mean Score
Classroom Practices	2.22
Placement	2.07
Available Resources	1.91
Administrative Decisions	1.80
Instructor Qualifications	1.79
Recruitment	1.70

Mean scores in each assessment area were above 1.0 which indicated that institutions across the state are practicing recommendations in each area to some degree. The highest mean score of 2.20 indicates that there is room for improvement in each assessment area across the system. Because of 2.0 is the score in the middle of the range of possible scores, scores above 2.0 indicate practices more likely to be adhered to while scores below 2.0 indicate a lower degree of adherence. A score of 2.0 serves as the dividing line since 2.0 reflects the “not completely true or false” response on the survey. Anything above 2.0 then indicates more “true” responses, and a score below 2.0 indicates more “false” responses. The survey data indicate that institutions across the system are more likely adhering to the CCCC recommendations for classroom

practices and placement and less likely to be adhering to recommendations related to available resources, administrative decisions, instructor qualifications, and recruitment. This data informed my interview questions in that after reviewing it I knew to ask respondents to elaborate on what factors allowed them to be successful in classroom practices and placement. This data also made available resources, administrative decisions, instructor qualifications, and recruitment subject areas where it was important to ask respondents to identify barriers or obstacles.

Research Question #2. What variations exist in the way different TBR community colleges incorporate these recommendations?

To answer this question, scores were calculated for each of the 11 institutions represented in the survey responses. These scores were calculated by awarding one point for every “false” answer, two points for every “not entirely true or false” answer, and three points for every “true” answer. Point totals were divided by the total number of questions to obtain a mean score for each institution. For institutions with multiple respondents, an average of these averages was calculated so that each institution had just one final mean score. Mean scores for each institution are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: *Means Scores by Institution*

Question Text	Mean Score
Community College A	2.58
Community College G	2.44
Community College J	2.41
Community College E	2.36
Community College K	2.35
Community College D	2.09

Community College L	1.66
Community College M	1.62
Community College I	1.58
Community College C	1.45
Community College B	1.26

Six institutions had scores above 2.0 which indicated a ranking of “true” or “partially true” on more than half of the recommendations. In comparison to the scores of institutions across the system, this six community colleges comprise the high adherence group. Five of the surveyed institutions have scores below 2.0 which indicated a response of “false” or “partially false” on more than half of the questions. These five community colleges comprise the low adherence group. I received no survey data from Community Colleges F or H.

Qualitative Study

Selection of Participants

Participants for the qualitative portion of the study were chosen from those survey respondents who completed the optional portion of the survey which indicated they would be willing to be interviewed if contacted. Of the 33 individuals who responded to the survey, 14 (42%) indicated a willingness to participate in an interview. These individuals represented eight institutions across the state: Community College A, Community College B, Community College E, Community College G, Community College J, Community College K, Community College L and Community College M. For four of the institutions, Community Colleges A, B, G, J, and L, there was only one individual at the institution who consented to the interview, so those individuals were contacted to schedule an interview.

For the remaining three institutions, I determined which individual to interview by viewing their responses for Part Three of the survey. In this section, participants ranked their involvement in various decision-making processes. Options were “no involvement in decision-making,” “some involvement in decision-making,” and “primary decision-maker.” For each institution with multiple individuals interested in participating in an interview, I calculated a total decision-making score by adding one point for each “no involvement” response, 2 for each “some involvement” response, and 3 for each “primary decision-maker” response. I then reached out to the individuals with the highest decision-making scores at each institution.

The five participants in the interview portion of the study are similar in that they all work for community colleges in the state of Tennessee, and they all work or interact with ESL students in some capacity as part of their jobs. However, they represent different kinds of institutions with different geographic locations. Three of the institutions represented are urban (Community Colleges A, E, and G) and two are rural (Community Colleges J and M). Four of the institutions represented are high adherence institutions as identified by the survey portion of the study (Community Colleges A, E, G and J), and one institution is a low adherence institution (Community College M). The participants also represent different kinds of involvement with ESL programs at their schools. One individual interviewed was the chief academic officer of the institution, one individual was dean of a department that housed ESL classes, one individual was a coordinator of ESL programs whose role was completely administrative, and two individuals were coordinators of ESL programs who also taught full-time within that program.

Conducting the Research

Once I selected individuals to be interviewed, I contacted each via the email addresses they provided on the optional question of the survey form. I contacted a total of 10 potential

interviewees and ultimately conducted 5 interviews. Of the schools where only one individual expressed interest in participating in an interview, interviews were conducted with individuals at Community Colleges A, G, and J, but the individuals at Community Colleges L and B did not respond to my interview request. At institutions where multiple potential interviewees were ranked by decision-making score, the first individual I contacted at both Community Colleges E and M consented to an interview. At Community College K, three individuals initially expressed interest in participating in an interview on their surveys. I contacted all three in decreasing decision-making score order, but no one at this institution responded to my requests.

Since participants were located across the state, interviews were conducted either via Zoom web conferencing software or by phone. Zoom was the method of choice for interviewing as it allowed me to record both verbal and non-verbal communication, but due to technology malfunctions, two of the interviews were conducted by phone. As a result, to maintain consistency in the data, only audio recordings were retained and analyzed for all interviews. Before starting each interview, I ensured that I had received a signed informed consent document. I then verbally reminded each participant that participation was voluntary, that interviews would be recorded, and that I would protect their identities by referring to them only by position title and using pseudonyms for the name of their institution. I used an interview guide (Appendix B) as a rough guideline for each interview, but I also asked follow-up questions when I wanted participants to explore a particular idea further. Notably, I chose not to ask participants their views on the research question directly. Rather, I hoped to encourage each participant to talk about both positive and negative elements of programs at his or her institution with the hope that a more complete answer would emerge from an analysis of the transcript. Each interview lasted between 30 and 60 minutes.

Analysis of the Data and the Emergence of Themes

After each interview was complete, the recordings were transcribed, and the coding process began. The initial coding process yielded a large number of codes (n=81). Through the second cycle coding process of axial coding and pattern analysis, seven interconnected themes related to research question three emerged:

1. Financial or budgetary considerations for the college
2. Administrative considerations beyond budgetary considerations
3. Misconceptions or lack of knowledge about ESL
4. The presence of experienced and dedicated faculty
5. Partnerships across campus
6. The local and national political climate
7. Acknowledgement that programs will never meet all needs

While participants also discussed many other topics, these themes emerged most frequently in interviews and most adequately addressed the research question at hand.

Financial or budgetary considerations for the college. Every participant interviewed mentioned that programs for language minority students at their institution were shaped in some way by financial considerations. Specifically, many interviewees discussed the idea that classes need to “make” or have enough enrollment to support the financial cost of the class in order to make ESL programs successful at their institution or that a lack of programs and services is a direct result of low enrollment in courses during previous semesters. For example, the senior academic officer at Community College J explained that the institution offered no courses for language minority because “that hasn’t really been a demand we’ve seen in our area,” showing that enrollment is the driver for programming at that institution. Further, the ESL Coordinator at

Community College A which has an established ESL program said his biggest concern related to his program was, “Numbers. Because my school needs numbers in order to justify classes and to keep a cadre of teachers hired and to keep resources going. We don't have numbers right now.”

Similar messages were echoed by interviewees at Community Colleges G, A, and M. Individuals at all of these institutions indicated that future growth of their programs depended on or resulted from growing enrollment. The interviewee at Community College G, an institution with a small but well-developed and robust program, explained:

At the time I came in, I think we had a Grammar 1 and 2 that was usually put together. Actually, 1, 2, and 3 at one time were put together. Because that was my first semester that I taught as an adjunct, I thought, oh wow, this is crazy. . . I was juggling a lot there. And of course the students suffer. But you always have that side of, ‘You’ve gotta make,’ and all that good stuff.

This interviewee further explained that, as the program grew, they were able to move away from all multilevel classes except one offered in the summer. Again, she explained the motivation for a multi-level class is “so the class will make” which indicates that course enrollment is a primary consideration. In his interview, the ESL Coordinator at Community College A also mentioned that the same process once occurred at his institution before growth allowed them to stop. He said, “Historically they would combine levels 1, 2, and 3 in one in the evening class. I’m like, ‘I don’t know about the wisdom of that.’”

At Community College M, an institution with a very small and very new program, the interviewee, who serves as the Dean of the English department, explained that her institution is trying to fill just one class with language minority students of any level. She noted that “every semester we build the class, and every semester we cancel it due to low or no enrollment. This past semester we had two students and converted the class to an independent study” which resulted in the instructor teaching the course without pay. She went on to explain:

Right now, we're always focused on how to get the class to make and that's been a huge challenge. As dean I have to think about do I let this class run with four students or how can I schedule the class? Where can I put it or when can I put it to make it most likely for students who need it to be able to fit it in their schedules?

This interviewee indicated that enrollment was one of the primary barriers to establishing the kind of program she would prefer at her institution.

Conversely, at Community College E which has a robust and thriving program with over 300 students every semester, enrollment numbers are clearly viewed as a benefit. The interviewee at this institution explained "classes at the [satellite] campus fill up extremely quickly . . . we've always had confident numbers here at the [satellite] campus and we still do." This assurance that the courses would always be full has allowed Community College E to expand services to other campuses and offer courses for students on non-traditional schedules.

Administrative considerations beyond budget. Interviewees from each college also mentioned administrative issues that extend beyond financial considerations as impacting the design of the programs they offer language minorities. Two of these issues included legal considerations and scheduling difficulties, especially difficulties caused by multiple campuses.

Legal issues or considerations were mentioned by three interviewees over the course of their interviews. Each time, interviewees discussed how their decision-making is impacted by potential legal issues surrounding a decision. Often these legal issues include considerations related to access and documentation. At Community College E, the ESL Coordinator interviewed discussed a program of accommodations such as extra time on in-class assignments or ability to use an English only dictionary that her department wanted to offer. She explained that ESL accommodations are only available to students who complete the required ESL coursework. In order to be able to deny those accommodations to students who do not complete the coursework, they had to involve a legal team and implement a very structured process.

So, we cannot require a student to take ESL courses. ESL courses are a recommendation. They're never a requirement. . . So, what happens here at [Community College E], there was some point in the past: they went through with TBR and lawyers and whatever and they came up with language and a document for what we're calling a waiver of ESL accommodations. . . . So, at [Community College E], a student that completes all of the recommend ESL courses [is] eligible for accommodations in their college level classes. If the student wants an accommodation, they have to come to my office. We fill out out a form. We have a conversation, and then they take that form to their professor. Their professor, instructor signs it, and then they make the arrangements for how the test will be handled. . . it's very formalized. It's an accommodation process that is documented for legal reasons."

The interviewee at Community College G mentioned legal issues two different times in her interview. In both instances, she discussed ways in which concerns over potential legal repercussions altered the behavior of individuals at her institution. In the first occurrence, the ESL coordinator at Community College G discussed the application for admission to the college. She explained that the questions they are allowed to ask on the application to identify applicants whose first language is not English "is just always in a state of flux because of the legal terminology. . . I have always wanted to word it first language, and they won't let it. So they ask what their native language is." In this case, the coordinator explained that her preferences were overshadowed by legal implications of the terms.

In her second mention of legal considerations, the interviewee at Community College G was discussing the reluctance of individuals in various departments on campus to refer a student to her for ESL testing. She explained her perception that individuals on her campus feel uncomfortable referring students for ESL because language spoken is so closely associated with issues like race and ethnicity. She said, "you know, it's like, "Oh, I don't want to profile." And it's not. We're trying to diagnose what students need to help them be successful." In this situation, the interviewee expressed a view that students on her campus are not receiving all the

help they should because faculty and staff on campus fear legal repercussions from their recommendations.

The interviewee at Community College M also referred to a legal issue in her interview. She was discussing placement of students who are enrolling at her institution without the necessary language background for the one ESL course the institution offers. She explained that they didn't feel they had the legal ability to turn the student away, even though the institution did not have a course which would be suitable or appropriate for the student. She noted:

But that student is probably going to repeat English 1010 and a lot of the other classes several times. That's the unfortunate part. We can't turn them away. We are open access. There has not been any services provided, and we really have no way to know how many students we've lost that way.

Along with legal issues, interviewees at four of the five community colleges also mentioned scheduling issues as an administrative consideration that shaped the direction or content of programs they were able to offer. Many of these scheduling issues were related to balancing the schedules of faculty with demand from students. Others suggested that the presence of multiple campuses made it difficult to schedule courses in the locations and at the times that would be most be most beneficial to some groups of students. As previously discussed, scheduling issues are also closely related to financial considerations.

The interviewee at Community College E probably had the most comprehensive discussion about scheduling on multiple teaching sites. She explained that her institution has “five or six different campuses . . . It's kind of crazy. It's hard to keep track of all of them.” Part of the way she chose to deal with these campuses as ESL coordinator at her institution is to limit the number of campuses on which a student can take ESL coursework. She explained that she realized “we can't have everything at every satellite.” She also understood that it is impossible to offer all services at each campus as well. “We don't go out to those satellite campuses to test.

There's just no way I could do that, but those students are coming in because it's part of their admission requirement."

At Community College M, the Humanities Dean I interviewed was attempting to navigate the same issue. She explained that they had never had a face-to face section of English 0870 Developmental English for ESL students "make" and as a result the department had experimented with alternate delivery formats. One semester the instructor taught the course for no pay as an independent study. This instructor traveled between various campuses to meet with the enrolled students in person. The interviewee at Community College M explained that in fall they will try a hybrid course where some of the instruction is delivered online but the instructor will still be responsible for traveling to meet individual students on their home campuses. She explained:

as Dean I have to think about do I let this class run with four students or how can I schedule the class? Where can I put it or when can I put it to make it most likely for students who need it to be able to fit it in their schedules. And how can I make it accessible for students who do not take classes on the main campus?

In addition to considering the needs of students who attend classes at satellite campuses, interviewees also suggested that program administrators spend substantial time planning when and how to offer courses. The ESL Coordinator at Community College E suggested that purposeful scheduling is important. The goal is to schedule classes to create as many opportunities for students as possible. She suggests:

One of the things that's very tricky for me as coordinator . . . but in the past we've been really good about doing is this. When we make class schedules, we make class schedules in such a way that we try to eliminate overlap and create opportunities. So, that means we have levels two, three, and four. Level four classes at night are offered on the main campus. Level two and three, if we have the population, classes are offered at night on the [satellite] campus.

In other words, she fills classes on the satellite campuses which house the largest part of the institution's language minority population before deciding to offer courses on the institution's main campus as well. Level four courses are the only ones that get offered both locations because it's the level large enough to support both courses.

The interviewee at CC G also mentioned the importance of scheduling, but she discussed a different method for making sure students are able to fit the most appropriate class in their schedules. She explained:

We have all of our writing classes, we offer at the same time. So they meet Tuesday/Thursdays from 12:45 to 2:10, no matter what level. . . We're doing samples the first day, because if we need to switch them, it's an easy thing to do in their schedule. And it doesn't mess them up.

This allows her to ensure that students are enrolling in the most appropriate skill level of a particular course since placement can change over the summer or between semesters. At the same time, she also acknowledged that this schedule probably does not meet the needs of all students in her service area.

There's some that can't come just because their work schedule, they're working during the time that we're offering the classes. So that's one thing I'm looking at is I'd like to be able to offer at least some basic classes maybe at night.

While she acknowledges this need, she also knows that staffing additional courses would be difficult with the resources her institution currently has available.

Misconceptions or lack of knowledge about ESL. In addition to the administrative decisions that participants indicated had a direct impact on the structure and content of programs for language minority students at their schools, all interviewees also discussed ways they felt ESL was misunderstood by people at their institutions and the effects these misunderstandings had on the availability of programs or classes, the success of students enrolled in non-ESL coursework, and the ability for students to get information from various campus offices. Some of

the participants described a general lack of understanding of who language minority students are and where they come from; others described a lack of understanding of how to work or communicate with them.

Two interviewees dealt with the tendency of some individuals to associate the term ESL with only Spanish-speaking individuals. This emerged two ways throughout the course of the study. The interviewee at Community College J equated the terms ESL and Spanish-speaking several times over the course of the interview. When asked generally to describe what services they offer for ESL students, the interviewee responded:

We really don't. In years past, we've offered ESL as dual-enrollment for some of our communities. We have a Hispanic population in our service area . . . there's a couple areas where there's a large Hispanic population, but we've done some ESL as non-credit. But, as far as offering credit courses or anything that would be in their academic schedule, we have not.

Similarly, when asked about the resources her campus provided for language minority students outside the classroom, the interviewee responded "In our learning center, we have folks who are fluent. We offer free tutoring for our students, and we have tutors, several of them are fluent in Spanish, especially, that's usually the one that we see." In addition, the interviewee also told me about two specific language minority students who she recalled excelling at the institution, and both of these students were Spanish-speaking.

The interviewee at Community College M also mentioned the common association between the term ESL and Spanish-speaking individuals. As a native Spanish-speaker and in her previous role as chair of the Foreign Languages department, "if there was any student in need around campus that was identified by a faculty member, they would usually send the student to me." The interviewee also noted that, "Because there are a number of Hispanic individuals living in our community, people assume that all our ESL students are Hispanic." Later in the interview

she clarified that this is not the case. She explained that “We have students from a broad background, not just students from Mexico. A student just last week was in my office from Egypt. I know of others from India and several countries in Africa.”

The interviewee at Community College G also made a note of the broad number of countries and languages represented in her program.

We have a really wide variety of nationalities. . . Even in one class, there might be 10 different nationalities in there. So it’s not as prone to be cliques gathering with the people that speak your same language. You almost have to get past that, because there’s just too many. There’s so many varieties, it kind of opens it. I think it really helps us really understanding diversity. Because you realize, ‘Wow there really is something. That’s an interesting part of that culture that I didn’t know.’ They can appreciate it.

She also discussed ways in which this causes problems in campus, especially in the admissions department. She noted that sometimes students from Africa and other countries where English is recognized as a native language are referred for ESL testing just because they come from an African country. She explained “They don’t do this with students from England or Canada. I think it’s definitely a case of lack of awareness.” The interviewee from Community College A made a nearly identical claim. He explained that:

The Advising Office will hear an accent and send them over, see a passport, send them over. But if sometimes ... I've had two students from Africa who were sent to me, who were educated in English and their first language was English and then they were sent to me. So then I had to take rounds with the Advising Office to be like, "Look, just because they have a foreign passport doesn't mean they're ESL students."

Another misconception that emerged in the interviews is the idea that ESL students are only international students on student visas. In reality, many of the participants discussed the fact that F1 students make up very small percentages of their ESL program populations. At Community College E, the institution with the largest ESL program interviewed, the director

noted “the majority of our students are immigrants and refugees. We have very, very few F1 international students.” She further clarified that in a program with over 300 total students

We have maybe three, three to ten. It’s very, very low numbers, and so we’re really catering to students who have been living in this country who have been integrated into working and maybe school culture with their children and things like that. So they usually have a higher speaking and listening ability compared to their reading and writing because they’re just not reading and writing in our culture.

This same pattern of low numbers of F1 students also emerged in the interview with the ESL

Coordinator at Community College A. He explained:

After the quarter to a third of F1 students, we have a nice mix of students who already have master’s [degrees] in their home countries and in their first languages. I’ve got one girl now who has a few master’s degrees. And then we have some that are moved to the U.S. in the end of high school, and they sort of got pushed through the high school system. And now they’re here with a high school degree but not really a working command of English, and not ready for college.

He also noted that it is not unusual for ESL students to have American citizenship. He described a pattern he noticed in his own institution with Chinese students who enroll. He reported that [Community College A] “is starting to get some Chinese students who have citizenship but no English.” While the interviewee was uncertain about how exactly this happened, he speculated that the students were born in the United States, grew up mostly in China, and returned to the U.S. for college.

Interviewees also described a lack of understanding of how to work with language minority students on the part of individuals outside the ESL departments. At Community College E, the interviewee noted that individuals in offices like advising and admissions are often not knowledgeable in how to communicate with ESL students. She explained:

One of my biggest concerns is that every time we try and do something like recruiting on campus or financial aid, that the people who are talking may not really understand how they need to talk to ESL students. They don’t understand that they need to break down concepts, use simpler vocabulary, pause a little bit more, repeat things.

The interviewee found this to be the biggest problem at large events like orientation. Orientations can be complicated and inaccessible even for students whose first language is English. In addition, the information ESL students need in orientation is not always the same information that native speakers of English might need. The interviewee at Community College E worked to remedy this problem by creating a new ESL orientation. To do this, she took the presentations used in all orientations and “started breaking down the slides and adding different components to it because our students have things that they need to understand that the other staff on campus don’t realize.” Some of this new information included the following:

Our students need to have someone talk to them about, culturally, what it means to be sleeping in a classroom, or, culturally, what it means to be eating and getting up and leaving and coming back and talking on your phone. There’s totally a different perspective, sometimes. Our students need to understand. So, what that means is that we need more ESL resources to help facilitate whatever admissions or financial aid or records, whatever they’re doing, because they don’t necessarily have the same scope of . . . their material is different, and it may not be the best for our audience.

Interviewees also talked about a lack of understanding of how to work with ESL students in the classroom on the part of non-ESL faculty and staff at the college. They also talked about a certain rigidity or unwillingness to help facilitate learning for ESL students due to assumptions they may have made about the student’s intellectual ability or capacity for learning. This theme was especially prominent in the interview of the ESL Coordinator at Community College A. He revisited this theme three separate times in his interview. All three mentions were completely unprompted. As part of his introduction, he had this to say:

But what I'm seeing is, teachers outside of ESL, I have to go searching high and low to find out which teachers are going to be patient with my students. So when I'm advising my students for classes outside of ESL, I have to be really careful that I'm putting them with teachers who are going to be patient. We had one class for example that was offered through the Communication department, that was a Voice and Articulation class . . . [the professor who taught the course] was really impatient with any ESL students and he didn't like having them really and he is like, if one student couldn't pronounce "interdental fricative" properly, he would like, "I'll try to get him to do it but if they can't

do it I can't work that." . . . I get calls from teachers, "What do I do about this student? They have a foreign accent." And I don't know if it's a sign of the times. I've been having to go at bat for our students left and right. Explain to teachers that speaking a second language is not a cognitive disability but it's actually just a language issue.

Later in the interview, the interviewee discussed how to build a schedule for a student who needs to be registered full-time with the college but who does not yet have the language skills for many of the college level courses across the college. According to the interviewee, physical education classes often fill part of this role but that students eventually tire of taking only elective courses. He suggested that the problem is made more difficult by the lack of willingness on the part of faculty at the college to work with ESL students. He explained:

Now, and especially since a lot of teachers are not going to be totally ESL friendly. I have been sort of adamant about explaining to mainstream teachers, that like, "Look, we get all these students coming in with special needs or learning disabilities and whatever and the ESL students will probably work harder than any of them. I mean I don't want to pooh-pooh on students with learning disabilities, but these kids will come in and will probably work harder for you. It's a small investment for getting a lot back. Some [the instructors] do, some don't. I'm learning which teachers are good and bad.

Toward the end of the interview, the interviewee returned to a discussion of the professor from the Communications department who taught the Voice and Articulation class. In this part of the interview, the interviewee made it clear that he had had issues with this professor on both a professional and personal level over his unwillingness to work with ESL students. The interviewee told me:

I did a hashtag a couple weeks ago and I just said, "shit monolinguals say." And honestly, some of this stuff that came out of his mouth in his life he deserved that. And I was like, "Okay, you know. It's so amazing to me that we're in a country full of immigrants, with a history of immigration, and people don't understand what immigrants go through or what the nature of immigration is."

The ESOL Coordinator at Community College G also discussed this theme. When I asked her what the biggest obstacle she had to overcome to grow her program was, her answer

was just two words long: “subliminal prejudice.” When asked how she worked to overcome it, she explained her process:

Really maybe telling, talking. Just when because I would go with students a lot of times, now my work study sometimes will walk a student over to wherever they're going, because it's easy to get lost on campus. And so when I discovered that that was really a problem, I would walk with students, and then was sometimes supporting them, so there wasn't any communication gaps. And then later telling accomplishments of students or what they've gone through. When you hear somebody's been in a refugee camp and half their family has been killed. It does put a different light on things.

For this interviewee, it was important to help individuals on campus see ESL students as unique individuals with diverse and often complicated backgrounds. She felt that it was easier to have patience with individuals when you know their stories.

The dean at Community College M also talked about both misperceptions of ESL students and the need to identify which individuals would be most likely to work with ESL students to help them succeed. Specifically, she identified two common misperceptions that she saw in individuals on her campus. She explained that, because there is a large Hispanic population in her community, “people also assume that means that they are undocumented or that they will have gotten all the ESL services they need through their time in the K-12 system. In my experience, neither of those things are true.” Beyond this, the interviewee at Community College M also mentioned the idea that not all faculty members will be equally receptive to working with ESL students. However, instead of attributing this to stubbornness or a dislike of immigrant and non-English-speaking students, she attributed it to a lack of awareness:

I think a lot of them would be receptive to modifying curriculum or other classroom practices to help ESL students, but they just don't know that it's something they need to do. One thing I'd like to focus on is offering professional development to all faculty on campus about how they can facilitate learning for ESL students. Also, it would be helpful to find a list of those faculty members who are most willing to work with these students to be successful. That would be a helpful resource for advisors working with ESL students.

The presence of experienced and dedicated faculty or administrators. All five interviewees noted the relationship between programs for language minority students and the presence of experienced and dedicated faculty members or administrators on their campuses in some way during their interviews. Three of the interviewees, those who serve as coordinators of ESL programs at their institutions, did this by describing the many tasks that are required of their jobs and the many hats they wear and roles they fill for their students. The two interviewees who were administrators in positions of oversight over ESL programs expressed this relationship by describing individuals who make a difference at their institutions.

At Community Colleges E, A, and G, the interviewees all serve as the ESL program coordinator on their respective campuses. Two of the interviewees have teaching duties associated with the coordinator role (A and G) and one coordinator is purely administrative (E).

At Community College E, the interviewee described her job like this:

My job has many, many, many responsibilities. I wear lots of different hats. . . . I do all of the testing for placement into our program. I coordinate. I'm responsible for curriculum, working with our full-time faculty. We have six full-time faculty. We have anywhere between 10 and 15 adjuncts that I'm responsible for managing. I work with the dean and the campus director because I work at two campuses. . . . I do all the testing.

Later in the interview, she also explained three more roles to me. She manages the ESL student ambassadors program, she does all ESL orientation and advising, and she's in charge of all ESL recruitment efforts. She does this for a program with more than 300 students enrolled each semester. Throughout the interview, the interviewee at Community College E made it clear that the number of responsibilities she juggles prevents her from taking on any new tasks or improving any existing ones. She simply has too much work to manage without assistance. She expressed frustration with this often. She said, "Testing season can be really rough for me because it's physically demanding. It's mentally demanding, and my time just gets eaten up by it."

I love my job, but that's, I think, one of my biggest challenges." When she expressed an idea for improving the program in the future, she mentioned that she hasn't had a chance to implement it because of "an issue of capacity and time on my part." Toward the end of the interview, she noted that Community College E doesn't recruit from the community as much as it would like because "it's exhausting. The only person that does it is me. It's part of my job, but it's something that gets done when I can squeeze it in." From her interview, it seemed clear that the program at Community College E is as robust as it is because of her dedication.

At Community College A, the ESL coordinator I interviewed teaches in the program as well as doing the administrative work for the program. He was recently hired as the ESL coordinator for Community College A when the previous one retired. He described her as being a tremendously hard worker who sacrificed a lot to build the program:

Now [the previous coordinator] single-handedly did a lot of it and gave of her time and of her energy and of her blood. She would, everything a student came in basically, a couple of times a semester when students came in, she individually advised all of them. She would individually administer the Michigan test to each one of them.

He also mentioned that he had all the responsibilities of the previous director. This statement is true of his own responsibilities in the program as well. In addition, the coordinator at Community College A also saw it as his job to be an advocate for his students. He told me "I find myself as of late having to go more to bat for some students to get teachers to give them just a little extra consideration." Further, at times he almost adopted a paternalistic, nurturing tone when referring to the ESL students at his institution. For example, he explained, "I sort of end up being the go-to advisor for all ESL folks. I get to herd my little ducklings." Ultimately, from the interview, it was clear that the interviewee from Community College A went above and beyond the minimum required by his job:

I give them all my cell phone number, and I tell you what. That's good and bad too because I get texts and calls at very inappropriate house, but for two weeks before the start of the semester and two weeks after the start of the semester, I'm putting out fires and helping them deal with [issues].

He also expressed concern that people might not continue to give this level of service to the students should he ever change jobs. He worried that "I have to make sure, if I eventually go anywhere, or if I don't stay here forever, that someone else is really schooled on how to follow up."

At Community College G, the ESOL Coordinator is also a full-time reading professor. Like the other coordinators I interviewed, her position also includes teaching courses, scheduling classes, advising students, and recruitment. She also viewed advocating for the program as a large part of her role at the institution. Until her program was able to grow to the size it currently is, one of her goals was working to achieve buy-in from other individuals on campus. She described it as "you're kind of one voice screaming into the void, screaming into the white noise that nobody hears." She also does "extra" advising on top of her regular duties advising students enrolled in the language training program at her institution. She tells all her ESL students:

If English is not your first language, that they have the benefit of two advisors. They'll always have, I'll help them. And then they'll also have advisors in their area, but it just gives them another person to connect to. And retention, all those things, a lot of it has to do with do students have somebody they can connect to? That they feel safe? Because so many times there's so many questions, and we don't even know what their questions are. They don't know what their questions are.

Like the other coordinators, this reflects her willingness to go above and beyond for her students. However, at times in the interview, she also expressed the idea that fulfilling the administrative requirements of her position takes up time that she feels she could better use teaching. She expressed this conflict when she said:

I want this program to grow, and instead of document it . . . that's the thing, on the administration side, they want everything on paper, and they want numbers. I just, I

want it to work. I don't care what it looks like on paper. Anyway, I know, but it's supposed to be that way. I do respect that, and I do understand that. But there's that side of me that's like, "Let's just do it instead of talking about it and writing about it."

A bit later in the interview, she also expressed a reluctance to take on any more responsibilities because they would interfere with her personal life. During a part of the conversation where we discussed applying for a grant to fund an expansion of her program, she said "Well, I'll be honest with you. I don't really want to write a grant." When I asked why, she elaborated:

I feel bad about that, but also, and I know other people have this too, but my mom has dementia and lives with me, and things are . . . there's been a lot of variables going on. I hate, it's really, I feel hesitant to commit to something, because I really don't know what my life's going to be like. And so, I have to admit, that's part of my reasoning.

From this exchange, it seemed that the interviewee was torn between wanting what's best for her institution and also knowing what needs to be done for her family members.

The interviewees at Community Colleges J and M also demonstrated this theme albeit to a much less significant degree. At Community College J, which has no ESL program, the interviewee discussed another individual who has played a significant role in bringing international students to the institution. She described the individual who chaired the institution's International Education program this way:

Our leadership in International Education has suffered some major illnesses and has since retired. So, the population of students that we would bring into campus under International Ed. has declined over the last couple of years. We only have two on campus this year. We had as many as 20 in the past. But, he did a great job, fluent in multiple languages, and so he was kind of their point of contact and, of course, oversaw them if any... Let's not call them barriers, any hurdles that they might encounter while they were on campus. And he did, like I said, a great job with that. And there was no, to my knowledge, we never brought a student on campus that he wasn't fluent in their language.

While this individual was not directly related to providing language programming for these students, the interviewee is describing the same kind of commitment that can be seen in the

interviews with the ESL Coordinators described above. This interview also shows how removing that one dedicated individual can cause a program to collapse.

The interviewee at Community College M also mentioned the efforts of a dedicated faculty member in parts of her interview. At Community College M, the program is just beginning, but already there are plans to give the instructor of the course additional duties, including becoming advisor of record for all language minority students the institution identifies.

We are also lucky in that we happened to have an ESL credentialed faculty member in the department. I know the previous dean had an interest in ESL, but because we have never had classes, it hasn't been a part of the hiring criteria for the department, But one of our full-time faculty members has both an MA in English and a graduate certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, so she has been a big help in being able to be successful in those areas you mentioned. She will continue to be an integral part of the program as it grows.

The interviewee at Community College M also provided some additional evidence to show the dedication of this employee to the program. She explained that the most recent version of the ESL course offered was an “independent student where the instructor travels to meet the students.” Scheduling the course as an independent study means the instructor was not compensated for teaching to course. Essentially, the instructor was willing to volunteer her time to help the program gain ground.

Partnerships across campus and community. Several interviewees discussed the importance of partnering with other offices on campus or organizations within the community to best serve language minority students. In terms of campus partnerships, two interviewees mentioned the admissions office of their institutions as vitally important since they help to identify and funnel students into the program. They also help recruit and enroll international students. The interviewee at Community College E insisted, “you need to have a strong partnership with your admissions office. At [Community College E], we have a great admissions

director who is always willing to work and listen to what we need.” One reason the interviewee at Community College E gave for having a strong working relationship with the admissions office is that it is often more difficult for ESL students to be admitted:

They don't have the same resources. They have to come up with a transcript from their high school. It had to be an original transcript. It can't be a photocopy or something on their phone or a fax, and so, they have to come in with this document that has the hand stamps and the embossing from their school. If it's not in English, they have to get a certified translation. That means it has to come from a certified translator, somebody that we approve. . . . Again, the majority of them are refugees and immigrants, but they maybe haven't lived in Tennessee for a year, so they may not qualify for in-state tuition. Many of them do, but it's through an extra process in the admissions office. It's a residency appeal process where they have to show documentation that they have lived in Tennessee. They moved here because of a spouse and the spouse owns a home so that they can show this residency. Or, it could be they have an I-94, which is a refugee document, and it just needs to be explored a little bit more.

If the employees in the admissions office were not willing to do the extra work to help students track down their necessary paperwork or interpret that paper work, many of the students at Community College E would not be able to enroll.

The interviewee at Community College E also noted that staff at the admissions office at certain campuses are especially helpful with identifying ESL students based on their documentation while other campuses without the strong partnerships between the ESL instructors and the admissions staff miss this benefit. She explained that when a student comes to the admissions office on certain campuses, the staff members know how to process that information to place the students in the appropriate classes. For example, if the student brings in a college transcript from Egypt, the admissions staff worker might say, ““Hey wait, you haven't taken the Michigan test.” They'll go in and click in the computer and put a hold on the account until that student takes the Michigan test.” This, however, is not true at all campuses:

What do we have, five or six different campuses? It's kind of crazy. It's hard to keep track of all of them. But, on certain campuses, they're very alert to this and on other campuses, they're not ... on the [satellite] campus, because this is really our main campus for all of

our students, they're very good at identifying it, but there are still people who might work in the front office on a part-time basis that aren't as alert to it. But, again, [admissions worker], who is so fabulous, she is really great at picking things up and going, "Oh, wait a minute. We need to re-look at this." And then, like I said, we have other campuses, that, they don't have as many students and they don't have an ESL program, so they may slip through the cracks a little bit more. But, on one of our campuses, on the West Side, the campuses over there tend to ... they're starting to identify more and more students, and they have to go to the main campus to get tested.

The importance of partnering with the admissions office also came up in the interview with the ESL coordinator at Community College A, and the reasons he gives for the necessity of this partnership are similar to those expressed by the interviewee from Community College E:

I've been really lucky, the admissions office, has our primary point of contacts for international studies, for the students on F-1 visas. She was really friendly with [the previous coordinator] and she's been really friendly with me and so basically I have her on speed dial. And for the two weeks before, three weeks before the start of class, she and I are calling each other and getting students' issues worked out. So it's good because I can handle a lot of problems when they come up.

Cultivating these partnerships across campus offices helps students register efficiently and enter the right courses at Community College E and A.

The local and national political climate. Three of the five interviewees mentioned ways in which local politics or national politics impact their ability to educate ESL students on their campuses. While almost everyone commented on the uncertainty related to immigration nationally, others also noted state and local level political issues that have impacted the programs and services their institutions offer. One participant even noted how political events worldwide can impact programs in the United States.

At Community College A, the ESL coordinator discussed political issues at the national level and international level. He explained "We have a small population. Right now there's only a couple of us teaching ESL, but we're hoping the numbers will grow again maybe once the political climate gets better." When asked to clarify, he responded:

You might know that in the U.S., ESL numbers, international student numbers, international student applications are down really low, like 50% kind of low as far as new international students joining us in the States. And then on top of that, you add the sort of the anti-immigrant climate into it. We have just international student numbers are down everywhere. Now meanwhile they're totally up in Canada. Fancy that. People say, "Hey, welcome!" versus people who say, "We're building a wall."

The interviewee at Community College A clearly views the current political climate in the United States as detrimental to his goals for the program. Similarly, he noted that his own program is also dependent on international politics as well:

I think ESL in the States is historically it ebbs and flows with socio-political ties. You know in the 70s there were tons of Iranian students and then there was the hostage crisis and there were no more Iranian students. Then there were tons of Japanese students in the 80s and then there weren't. And then, post 9/11 the Saudi government had a scholarship for all Saudi students. There were tons Saudi students in the US, like a 100,000. Right. So it all comes and goes. So where right now, we have a bunch of Syrian and Yemeni students at our school. I've a lot. It's interesting. And that's as a relate to the wars going on in their countries. So numbers go up, numbers go down, populations change. Now we're getting more Venezuelan students more too.

In this way, the coordinator at Community College A views part of his role as being flexible, waiting for the next wave of immigrants who need to study English abroad, and working with those students once they arrive.

At Community College G, the ESL Coordinator also noted that the size and appearance of the program at her school fluctuate as a result of political issues. Toward the beginning of the interview, while explaining how her program grew into its current iteration, she explained:

It's definitely gone through peaks and valleys. Sometimes that's the political climate. Sometimes it may just be the political climate of the school. For example, we had a kind of an off-site campus that was in [a suburban area]. A lot of our students really like that, because some of them were undocumented, and so they were nervous about driving. So we actually had [a church in the suburban area] was allowing us to use part of their facility. It was actually nice, centrally located. We were doing really pretty well. And then there was some kind of tiff between the President at the time with the elders at the church there. And so it wound up getting shut down. They just no longer let us use their site. So that just kind of killed us, because we started back up from scratch. That's an example.

In this case, it's a local disagreement between leaders at the church serving as an off-campus site and the leaders of the institution that impacted the program. However, the interviewee at Community College G also noted that she had seen national political issues play a role in programs at her institution as well. More specifically, she suggested that the "hostile" political climate toward immigrants may be impacting enrollment at an off-campus site:

We opened a new campus in [a specific neighborhood]. When that campus opened up, we were pretty excited about it for ESOL wise, because there happens to be a large Hispanic, mainly Hispanic, but there's other nationalities there too. But, we started out trying to offer classes there and it just... it never took off. I think in that particular culture they were very wary. I think they were suspect thinking that this was some trick.

While they were attempting to bring services into the neighborhoods where students could most use them, the students were afraid to sign up, perhaps because of the association between the college and the government. Students saw the school as a threat to their security in the country and did not enroll.

The interviewee at Community College M also mentioned the national political climate in reference to a question about factors keeping the institution from being able to move forward or improve the programs for language minority students:

One thing I suspect that may have something to do with it is the current political climate. Politics isn't really something we talk a lot about on campus, but I suspect that something that was already an uphill battle has become even more challenging in the last couple of years.

As a follow up question, I asked her to clarify whether she was referring to local politics or politics at the national level. She specified that she could see how issues at both levels were impacting programs at her institution:

At the national level we have a president who has not been shy about the way he feels about immigration and refugees. I think that definitely impacts who comes here, and it's had an impact on our state political system as well. Our state doesn't always make it easy for immigrants to get higher education with things like the EVEA. I think it was last year that we had a bill that would've let undocumented students enroll and pay in-state tuition,

but it was defeated by just a vote or two. Because of the conservative nature of the area, I think we probably have a lot of people on our campus who have similar feelings about the issues as our national and state politicians.

While she pointed to both state and national level political problems, it seems that the political issue the interview is most referring to is an anti-immigration legislation or a perceived anti-immigrant sentiment that has risen to prominence since the 2016 presidential election.

Acknowledgement that programs will never meet all needs. It seems counterintuitive that dedicated professionals with a passion for helping language minority students would even consider that they might not be able to help every student who enters or attempts to enter their programs. However, the idea that it's difficult or perhaps even impossible to design programs to be broad or inclusive enough to meet the needs of every English language learner in the service area came up in almost every interview.

The interviewee at Community College E expressed this view when she discussed the levels our courses offered by her institution. Instead of a full program (which would be four levels of ESL coursework), her institution only offers three levels of courses that “flow towards learning support, that developmental level.” Before the interview stepped into her current position, the institution offered all four levels. However, administratively, the college made a decision to eliminate that level from the curriculum. That leaves a large group of students who have a need for coursework but are unable to meet that need through Community College E's program. One option might be enrolling Level 1 students into the Level 2 course, but that felt unethical for the interviewee. “We have to turn them away because they don't even have a level proficiency that could really show any success at college. . . . We're not gonna place students in our ESL classes just to have ESL students.”

To help combat this problem, Community College E has designed a preparatory course for students who cannot test into the ESL program. This course does not carry college credit, but it also substantially cheaper than the cost of college tuition:

So, what we did is we have devised, through our workforce office, a combined skills class. It's a reading/writing/grammar class, and that's a level one class that is fitting that need for students who want to come here but just really don't have those reading and writing skills, yet. So, we started that in the summer, this past summer of 2018, and it was a mad dash. We're like, "Hey, this is a great idea. Let's do it," and we threw together a class and we had about 11 students, and then we continued in the fall with 14 students, and then this semester, January, we are running two classes, and I know the numbers are at 13 or higher and we've capped them at 15, so, super exciting to see that we have this thriving level of students that want to be here. They're paying cash to take these classes because it's not part of our curriculum, so it's not part of financial aid.

While this sounds like an excellent solution to the problem of not being able to meet the needs of the students who seek admission to the program, it is not perfect. Despite the availability of this additional course, they “still also turn a lot of students away.”

The ESL coordinator at Community College G also struggled to accept that there were some students that their program would not be able to help. Unlike Community College E, Community College G does offer all four levels of coursework. Before the program grew to this level, however, students who placed below the levels the institution offered were referred to adult education. The issue the coordinator sees now, however, is that the TBR mandated corequisite model for developmental coursework is hurting ESL students. In this model, students take English 0870 (the developmental course) and English 1010 (the college-level course) at the same time. Ideally one course is supposed to serve as a support for the other. The coordinator at Community College G does not see it working this way for her ESL students:

We have more and more students coming in from high school that English is not their first language, so they take the ACT, they come in, they score below 13, and a lot of the schools now, if they're zero to 13, everybody's in learning support. And now they're with the co-requisite, and if it's really a second language issue, not a disability issue type thing, then what happens is they wind up doing very poorly in that combination class, the co-

rec, that's six credit hours. Some of them are coming in with either Tennessee Promise or the Tennessee Reconnect, and then they fail. . . . Right, they can't get passed it. And, it really is, it's also really hurting them as far as their other courses, because they can't keep up with the reading level. They're exhausted, because they're trying to translate, if they're Tennessee Promise, they've gotta be in 12 credit hours. A lot of our students are working full time. I mean it's just, it's a recipe for disaster that when you only look at one part of it, you don't realize how bad the combination gets. And sets them up for failure.

While the corequisite model is designed to help students who struggle, for this population the coordinator at Community College G sees it as a hinderance. Unfortunately, because the model is mandated by the state, she feels powerless to change it. In this case, she feels like she could do something to make the coursework easier for the population in question, but she's unable to due to restrictive state policies.

For the coordinator at Community College A, the issue is helping students register for a full-time course load when they don't have the English ability to complete content courses. This became a problem at the institution especially because of athletes who come on visas that require full-time attendance:

The hard thing with them is that if they come in with a low level ... They have to have 12 hours. It's hard to get them into enough classes to fill up their schedule. I got three students that came to me, two students, sorry, that came to me from Brazil, they're here on the soccer team, and they came with little to no English. The soccer team brought them because, and they've got some program where they're going to bring more Brazilian soccer girls, but their English was next to nothing. So those are the level 1s and I can even put them in level 2, but the teacher was going to have to repeat them. But then the third one, I'm like, "I don't know." We put him in a yoga class or something. But then it's tough after a while because then they were like, "We don't want to take PE this semester, we want to take something else. We want to take a real class. And I was like, "Your English isn't quite up to real class."

In this scenario, the coordinator is helping the students in the sense that they are enrolling in coursework at the college, but he's not helping in that he's forcing students to take courses they're not ready for or to delay their time in country because of their language abilities. Because

there are not enough students in this situation, the program can't support an expansion just for the few who do arrive.

For both Community Colleges J and M, the issue seems to be that they can't help the students because they can't find them and get them enrolled into classes that would help them improve their language skills. When asked what her institution does for ESL students on campus, the interview at Community College J responded, "We really don't. . . I didn't want to just tell you on the phone or tell you via email. . . but we really don't [do anything for ESL students]". At the same time, the interviewee also mentioned that her service area contains several relatively large Hispanic communities and a number of immigrants who come to the area for science and research-based jobs. As a result, it's possible that Community College J has a number of currently enrolled ESL students. It may just be that they are unaware that they're not helping these students because they don't realize that there are supports they could be providing for them. At Community College M, the interviewee recognizes that the single course currently offered by the institution is not enough to help the language minority students already present on campus. However, the campus seems to be stuck in a loop here they cannot expand services until they recruit more students, but they cannot recruit more students until they have more courses to place them in. The interviewee reported "we had two students officially enrolled this past semester, but I think there was a lot more need on the campus."

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUMMARY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent programs for language-minority students at TBR community colleges adhere to the recommendations contained in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers and to investigate the factors beyond these professional recommendations that influence administrative decision-making about these programs and their designs. This study incorporated both a survey of relevant individuals at community colleges across the state and follow-up interviews with select survey respondents.

The survey in this study was designed to gather basic information about which TBR institutions across the state have programs for language minority students and to what degree those programs utilize the CCCC's 2009 recommendations about language minority students. Data generated by the survey indicate that schools across the state are implementing the recommendations but not to an equal degree. Similar, survey data also show that certain kinds of recommendations such as those related to classroom practices and placement suggestions are more likely to be followed than recommendations related to available resources, administrative decisions, instructor qualifications, or recruitment.

Follow up interviews were conducted with five survey respondents from community colleges across the state. Interviewees were asked questions about both the survey data from their own institution and collective survey data from the study as a whole. After transcribing and coding the data, themes emerged indicating there are a number of factors that impact the structure and design of programs for language minority students beyond professional recommendations. These include financial or budgetary considerations, administrative

considerations beyond budgetary matters, misconceptions or a lack of knowledge about ESL students, the presence of experienced and dedicated ESL faculty on a campus, partnerships across a campus, the local, state, and federal political climate, and an acknowledgement that no program can meet the needs of all learners. While originally the survey was intended to address the first two research questions and the interviews were to address research question three, after analyzing the data it was found that both data sets are helpful to understanding all three research questions.

Conclusions from the Study

Research Question 1

This research question asked in what ways do TBR community college programs for language minority students follow the recommendations contained in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers? The results of the survey showed that all of the recommendations were followed to at least some degree, but not all recommendations were followed equally. Across the system, institutions were best at adhering to recommendations related to classroom practices such as designing assignments intentionally, helping students learn U.S. expectations of plagiarism and teaching various aspects of essay writing in addition to grammar. One reason that institutions system-wide may have scored higher in this area than others is that many of the individuals who took the survey had roles in the classroom as indicated by their "low level of decision-making" scores on the second part of the survey. Instructors who took the survey would be most aware of the efforts they make in the classroom and most willing to acknowledge their own efforts.

However, another explanation for the success of institutions in the area of classroom practices relates to a theme that emerged in the qualitative strand of the study. This portion of the

study found that institutions with growing or thriving ESL programs benefit from the presence of experienced and dedicated faculty members on their campuses. These faculty members are willing to take on multiple tasks and fill multiple roles at the institution. Usually this appears as a full-time faculty member who is also responsible for serving as program coordinator for ESL on the campus. These individuals are experienced and pedagogically knowledgeable, so it makes sense that they would incorporate that information in their classroom practices.

Survey responses indicate that, system wide, institutions struggle most with following the CCCC 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers recommendations related to recruitment. The statement “my institution collaborates with local secondary schools and secondary school teachers to identify language minority students and help them transition to the community college” had a mean score of 1.20 on the survey. This indicates that almost all respondents identified that their institution does not participate in this practice. Again, the interview data is instructive here for considering why this item may rank so low. Based on the interviews, it seems that most frequently the task of recruiting students falls on the shoulders of the ESL program coordinators at each institution. These employees often have more work than they can do taking care of the students who are already enrolled, so the work of recruiting more students to the program is pushed to the bottom of the list of tasks they must complete. This is evidenced in the interview with the ESL coordinator at Community College E who said that recruiting is “exhausting... the only person that does it is me. It’s part of my job, but it’s something that gets done when I can squeeze it in.” Other interviewees made similar comments related to recruiting as reported in Chapter 4.

Between the most followed practices and the least followed practices fell those related to policies used to place students into classes, available resources like tutoring and library

materials, administrative decisions like which courses are offered and how many students enroll in each, and instructor qualifications and professional development. For the most part, institutions tend to follow most of the recommendations of the CCCC related to placement. Placement is the process of evaluating a student's skill level and choosing the most appropriate coursework for that student. There was, however, one placement question on the survey where the mean score was relatively low (1.52): "My institution allows students to choose which course is right for them through directed self-placement." Based on the interview data, there are two possible reasons why schools are not adhering to this particular recommendation. One is related to expediency. Most of the institutions in the interview who offer more than one level of ESL course place students using a specialized placement test called the CaMLA or the Michigan Language Assessment test. The institution sets "cut scores" for each level of course they offer, and make placement decisions completely based on these scores. That way they can ensure that students are enrolling in the most pedagogically appropriate level of each course for their current skill level.

The other possible explanation for the low mean score for this question is that institutions do not recognize that they are doing a form of directed self-placement when they make ESL courses optional for students. The schools represented in the interview portion of the study with established ESL programs all allow ESL students to opt out of ESL coursework if they choose. The interviewee at Community College E explained this best when she said, "we cannot require a student to take ESL courses. ESL courses are a recommendation. They're never a requirement." This is a form of directed self-placement. When the student takes the placement exam, the individual who interprets the results suggests which courses the student must take. The student then ultimately makes the choice for him or herself about where to enroll. It seems likely

that other schools also use a similar practice but were unfamiliar with the term “directed self-placement.”

Institutions across the state reported moderate to low adherence for both available resources such as tutoring and ESL library materials and administrative decisions like how many courses were offered and when. Several considerations that emerged from the interviews seem relevant to explaining why these numbers are higher. First, some of these decisions are heavily related to budget. The interviews show that budgetary considerations are one of the most important factors for determining the scope and shape of ESL programs at TBR community colleges. Those who make decisions about scheduling, the number of students to enroll in each course, and the number of tutors to hire must consider whether they are allocating resources fairly and appropriately. In addition, the interviews also show that scheduling is difficult, even without financial considerations, especially for institutions who operate more than one campus.

The survey also reported low-to-moderate adherence for a group of survey questions that measured instructor qualifications. At first, this seems to contradict the theme of the presence of experienced and dedicated faculty within the program. However, looking more closely at the survey questions for this category yields an explanation. This section includes four questions:

- (1) Instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution are formally trained and prepared to address the needs of second language writers,
- (2) Tutors at my institution have received training on working with second language writers,
- (3) My institution offers incentives for or otherwise encourages instructors teaching ESL to attend workshops on teaching second language writing, and

(4) My institution offers faculty development sessions to help non-ESL faculty learn to work with ESL students.

Of these questions, only the first addresses the preparedness of the actual program instructors. That question had a relatively high adherence score of 2.25. The other three are actually assessing the preparedness of other individuals on campus or the ability of all faculty, both ESL and non-ESL, to receive professional development to improve their ability to work with language minority students. With mean adherence scores of 1.76, 1.64, and 1.52 respectively, these are the questions lowering the average adherence score for this category.

It is unsurprising that these questions have low adherence scores based on the themes emerging from the interviews. The ESL coordinator at Community College A mentioned that tutors at his institution receive no specialized training: “We’ve been lucky that we’ve had some people who come to us with an ESL background. To be quite honest, we’ll take warm bodies and patience.” Other interviewees rely on tutors who are bilingual. The interviewee at Community College J indicated that the only special qualification their ESL tutors have is that they speak Spanish. The interviewee at Community College M specifically said that they need money to hire tutors with ESL training.

Similarly, several of the interviewees spoke to the lack of emphasis or availability of continuing education for ESL professionals and the lack of professional development for non-ESL faculty related to working with ESL students. For example, the interviewee at Community College A mentioned that he was only able to attend the TESOL Conference (the major conference in the field) in Atlanta, GA this year because he obtained outside funding. The interviewee at Community College E suggested that she could only attend because she redeemed the hotel points that her husband accumulated through work travel. Further, several interviewees

expressed a need for professional development for non-ESL faculty, but none indicated that it is being offered on their campuses.

Research Question 2

This research question asked what variations exist in the way different TBR community colleges incorporate these recommendations? To answer this question, mean scores were established for each participating institution. Community College A had the highest mean score at 2.58 while Community College B had the lowest mean score at 1.26. While I attempted to interview individuals at each institution, only individuals at Community Colleges A (2.58), G (2.44), J (2.41), E (2.36), and M (1.62) consented to an interview. Based on these mean scores, one might easily assume that Community Colleges A, G, J, and E all have similarly robust programs. Based on the interview results, however, this is not the case. Community College E has, by far, the largest and most robust program of the institutions studied, while Community College J has no program at all, despite having a higher mean score than CC E. While the program at Community College M is new and fledgling, it is more developed than the one at Community College J despite drastically different mean scores.

After reevaluating this data, it seems that these scores are not actually assessing the programs themselves. They are assessing the perceptions of the individual respondents about the programs at their schools. For example, the program at Community College E is large and would be impressive to most any individual from another school who assessed it. However, the individuals who completed the survey about that program are very familiar with where it works well and where they would like to see improvements. Many of them are still upset that their institution lost the Level 1 course they used to offer, so those critiques are reflected in the scores they gave their institution. This also explains the relatively high mean score for Community

College J which has no established coursework for ESL students. Based on the interview at Community College J, they don't see a need to incorporate any more ESL services as they don't believe they have a need for them. As a result, when responding to a survey question like "my institution employs enough faculty members to teach ESL courses," they rate that statement as true for their institution, even though they have no ESL faculty members, because they also don't see a need to hire more. This is different than Community College M which also has a very small program. This institution had a much lower mean score because the respondents do see a need to improve the services, they provide for language minority students.

Research Question 3

The final research question asked what factors affect the design and delivery of language minority programs at TBR community colleges. Themes that emerged from the interviews provide a number of answers to this question. These themes include: financial or budgetary considerations, administrative considerations beyond budget, misconceptions or lack of knowledge about ESL students, the presence of experienced and dedicated faculty, partnerships across campuses, the local, state, and national political climate, and an acknowledgement that programs cannot meet the needs of all learners.

Financial or budgetary considerations seem to be one of the biggest issues that administrators consider when making decisions about which services and programs to offer for language minority students on their campuses. Participants frequently discussed the need for classes to "make" so that the ESL program can support itself financially. This is a consideration at both schools with large programs and small programs, but for schools with no program or programs just getting started, it is of primary importance. To combat this problem, administrators are often tempted to combine students of multiple skill levels into one course section, which

causes extra work for the instructor and keep students from getting the individualized time and support they really need. This same impulse also prompts administrators to place too many students into each class, against the CCCC's professional recommendations which suggest that courses should be capped at 15 students.

Other administrative considerations also shape the programs for language minority students at TBR community colleges. Two of these issues are legal considerations and scheduling difficulties. Participants in interviews suggested that they question the legality of most decisions they make related to the program before they implement them. This shows that the institutional bureaucracy very much plays a role in deciding what things get done and how for students in this population. This is not necessarily a negative occurrence, however, since it is always important to make sure all proper policies and regulations are being followed. However, it does seem that there may be more consideration of the legal implications of decisions related to language minority students because it is so closely related to federal immigration laws and regulations. People tend to have a certain amount of fear related to these issues and the consequences of accidentally making a mistake related to these laws.

In addition to laws, interviewees also suggested that scheduling plays a role in the design and delivery of services and programs for language minority students. Most interviewees found it difficult to balance the desire to offer services for ESL students on all campuses with the reality that resources are limited. It seems that the most successful institutions have chosen not to try to offer ESL services on all campuses. Most of the institutions with the most robust programs limit ESL coursework to one or two campuses. Usually these campuses are chosen deliberately to be nearest the communities of students they will serve. In other words, they attempt to locate the classes as close to the students as possible, especially since many ESL students express

reluctance to drive long distances. Evening courses are another scheduling issue that administrators struggle with when attempting to accommodate the students they serve. Several interviewees expressed a desire to begin offering courses in the evening to meet the needs of students who work during the day. However, for most, a scarcity of resources has kept this from being a viable option. Administrators don't want additional courses scheduled at night to pull enrollment away from courses that are offered during the day. Finding qualified instructors to teach these courses is also a problem that keeps the idea from being fully implemented.

The attitudes, misconceptions, or general lack of knowledge people on campus have about ESL students also shape the design and delivery of programs on campuses. One major misconception that surfaced in all interviews is the idea that people on campus generally do not know who ESL students are or where they come from. Some believe that all ESL students on their campuses must be native Spanish-speakers because they are not familiar with the immigrant communities in their areas. Others believe that all ESL students are F-1 visa students who have traveled to the United States solely for educational reasons. The reality of the situation is much more complex. Even the most rural campuses across Tennessee have ESL students from a variety of different language backgrounds, and most ESL students across the state immigrated for reasons other than education. When individuals on campus do not know the backgrounds of their learners, they may not realize they are not meeting the needs of the students in their communities.

The design and delivery of programs for language minority students across the state are also impacted by non-ESL faculty members who do not know how or unwilling to work with language minority students in their content courses. Some interviewees noted that faculty members were resistant to offer course modifications or curriculum modifications for non-native

speakers in their courses. Others found that faculty members are willing to work with their ESL students, but that they have no training about how to do this effectively. This lack of knowledge is a barrier to providing effective services for ESL students, and it creates obstacles for the individuals who provide advising services to these students.

The design and delivery of programs for language minority students are positively impacted when campuses have an experienced and decided faculty member in charge of them, by putting too many responsibilities on these individuals can negatively impact programs. Interviews indicate that most successful ESL programs across the state have coordinators who also teach in the program. These coordinators are responsible for teaching their assigned courses, testing, advising, managing disputes, writing and administrating grants, and recruiting students to the program. They serve as the front line or first friendly face ESL students encounter on campus, and often they make strong connections with these students. However, these individuals are often overworked and given so many responsibilities that they cannot possibly complete them all successfully. Overworking these key faculty members hurts their ability to make positive impacts in the classroom as well.

Instead, programs seem to function most effectively when ESL coordinators work in partnership with other offices across campus. Specifically, having strong working relationships between the admissions offices, advising offices, and ESL departments positively impacts an institution's ability to provide services to language minority students. These partnerships make it easier to identify students who need placement testing, enroll those students in the correct classes, and recruit new students from the community to help the program sustain itself financially.

One factor that impacts the design and delivery of programs for language minority students on campuses across the state is significant in that people on campus have no ability to control it. Several interviewees discussed the ways in which local, state, or national politics impact their ability to serve students. At the local level, disputes between campus administration and community partners can make it difficult to offer programming for students where they need it. At the state level, laws such as the Eligibility Verification for Entitlements Act (EVEA) and citizenship or residency requirements attached to programs like Tennessee Promise and Tennessee Reconnect make it difficult to reach as many ESL students as program administrators would like. Nationally, the often-hostile conversation related to immigration and the role of immigrants in the communities make non-native English speakers reluctant to register for courses. Similarly, changing national policies surrounding immigration laws have decreased the number of international students seeking visas to study English in the United States, which has changed the design of programs across the state.

Ultimately, the final factor identified by interviews as impacting the design and delivery of programs and services for language minority students across the state is the understanding that there is no way to design a program that meets the need of every ESL student in a given service area. No institution has unlimited resources, and part of making decisions about a program is deciding how to maximize services to the largest possible group with the resources available. Interviewees at institutions across the state have made these decisions in different ways. Some choose to eliminate the lowest level of classes and refer those students to community partners or adult education classes. Some choose to combine multiple levels or skills into one class. At other institution, this means only offering coursework on select campuses. Regardless of the specific

decisions each campus makes, this consideration is one that has an impact on the design of programs on all campuses.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Practice

There are several takeaways from this study for individuals looking to establish or improve the programs for language minority students at their own institutions. The first is to establish partnerships with local communities of immigrants and local non-profit organizations who provide services to those immigrant communities. These partnerships can help recruit students to the program, but they may also be valuable resources for students that do not yet have the language skills for the program being constructed or who may not be able to pay the cost of college tuition.

Another recommendation based on the results of the study would be to provide professional development related to working with ESL students to everyone in a student-facing role on campus. This includes administrators and staff working in offices students visit like admissions and advising, faculty teaching courses in departments across campus, and both peer and professional tutors across campus. This training serves two valuable purposes. First, it gives these individuals basic tools for working with students whose first language is not English, and these tools can make lectures more accessible and help improve student performance in the course. Additionally though, offering widespread professional development on campus also sends the message that language minority students are important to the institution and raises the visibility of this often marginalized group of students.

For institutions who are just beginning to establish programs for language minority students, one recommendation would be to budget for a grace period in which the department

covered the cost of the course even if it did not meet the minimum enrollment threshold usually used to determine whether courses were kept or deleted. This would take a few of the financial considerations out of the picture and allow the course to become established on campus before worrying about the numbers of students. A class that is repeatedly scheduled and deleted may never “make” because advisors are unsure of the course and will not place students in a class that is not guaranteed.

Additionally, the results of the survey suggest that institutions looking to establish or improve ESL programs should not necessarily be concerned about making courses accessible on all of the campuses the institution operates. Rather, most programs represented in the study have found success by scheduling courses on the campus closest to the communities where most second language students live and work. To do this, it is important for campuses to know their learners. Before attempting to schedule classes, the department should conduct a needs assessment for the local populations of English Language Learners. This will help schedule the courses at the most advantageous time for both the learners and the institution.

Recommendations for Additional Research

This study also leads to several recommendations for additional research. First, since the instrument used in the survey strand of the study did not accurately measure which institutions are doing the most for language minority students in the state, further research would be needed to accurately obtain this information. One way to do this might be through document analysis of each institution’s catalog and course offerings, but a survey with non-Likert type questions might also be more functional than the one used in this study.

In addition, because of the low response rate for the survey, it would be beneficial to repeat the study again and select participants in a different way. For example, instead of casting a

wide net and hoping the survey found its way to the appropriate individual, a more intentional recruitment of participants may be warranted. One way to do this more effectively might be through a snowball sample where the research could draw upon the natural networks that form between ESL professionals through professional development opportunities and system-wide working groups. Similarly, an expanding the number of survey participants could also lead to an expansion of the number of individuals participating in interviews. For a true system-wide look at this issue across the TBR, it would be necessary to interview individuals at all 13 community colleges across the state.

This study focused on the way administrators and faculty members perceive programs for language minority students at TBR community colleges. Another avenue for further research would be to examine student perceptions of those same programs. Not only would surveying students themselves about their needs help reveal needs that are not being met, comparing student perceptions to faculty and administrator perspectives would help decision-makers understand differences in the way both groups identify problems and prioritize services.

This study also yields recommendations for research beyond improvements that could be made to the research design of the study itself. One area of needed exploration is related to outcomes. The current study did not address outcomes, and little research exists on whether implementing the professional recommendations contained in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers actually improves the outcomes for students enrolled in programs. Knowing which recommendations specifically lead to improved outcomes for students would be beneficial for program administrators who must balance competing interests.

This study was also limited in that it studied programs for language minority students in a state where non-English-speaking residents make up a relatively low but growing percentage of

the population. Repeating this research in a state with a higher number of language minority students would yield data more plentiful data. Studying the way states like California, New York, and Texas have responded to the needs of language minority students at the community college level would give individuals at institutions across Tennessee models for how scale and modify programs as the number of non-native English speakers living in the state grows.

Summary

This study was conducted to determine to what extent programs for language-minority students at TBR community colleges adhere to the recommendations contained in the CCCC's 2009 Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers and to investigate the factors beyond these professional recommendations that influence administrative decision-making about these programs and their designs. This study contained a survey sent to individuals at all 13 community colleges in the TBR system and follow-up interviews with 5 survey respondents from different institutions. Analysis of the results of the study indicates all TBR community colleges across the state are utilizing the CCCC's 2009 recommendations to some degree but that no single institution has fully implemented every recommendation. Additionally, the survey showed that, across the system, the most followed recommendations are those related to classroom practices. Other areas assessed including placement, available resources, administrative decisions, and instructor qualifications were all implemented in that order. The least followed are those concerning recruitment of learners into the program.

Finally, the study results also show that other factors beyond professional recommendations which influence the design and delivery of programs for language minority students include financial or budgetary considerations, administrative considerations beyond budget, misconceptions or a lack of knowledge about language minority students, the presence of

experienced or dedicated ESL faculty, partnerships between offices on campus, the local, state, and national political climate, and an understanding that no program can meet the needs of all learners. These conclusions yield a number of considerations useful to individuals looking to implement or improve services for language minority students at their institution.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: ESL Program Characteristics Survey

ESL Program Characteristics Survey

Part One: Basic Information

For each of the following questions, answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.

1. Each semester, approximately how many students enroll in ESL classes at your institution?
2. How many faculty members are involved in ESL instruction at your institution?
3. How many different ESL courses does your institution offer?

Part Two: For each statement below, mark the response that best characterizes how well the statement describes the institution at which you are employed.

	This statement does not describe my institution	This statement somewhat describes my institution	This statement describes my institution
My institution employs enough faculty members to teach ESL courses.			
My institution offers enough ESL classes.			
Aside from ESL classes, my institution offers enough services for language minority students.			
My institution offers faculty development sessions to help non-ESL faculty learn to work with ESL students.			
My institution limits the number of students in an ESL class to 15 or fewer?			
Instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution design writing assessments that do not require substantial background knowledge of one specific culture.			
Instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution design writing assessments that do not require substantial background knowledge of one specific culture.			
Instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution provide students with multiple prompts or multiple options for completing assignments.			

When evaluating student essays, instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution consider various aspects including topic development, organization, grammar, and word choice.			
When evaluating student essays, instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution focus on successes in addition to problematic features.			
To help students avoid plagiarism, instructors teaching ESL courses at in my institution teach and reinforce U.S. expectations for borrowing and citing.			
Instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution take a student's cultural and educational background into consideration when suspecting him/her of plagiarism.			
Instructors teaching ESL courses at my institution are formally trained and prepared to address the needs of second language writers.			
My institution provides resources (including textbooks and readers) for faculty teaching ESL.			
My institution provides resources (like dictionaries and grammar handbooks) for second language learners.			
My institution offers incentives for or otherwise encourages instructors teaching ESL to attend workshops on teaching second language writing.			
My institution places students into writing courses based on their writing proficiency.			
My institution offers a variety of placement options (including mainstream classes, basic writing classes, and ESL classes) for non-native speakers of English.			
My institution allows students to choose which course is right for them through directed self-placement.			
ESL courses at my institution are offered for credit.			
ESL courses at my institution satisfy developmental writing requirements.			
Tutors (professional or student) at my institution have received training on working with second language writers.			

My institution actively recruits members of multilingual populations in our service area.			
My institution collects data related to language use and language background of enrolled students.			
My institution collaborates with local secondary schools and secondary school teachers to identify language minority students and help them transition to the community college.			

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Background:

- Can you tell me a little about yourself and your position at the institution?
- In what ways do you work with ESL students on a regular basis?

Areas of Strength:

- What do you feel your institution does best for ESL/language minority students?
- Overall, what are some factors in place at your institution that allow you to successfully educate language minority students?
- Based on the surveys, your institution scored high in the area of [insert survey item here]. In your opinion, what led your institution to excel in this area? [Repeat this question for all areas of strength.]
- Based on the surveys for all TBR institutions, the system as a whole excels at [insert survey item here]. What thoughts do you have about why?

Areas for Improvement:

- Before we talk about the survey results, where do you think your institution has the most room to improve when it comes to reaching out and providing services to ESL students, and why?
- Based on the surveys, your institution received low scores in the area of [insert survey item here]. In your opinion, what factors make this area difficult for your institution? [Repeat this question for all areas for improvement]
- Based on the surveys for all TBR institutions, the system as a whole seems to be struggling with [insert survey item here]. What are your impressions about why this goal is difficult to achieve systemwide?

Areas of Difference:

- Based on the surveys, most TBR schools are struggling with [insert survey item here] while your institution is excelling in this area. What makes you different?
- Based on the surveys, most TBR schools are excelling in [Insert survey item here] while your institution seems to have difficulty in this area. What makes this a challenge for you?

Other:

- Is there anything else about this issue you'd like to discuss?

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