

IMPLEMENTING ORAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION POLICY

IN CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CLASSES:

CHANGING TO A SOCIAL PEDAGOGY

PARADIGM

by

KELLEY E. CROCKETT

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all my immigrant students and their families from whom I have learned the true meaning of perseverance and triumph in the face of adversity.

And

To my own two children who have shared my journey.

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ABSTRACT

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Kelley E. Crockett, PhD

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2010

Supervising Professor: Rod Hissong

Federal and state policies have long sought to address the social inequities faced by limited English proficient (LEP) students through the improvement of English language acquisition. English language acquisition policy has focused on access to resources, qualified teachers, and instructional methodologies (e.g. pedagogy) that create a learning environment conducive to increased proficiency in English language attainment. A challenge to the successful implementation of these policies is an incremental approach to policy implementation that limits the social dialogue –generated by the entire organization’s community - necessary to challenge the status quo. This incremental approach is manifested through the limited participation of key stakeholders in the creation of these key learning environments. The environment is socially derived and sustained by individual actions sanctioned by organizational culture. Social capital theory and Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development theory were applied to understand the importance of socially derived support in improving oral English acquisition. The theory of incrementalism and its effect on personal accountability was considered to understand delaying strategies in implementing policy.

In Texas, meeting the policy requirements for the English Proficiency Standards (ELPS), for oral (listening and speaking) English acquisition, requires a change in pedagogy to a collaborative social integration model. This study considers whether the factors that deter Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers from implementing such a model are political, organizational, individual at the teacher level or individual at the student level. This research examined the perceptions of CTE teachers in two Texas school districts with growing LEP student populations. A survey instrument was utilized. Teachers were able to clarify their perspectives through open comment sections. Administrators and district specialists were interviewed to augment understanding of teacher responses.

The researcher concluded that teachers are influenced by politically charged events that occur outside the schoolhouse door. Factors such as media attention to issues involving English learners like immigration and poverty affect their sense of urgency in implementing policies designed to improve oral English acquisition. The teachers were also influenced by the challenges to the organization in creating teaching communities in which mentoring for, communication about, and monitoring of oral English pedagogy regularly occurred. The teachers themselves impacted the creation of an ideal interactive learning environment through their lack of formal training in LEP instructional strategies and through an uneven access to informal networks of support. The lack of training and informal support could account for their dependency on clustering ELL students by native language by using student interpreters to convey content, although teachers also indicated that they thought that they should promote social support networks for LEP students. CTE teacher respondents indicated that they believed in a shared responsibility for teaching English language learners (ELL's). They also confirmed that a socially collaborative model in which LEP and non-LEP students were grouped together would be of benefit for both peer acceptance and oral English improvement.

Student factors that affected the implementation of a social pedagogy paradigm for oral English acquisition were dominated by the teacher's low expectations of ELL's prior learning and literacy levels which teacher's perceived impacted how well their LEP students could participate

in class or on the job using oral English. Although teachers believed that oral academic practice mitigates the potential for ELL's to drop out of school and that ELL's do not resist applying oral English skills in collaborative assignments, the teachers had doubts about the student's ability to do so. Implications of this research demonstrate the power of preconceptions about LEP students' ability to improve their oral English on oral English acquisition policy implementation.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Oral English Language Policy Implementation Challenges

Scholars know well that policy intent is ultimately distorted or thwarted during implementation (Pressman 1973, Mazmanian 1989, Honig 2006). The intent, reflected in guidelines, rules and mandates, is interpreted and re-interpreted by individuals who have decision-making authority in the implementation process. The language used in the policy initiative may increase ambiguity in policy intent, which may be further heightened through the compromises needed to successfully enact the policy (Zahariadis 1999). The ambiguous language necessary for the approval of the policy can complicate the implementation process, possibly distorting intended outcomes.

Beyond the language, individuals focused on maintaining the status quo, appear to be complying with the policy while simultaneously minimizing actual compliance. In this manner many policy implementers look like they are taking steps to implement policy without actually making any substantial changes in outcomes (True 1999; Friedman 2008; Mazmanian 1989). Incremental responses to vague instructions further complicate the process and may inadvertently delay or curtail full implementation. In addition full policy implementation may be purposefully delayed, creating a reactive environment in which communication and creative reflection is minimized (Adams 1979). This environment is socially derived and sustained by individual actions sanctioned by organizational culture.

After passing through the strainer of the bureaucratic process, actions taken by the front line bureaucrat may differ quite substantially from the initial policy intent. This divergence can naturally cause a variation between the expected and actual policy outcomes with the variation taking the form of 1) no outcomes, 2) fragmented outcomes or 3) unanticipated outcomes.

Through the customarily slow incremental response to policy implementation the interaction and feedback process is stymied. When only some members of the organization are confronted with change and others are left behind, they do not have the opportunity for intrapersonal learning (Lewin 1947).

The Oral English Language Acquisition component of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is an illustrative example of the divergence of policy intent and application. It reflects the complexity of factors that influence policy interpretation in contexts that are dynamic and bounded by their social culture. The long window (2002 – 2014 to make adequate yearly progress for full NCLB policy implementation) allows states and local school districts to delay full implementation thus limiting the intrapersonal learning necessary to address substantial change. This example highlights the manner in which a political pattern of incremental policy implementation limits large scale change. It does so by creating an adversarial process in which the compromise needed to take the small steps inherent in incremental response reflects the values of the status quo (Cates 1979).

Federal and state policies have long sought to address the social inequities faced by limited English proficient (LEP) students through the improvement of English language acquisition. English language acquisition policy has focused on access to resources, qualified teachers, and instructional methodologies (e.g. pedagogy) that create a learning environment conducive to increased proficiency in English language attainment. A challenge to the successful implementation of these policies is an incremental approach to policy implementation that limits the social dialogue necessary to challenge the status quo. This incremental approach is manifested through the partial participation of key stakeholders in the creation of these key learning environments.

Research indicates that children, whose first language is not English, are more successful at achieving in oral English proficiency when engaged in a conducive social environment. This environment normalizes the equal footing of all students socially through the

use of collaborative learning. The subsequent equity in social hierarchy challenges traditional power positions of non-LEP over LEP students in the classroom. Lack of English is not equated with social inferiority. Corson observed that it is at the school level that strategies for enhancing the English language acquisition of students are developed and it is where national language policy is – or is not – implemented (Corson 1990, 1999)

Traditional approaches at understanding policy implementation often miss the complex and dynamic interplay of influences that may complicate the execution of the policy initiative. Stakeholders make decisions at multiple points along the implementation trajectory, oftentimes affecting policy intent. To understand the current implementation of the oral English language acquisition policy, the conversation in educational circles must move beyond a dialectic of either compliance or defiance of the policy initiative, and instead explore the obstacles to the creation of a collaborative environment that fosters greater social interaction among all stakeholders: ELLs, non-ELLs, teachers and administrators.

The importance of language acquisition as a social practice has been explored by both language acquisition experts and sociologists. Jim Cummins argued that the continuum between developing basic interpersonal communication skills (street talk) to the acquisition of the deeper-level cognitive academic language proficiency required the contextual support of active communication (Cummins 1984). Bourdieu posited that language is a power tool that allows members of the upper class to discern who belongs within their social strata, noting that “speakers lacking the legitimate competence are de facto excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required” (Bourdieu 1991 p 55).

The dynamics of implementing a collaborative social interaction model for oral English language has not received extensive examination in the literature. Integrating social interaction in the classroom environment and teacher collaboration regarding LEP students in the school organization are key components to English language acquisition policy. This demands a move beyond the isolationist paradigms in which organizations and individuals (e.g. schools and

teachers) compete to implement their own interpretations of what and how language acquisition policy outcomes are obtained. A collaborative social interaction model makes large scale changes possible because it refocuses the entire group on a shared understanding of overarching goals. It thwarts the individual's ability to fragment implementation through incremental response because all members of the organization participate in policy interpretation and are jointly responsible for outcomes. This social interpretation of policy intent and social acceptance of joint accountability in the organization extends to classroom change dynamics. This new collaborative environment allows Lewin's (1947) concept of individual change processes in groups – unfreezing the current situation, changing attitudes and then refreezing the new behavior – to thrive.

Implementing a socially- interactive English language acquisition policy requires a change in political, organizational and individual status quo. The school environment must change to reflect an education system that is cooperative and collaborative instead of isolationist and competitive. To facilitate English language acquisition, English language learners must have collaborative relationships with both their peers and their instructors while teachers and administrators must form collaborative relationships with each other to create a shared vision for policy implementation and meeting student needs. English language acquisition policy supports this collaborative dynamic (TEA 2008j). Morrissey presents these collaborative relationships as learning communities that “overcome implementation problems through learning to develop whole staff capacities to deal with the change necessary for improving outcomes and ... use formal and informal communication to counter isolation” (Morrissey 2000 pp 10, 47). The role of the policy implementer needs to be re-cast as part of a network of influences that propel him or her to action instead of an independent decision maker.

English language acquisition policy implementation makes connections between political, organizational, teacher and student interests, elements that form a unique context for policy implementation. Political factors focus on student outcomes, equity, and efficiency. Organizational factors focus on building a supportive culture, fostering teacher and administrative development,

and demonstrating as well as communicating policy priority. Teacher factors focus on creating trusting relationships with students, and knowledge of how to teach adaptively in multiple contexts, as well as knowledge about what to teach. Student factors focus on personal engagement, meta-cognitive awareness of readiness to learn, and an ability to create relationships with others. Establishing relationships, instructional changes and school support are critical components needed to improve the context of the classroom environment (Darling-Hammond 2006). These factors, constituting the policy implementation environment within the secondary school context, create the learning community in which educational and language policies find fertile or hostile ground on which to flourish or die. "Educational policy establishes the future cadre of educated persons while language policy determines the efficacy of schooling that linguistic minorities receive" (Koyama 2004 p 417). Educational norms or philosophy in districts reflect their interpretation of educational policy. English language acquisition policy should link a school district's educational philosophy and the implementation practices of teachers in a process that empowers and enhances the lives of English language learners (Trujillo 2005).

Also important is the impact of time on creating a conducive environment for change. Critics of Charles Lindblom's notion of "muddling through", which uses incrementalism to support the contention that large policy steps are impossible, allude to dealing with policy implementation as an integrated whole (Lindblom 1979). They focus on what "ought" to be possible instead of what "is" (Ibid p 517). The longer the period for implementation the more likely it is that fewer people in the organization are touched by it. The result is a fragmented socially derived understanding of the policy intent and who is ultimately affected. A substantial change in education policy, from an individualistic competitive paradigm to a social collaborative one, demands full organizational participation and policy response in order to avoid policy fragmentation. A collaborative approach demands building horizontal as well as vertical understandings and mutual accountability, an approach that incrementalism cannot provide:

“Incrementalism is best suited to a stable environment where fine tuning is all that is needed...it is not suited to rapidly changing conditions or to changes in policy direction” (Cates 1979 p 528).

Politics impact policy implementation. In the exchange of federal education funds, states receive mandates to improve educational access for LEP students but without specific reference as to how that should be accomplished or without adequate funding to guarantee appropriate resources and training. This leaves the door open for discretionary decision making at multiple access points. In determining the potentiality of implementing oral English acquisition policy requirements, such as creating a social environment that levels the access to education, “it is important to consider how significant is the discretionary authority by any of the actors” (Mazmanian 1989 p 9). Teachers, as street level bureaucrats (Lipsky 1980), draw on their perspectives and assumptions in order to make sense of policy implementation directives (Trujillo 2005). So do organizations. Through the interpretation of policy intent at the organizational level, efficiency issues such as the application of local funding to support policy implementation can lead to competition between supporting disparate policies. Legislative intent can thus be distorted by goal displacement and over simplification, as well as misapplication of rules.

Achieving oral competency in English is a high stakes process for students who are classified as English Language Learners (ELLs), as Davila (2008) explains: “There is a perception of English language proficiency as a locus for upward mobility and ...that language has much to do with a person’s qualifications for a job and how he or she will be treated while on the job” (Davila 2008 p 359). There is an interconnectedness of English language dominance with sociopolitical and cultural power relationships that serves to perpetuate unequal, segregated and isolated treatment of English language learners. “Policy is applied in particular ways in specific situations, and there is a ceaseless interaction in which the social actors, policy, and situations inform one another” (Koyoma 2004 p 404). The critical importance of English language acquisition policy can be viewed through at least three lenses. It builds social capital, contributes to the reductions of the chronically high dropout rates of LEP students and improves human capital necessary for the post high school labor market.

## Building Social Capital through Implementing ELL Pedagogy

Scholars argue that, the use of English is important as it serves as a proxy for the accumulation of social capital (Stanton-Salazar 1995). Social capital is defined by as an individual's connection to network ties and trusted relationships that have mutual benefits for the individual and the community (Paxton 2002). For secondary school students, especially English language learners, the knowledge of social capital opens doors through mentorship opportunities with teachers and administrators and through participation in collaborative activities with peers. The extent that social capital is accumulated helps to determine one's place in the social hierarchy. Putnam (2000) takes a different approach to social capital, arguing that it impacts the well-being of groups and communities in significant ways.

Developing social capital between non-LEP and LEP students and adults allows LEP students to access the instructional and learning practices that are supported by the dominant values and policies of the school (Duran 2008). These values are socially interpreted, learned and circulated by all the school's members and thus define all policy intent. The "fundamental tool of socially constructed knowledge is language" (Farmer 1995 p 136) and in American schools the dominant language is English. Olsen (1997) claims oral language skills are fundamental to participation and success in an English speaking and English dominant world. Zemelman (2005) adds that oral language is the main tool for present and future learning. The importance of building social capital with peers through interactive use of English is not limited to the classroom; it is a school-wide issue.

## Social Pedagogy Paradigm in English Language Acquisition

Best practices in ELL pedagogy have been well documented in the research literature (Darling-Hammond 2006; Koyama 2004; Texas Education Agency 2008b; Hornberger 2005). These best practices reflect the interactive nature of classroom language and the part played by teachers in shaping the interactions, and therefore the students' language use. A social pedagogy

paradigm includes opportunities for LEP students to learn through a collaborative model. This model extends social interactional learning beyond interactions between teachers and their students to also include student to student, teacher to teacher and students and teachers to administrators. These collaborative relationships support explicit teaching of learning strategies while providing implicit examples of good English listening and speaking skills in a natural context. In a social pedagogy paradigm LEP students constantly have opportunities to practice learned strategies such as using prior language knowledge, self-monitoring of English sounds and speaking patterns, developing formal academic language out of informal messages and ideas, as well as knowing how to self monitor for understanding of spoken English and knowing how to seek clarification.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 required that this type of collaborative learning environment be in place in schools to enable English language learners to make adequate yearly progress in English attainment. Full attainment of adequate yearly progress must be accomplished by the school year 2013-2014. Each state has had great leeway in implementing this pedagogical change designed to increase the accessibility of all curriculum to LEP students. These practices, promulgated by the federal government are also promulgated by state agencies such as the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

The research has focused on the methodology in teaching ELL's but not on how the methodology is implemented, especially in the domain of strategies that target listening and speaking skills (Koyama 2004). An example of this disconnect can be found in the abundance of research on, and common teacher trainings available for creating collaborative groups. There is also an abundance of research and trainings on defining the differences between academic oral English and the use of basic interpersonal oral English. What is missing is a focus on the connective piece that stresses the implementation of these two skill sets such as using a collaborative group charged to achieve academic objectives to increase academic oral English application.



## Connecting Career and Technical Education to ELL Students

This gap in the literature is particularly evident when applied to enrichment classes such as Career and Technical Education (CTE). Career and Technical Education classes span many career areas with little commonality in content but they do share increasing enrollment numbers of ELL's (Swanson 2009). This variety in content but common issue of increasing ELL matriculation amplifies CTE teacher subject-matter isolation while underscoring the common challenge of educating ELL's. Teachers who would not collaborate regarding subject matter are now finding common ground in collaborating on understanding effective English language pedagogy. Teachers directly affect, through their instructional techniques and the classroom environment, the amount of oral English practice LEP students experience in their classes (Oliver 2003; Edirisingha 2007; Echevarria 2000; Darling-Hammond 2008).

Increased English language proficiency and literacy helps ELL's to attain social capital, a knowledge of how to 'derive institutional support' (Stanton-Salazar 1995). The ability to develop social relationships with those who can effectively help English language learners to gain language and literacy skills, such as their English speaking peers and their English speaking teachers, is critical to becoming a member in the learning community. It is within this community that learning is socially constructed (Osterman 2000; Vygotsky 1978; Dewey 1963).

There is a social culpability to non-implementation of policies designed to improve learning for a targeted group. Not learning is equal to not learning that is intentionally authorized and socially sanctioned (Erickson 1987). In the CTE classrooms ELL's who are invited to construct knowledge in the zone of proximity between themselves and their non-LEP peers or teachers at a level of development that will challenge but not confound them, do so to the benefit of their language acquisition (as a tool for communication), their knowledge generation (as a tool for further learning) and their development of social capital (as a tool for cultural acceptance). Those students who either isolate themselves, or are isolated, are systematically shut out of the social construction of knowledge.

## Improving Oral English and Reducing Dropout Rates for ELLs

American public schools continue to face major challenges in retaining ELLs. Significant assets have been devoted to researching dropout prevention. A central factor in dropout rates in high schools is the establishment of relationships: teachers creating personal relationships with students, teachers creating relationships between students, and students developing caring relationships between each other. Coupled with intensive instructional changes, these factors become critical within the context of the classroom environment. Relationship building and instructional change are critical components of a social pedagogy. The resultant instructional changes, based on research findings, have been shown to be key factors to student success where implemented (Darling-Hammond 2006). Other factors that impact dropout prevention, include the integration of career themes into academic work such as technology, technical know-how and people skills through oral communication. “Teachers who capitalize on making connections between students’ personal backgrounds, and the curriculum and application in real world settings successfully transcend the negative disengagement leading to dropping out and enhance engagement and motivation” (Darling-Hammond 2002 p 658).

American high schools are often criticized as LEP students become apathetic and unmotivated because students believe that what happens in their classes does not relate to their own vision of what skills they need for their own futures (Iver 2001). This leads to student detachment. LEP students need to see the personal relevancy of their education and to feel that their educational environment is welcoming. For English language learners, the acquisition of advanced oral English skills is critical for success in developing social and cultural capital which in turn, affects their sense of belonging (Osterman 2000; Stanton-Salazar 1997).

As originally designed, Career and Technical Education curriculum in Texas responds to a relevancy factor. The state mandated program of study connects academic English language usage with the highly motivating act of experiential learning in a career context (Shaw 2007). And ELL students respond to this intersection of theory and practice, as evidenced by the growth in

ELL attendance in these classes statewide (NCES 2008; NCELA 2006; Swanson 2009). As ELL students attend more than one course in a sequence of classes they must be dual-coded as CTE/LEP students for purposes of the state performance monitoring system. Studies have shown that the more CTE classes the student takes, the less likely he or she is to drop out of school (Shaw 2007). Lynch (2000) argues that participation by LEP students in CTE classes fosters their understanding of a direct purpose or relationship to future employment which translates into students that are less apt to drop out of school (Lynch 2000).

Limited English proficient students attending more than one CTE class in Texas are monitored by the state and at the federal level in terms of how well they do on passing all of their core academic exams and school districts are judged on success or failure to meet adequate yearly progress based on those results (Texas Education Agency 2008h). The school to career approach utilizes a design of learning experiences in settings both in and outside the classroom that offer authentic opportunities for problem solving and meaningful communication in a context that is highly relevant to ELL students (Goldberger 1996) and, as such, effectively counters the specter of student disengagement and dropout (Allen 1998). Dropping out of school is a process that is gradual and students often attribute their increasing disaffection with school to a perceived lack of relevancy in what they are being taught (Bridgeland 2006).

Despite the educational opportunities the state of Texas' CTE programs offer, Texas has a substantial drop out rate for limited English proficient students (McNeil 2008). Students in Texas enter high school in ninth grade but many do not graduate by twelfth grade (Swanson 2009). Swanson's study shows that the class of 2005 in the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington major metro area had a graduation rate of 68.2% with the Urban districts at 58.5% (Ibid p 16). In the urban districts of the DFW area more than half of those who dropped out were in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. McNeil's study puts the Latino youth dropout rate at more than 60%. McNeil argues that there is a great discrepancy between the official dropout rates and the actual disappearance of students which is due to the state's use of more than 20 leaver codes to drop students from enrollment figures (McNeil 2008). Bridgeland (2006) surveyed dropout students in his study and concluded

that 81% attributed their reason for dropping out to the lack of engaging curricula and lack of connectivity between school and work.

Career and Technical education, formally known as vocational education, is motivating to ELL's because of its implicit economic application but also because it explores students' interests in context. Some researchers have pointed to vocational teachers as not having "responded adequately to diversity" (Frantz 1996 p 14) but the literature has not considered why this group of teachers might have not been as prompt as others to employ new pedagogy techniques in their classrooms. The fact that vocational education has been associated with decreasing dropout and increasing employment opportunities for LEP students has prompted a need to examine the challenges these teachers face in implementing the collaborative social integration model that oral English language acquisition requires.

#### The Importance of Good Oral English Skills in the Workplace

For students who are exposed in high school to learning English while training for jobs in work-based learning opportunities such as job-shadowing, internships, mentoring and paid employment for teens, they quickly learn that they must apply academic vocabulary to their speaking and listening skills in dealing with their mentors and with the public. Good English speaking skills for LEP students also form a foundation for advancing their language skills by enabling problem solving discussions with English speaking adults (Allen 1998) and increasing opportunities for further integration and success in the workplace (Mikulecky 1982).

LEP students who enroll in Career and Technical Education classes (CTE) experience a competitive global marketplace, increase their knowledge of work place technology application in producing goods and providing services while learning to negotiate with a different form of organization than their school or home (Frantz 1996). Teachers of Career and Technical Education classes have specialized knowledge expressed through both classroom content dissemination and monitoring of hands on application or direct training that open up this world to CTE students (SCANS 1990).

## The Benefits to ELL's of a Modernized CTE Program

CTE programs have expanded their directives to modernize course offerings to reflect diverse and technologically advanced occupations, while also integrating academic knowledge and skill sets (Shaw 2007). In Texas, CTE programs are charged in the Texas Education Code (TEC 29.181) to both prepare students for high wage, high-skill jobs and for continuation of the student's education at the post secondary level (Texas Education Agency 2008g). The integration of a solid academic foundation, strong communication ability and specific technical skills in CTE classes reflect a growing diversified and highly trained job market. These new classes, unlike the vocational classes based on manufacturing skills, offer skill sets that command good salaries in today's specialized job market. Unlike the limited economic benefit of vocational education classes offered previously, English language learners recognize the economic opportunity that these new highly technical classes offer. This evolution in the career and technical field, from manufacturing skill level job training to highly technical specialization training, has done much to reduce the former fear that English language learners were being "tracked" into low wage dead end jobs (Rubin 2004).

## The Problem

Complex policy designs such as the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002, are not always implemented with fidelity to the policy's intent (Pressman 1973; Mazmanian 1989). The federal devolution of policy implementation further complicates the process as it enables distortion and non-compliance through self-monitoring and self-reporting schemes by states and school districts. Reliance on incremental steps in policy implementation assumes static environments. But decisions really play out as part of a complex process of negotiation in a rapidly changing environment (Graham 1969). Movement from the status quo requires a socially derived whole group understanding and commitment to the new policy goals or implementation will be fragmented.

The NCLB Act mandated specific goals of language proficiency advancement by ELLs but it left the how to achieve it (implementation) and the verification of success (accountability) up to the states (Congress 2002). The attempt through federal mandates in NCLB to significantly alter behavior to elicit change in the status quo is confronted with incremental implementation strategies by states, school districts, schools and teachers. Vague federal standards have confounded policy interpretation while autonomy –at many levels of implementation- results in individualized implementation. Creative interpretation of policy implementation is evidenced by elaborate schemes of accountability.

Accountability in Texas is separated between content learning, tested through the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) testing system, and English language acquisition, which is tested through the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). Academic performance of LEP students is monitored through a sub group category in each tested academic area. English language attainment is monitored through the TELPAS system that uses, in part, the opinions of LEP students' teachers to gauge English language proficiency.

Education experts agree that integrating listening and speaking pedagogy for English language learners into all student learning environments is credited to improved English proficiency which in turn improves academic testing scores (Texas Education Agency 2008i; Texas Education Agency 2008d). The expectation of the implementation of the English language policy in Texas' Career and Technical Education classes is that it would lead to rising academic test scores for LEP students and an increase in language proficiency levels measured by the TELPAS system. This outcome is more clearly discernable in academic classes whose subject matter is directly tested by the state and whose results are reported by subgroup.

LEP academic performance in CTE classes is not easily discernable as there is not a specific content TAKS test for each subject found under the CTE umbrella that conveniently breaks down results by a subgroup like Limited English Proficient. Nor is there any tracking system reporting whether CTE teachers participate in the subjective part (teacher opinion of

progress in listening, speaking and writing) of the LEP English language proficiency process engaged in by the TELPAS system.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) assesses CTE program efficacy by monitoring seven indicators of accountability. The Performance Based Monitoring System (PBMAS) collects this information and analyzes it to look for “data trends” (Texas Education Agency 2009e). Texas collects each dual- coded LEP/CTE student’s academic subject TAKS test scores as a PBMAS indicator. If the data trend shows LEP students in the CTE classes are not annually passing all of their TAKS tests at the PBMAS standard or state rate, then the district is placed on increasingly egregious levels of intervention in CTE programs due to failure to meet adequate yearly progress (Ibid).

Texas requires that this subgroup of CTE students must pass all their appropriate grade level TAKS exams while moving up a level in English language proficiency annually. This effectively gives English language learners just four years to become as equally fluent as their non LEP peers. If LEP students do not achieve either the language proficiency annual measurable achievement objective measured by the TELPAS, or if they do not pass their TAKS tests as a subgroup, then the district will not meet annual yearly progress and thereby possibly suffer being designated low performing (Texas Education Agency 2008h). By examining the multiple scores of each CTE/LEP student’s TAKS tests for their non-CTE classes and their English proficiency scores, the state can determine whether the Career and Technical Education program in each district is serving the linguistic and academic needs of its LEP students. The pressure to address the needs of the LEP subgroup and thus avoid state sanctions drives all Texas education stakeholders and especially CTE teachers to improve LEP instruction and classroom environments.

#### Implementing Oral English Language in Texas CTE Classes

There is little research on the extent to which a collaborative and social interaction model is used with LEP students in Career and Technical Education classes. In Texas secondary

schools implementation of the social pedagogy mandated by NCLB for successful oral English instruction was approached incrementally. The state education agency first introduced the collaborative and communication based expectations for LEP pedagogy through the TELPAS training of secondary level English language arts teachers in speaking, listening, reading and writing strategies. It was not until 2007 that core content teachers were included as responsible for implementing these teaching strategies for LEP students. Because CTE classes in Texas were labeled as an enrichment curriculum in contrast to the core curriculum label of academic classes, CTE teachers' responsibility for implementing this policy was delayed even further. As a result CTE teachers may have believed that state and federal laws governing oral language mandates for classroom instructional strategies dealing with LEP students were not applicable to them. The resultant fragmentation of oral English acquisition policy implementation has created divergent goal setting between different factions of teachers. Enrichment teachers in Texas, as last to be accountable for implementation expectations, have not had the opportunity to participate in policy feedback nor have they had an opportunity to dialogue with colleagues in order to realign their pedagogical paradigm. "Successful policy implementation requires airing and socially ameliorating teacher's starting beliefs as well as shaping the environment to be conducive to embracing the policy" (Honig 2006 p 2). Studies have shown that often CTE teachers perceive themselves not sufficiently trained in listening and speaking pedagogy to implement it (Walter 2002). Many educators teaching CTE classes in Texas have either not been exposed to pre-service training in English acquisition instructional strategies or have not attended substantial professional staff development while working (Echevarria 2000; McNeil 2008).

#### Federal and Texas Law

High school teachers of subjects considered non core academic classes or enrichment courses that are not directly tested through the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills system, have been perceived by school districts and/or campuses as the least needy of the training for instructional strategies designed to improve English language learners listening,



speaking, reading and writing (Abedi 2004). Federal case law, however, such as *Castaneda v. Picard* does not limit “meaningful and assessable education for LEP students” to only core academic classes (Department of Education 2008 (a); (NCBE) 2008).

Texas state law dealing with required curriculum at the secondary level (TEC 74.3 (2) (I)) requires that school districts offer and maintain evidence that all students have the opportunity to take Career and Technical Education classes (Texas Education Agency 2009b). Texas state policy in TEC 74.4 (c) (1) requires the application of second language acquisition essential knowledge and skills in all cross-curricular courses (Texas Education Agency 2009b). Federal and Texas state policy thus supports the inclusion of LEP students in CTE classes as well as supports the provision of comprehensible input (Krashen 1983) that would allow meaningful and assessable education. The implementation of the social environment necessary to conduct the collaboration needed to development oral English acquisition falls under this umbrella of meaningful and assessable education.

In December 2008 the State Education Agency in Texas clearly dispelled the misconception that teachers of high school enrichment courses were not liable to implement English language acquisition policy by issuing Proclamation 2010 which addressed the district’s responsibility in providing resource materials to every teacher who had ELL’s in their classroom. TEA also specifically included all cross curricular teachers by citing the new rule, 19 TAC 74.4, directing universal teacher responsibility for implementing pedagogy designed to enhance English language acquisition (Texas Education Agency 2008j; Galicia 2009).

#### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to explore Texas Career and Technical Education teacher’s perceptions of factors affecting implementation of the collaborative social interaction model for oral English language acquisition. This research is important because the information will give policymakers a unique perspective into the challenges of implementing oral English language

policy by a key stakeholder group, CTE teachers, whose classes represent a bridge for English language learners between academic and occupational learning.

### Research Question

Oral English language acquisition policy requires the teacher to create a sociolinguistic class environment in which LEP students practice oral English skills through peer English dialogue and teacher-student English dialogue. It also requires organizational change, calling for a collaborative teacher environment to better evaluate and serve the needs of English language learners. The complexity of factors that influence policy implementation in general requires a multi-faceted approach to investigation. The research question thus focuses on four areas of influence suggested in the literature that affect oral English language acquisition policy implementation.

What are the factors that impact the implementation of a collaborative social integration model for ELL student learning in Career and Technical Education Classes?

To what extent are factors political?

To what extent are factors organizational?

To what extent are factors individual at the teacher level?

To what extent are factors individual at the student level?

The literature also suggests that the answer may not lie in any one of these elements, but in the intersection of these elements as the front-line implementers decipher the cost of policy implementation (Spillane 2006). "Decades of education policy implementation research and experience have been pointing to the complexity of implementation (Elmore 1983, Sizer 1985) and, specifically, to policy, people, and places as essential interrelated influences on how implementation unfolds" (Honig 2006 p 3).

## Significance of the Study

That implementation of oral English language acquisition policy in CTE classes necessitates a sea change in teaching practices and organizational dynamics from a competitive, isolationist paradigm to a cooperative and socially based collective activity is of singular interest in furthering policy implementation research. Any delay, through schemes of incremental application and accountability, may be seen as a thwarting of policy implementation.

This study is significant for school districts across the United States that are experiencing increased student diversity, increased dropout rates for ELLs, and increasing pressure to comply with federal and state policies that require pedagogical changes in the classroom. Information taken from the results of this study can be utilized by teachers and administrators to improve oral English language acquisition policy implementation.

### Macro and Micro Views of Changing to a Social Pedagogy Paradigm

For students who are struggling with the acquisition of the English language, learning must be “an active, rather than passive, process that combats linguistic isolation through advancement of their skills by offering them the opportunity to develop their oral English in a variety of academic and community settings” (Allen 1998 p 10). The social pedagogy paradigm aims to offer the opportunity described above through a collaborative social integration model of teaching that has its roots in the “meaningful and accessible education for English language learners” promised by the outcome of *Castaneda v. Picard* (Castaneda 1981). Federal education support for this approach is delineated in the No Child Left Behind Act (Congress 2002). In Texas the tenets of this pedagogy dynamic are explicitly revealed in Chapter 74 of the state education code (TEA 2008d). This paradigm calls for cooperative grouping strategies that connect strong English speakers with weaker ones, additional and deliberate planning to increase academic speaking practice, accommodations in the choice of vocabulary, repetition of verbal with written

instruction, and teacher collaboration in the continual assessment of English language improvement (Ibid).

Through the interview process in this study of school administrators, English language instructional specialists and career and technical education specialists, a macro level or district impression of oral English language policy knowledge and expectations for implementation can be uncovered. A micro or situational understanding of barriers to this policy's implementation is generated through responses from the CTE teachers' surveys. The inclusion of both a macro and micro perspective of the problem adds rich detail to this qualitative study. The questions, which explore these barriers and incentives to creating the collaborative social integration model necessary to implement oral English language acquisition policy, are categorized into political, organizational, teacher and student themes.

#### Theoretical Underpinnings

Illustrating the complexity of policy implementation, particularly in educational settings, this study uses three theoretical perspectives: at the micro level, Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development helps to provide an understanding of students' foundation of intra personal learning (Vygotsky 1978); at the macro level, social capital theory anchors this investigation of a learning environment that reflects institutional change from competitive and individualistic strategies, to an ideal environment with collaborative supportive methodologies (Stanton-Salazar 1995; Smylie 2006); and lastly, the theory of incrementalism allows for an examination of the process of policy implementation manifested in the effects of varying time spans and partial accountability.

Through this collective lens the impediments and incentives to oral English language acquisition policy implementation take shape as having a social-cultural basis, an organizational context, and a temporal frame.

## Incrementalism Theory

Seminal leaders in incrementalism theory such as Charles Lindblom posited that “muddling through” or incrementalism in policy making is a rational answer to accommodate the inevitable satisficing or incomplete analysis born out of addressing complex problems. Lindblom’s theory, that analysis can never be complete so it is wiser to use small steps of incrementalism in order to not “rock the boat” in a drastic alteration of the status quo (Lindblom 1979 p 520), is shown to be “detrimental to implementation of policies that require large scale and rapid change” (Adams 1979 p 546). Changing to a social pedagogy paradigm that implements a collaborative social integration model for ELL student learning is an example of a large and rapid change in educational practice.

Incrementalism limits the horizontal spread of change through social communication and collaboration. It limits the progress of its own policy design in allowing only partial action and a narrower scope of accountability by employing fewer members of the group to be responsible for outcomes. The increase in social understanding through negotiated meanings and group responsibility that non incremental strategies afford increases the possibility that a similar interpretation of policy will lead to similar implementation and outcomes appropriate and specific to the situational reality.

## The Zone of Proximal Development Theory

The theory of the zone of proximal development posits that social environments influence the learning process (Vygotsky 1978; Kozulin 2003). Vygotsky’s construction of environment as a social situation that affects the process of learning and development illuminates the importance of social interaction as the nexus of knowledge construction (Mahn 2004). Culture and communication are intimately intertwined in developing new and perpetuating old knowledge. Bourdieu posited that language is used as a vehicle for acquiring and perpetuating specific cultures and ideologies, noting that “speakers lacking the legitimate competence are de facto

excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required” (Bourdieu 1991 p 55). The zone of proximal development is the area in which teachers or others more knowledgeable than the student arbitrate the meaning with that student of “scientific” (abstract, theoretical or academic) concepts and “everyday” knowledge (practical, spontaneous, empirical). Learning, then, depends on a socially devised understanding. In order to arrive at the same interpretation or meaning of words, for example, “the student develops his understanding with others who are already familiar with the normal understandings of their social group” (Vygotsky 1986 p 148-149).

### Social Capital Theory

Stanton-Salazar posits that social capital is a phenomenon that is embedded in how children are raised as all children are exposed to social networks to some degree (Stanton-Salazar 1997). He further avers that inequity to the accumulation of social capital has developed because working class schools in urban environments, unlike their middle class counterparts, have not focused on the networking skills that students need to ensure success in school. He connects the high rate of dropout for urban students with the lack of trusting relationships. Bourdieu argues that social capital is 1) cumulative, 2) can convert to tangible benefits, 3) has the capacity to generate profits and 4) is able to change into new forms (Bourdieu 1991).

Researchers agree that social capital theory provides a framework for understanding how individuals are able to attain goals and goods - through the sharing of resources and exchanging of information within the various groups of which they are a member - which they could not be attain alone (Coleman 1988; Valenzuela 1999). Social capital theory explains how having social relationships allows access to institutional support and to others on an equitable basis (Stanton-Salazar 1997). In an environment that uses social interaction to build understanding, competition is forfeited for a system of sharing and comparing experiences which creates new, more complex understandings that are socially disseminated (Rallis 1995; Darling-Hammond 2008).

Through this composite theoretical lens that reorients learning from an “individualistic to a sociocultural perspective” (Kozulin 2003 p 16), this study examines the principal influences on language acquisition policy implementation through the filter of socially mediated actions. The role of human agency is considered in practices that sustain or fracture the status quo.

Policy implementation is a complex phenomenon. Context is seen as relational and interconnected. In education policy research particularly, previous research into implementation has been limited because “it sought simplified models of efficiency or effectiveness at the school level without consideration of how different outcomes are produced because of complex contextual interactions” (Datnow 2006 p 110). The ability by implementers to de-construct this complexity into meaningful schemas that can be communicated forward is dependent on whether a foundation for negotiation of meaning is in place between and across levels of the system in which the policy is applied. Coburn notes that “the negotiation of meaning is the central mechanism for driving changes in practice, or learning” (Coburn 2006 p 43).

The “where, what and how” of policy implementation depends on how the policy is designed (with its intended outcomes), who interprets it (with the social understandings negotiated by the group), and the context (amenable or hostile), in which it is implemented (Honig 2006). Each aspect affects whether the policy is effective at the front line and each decision set is socially moderated through personal and group interpretation. “Decades of education policy implementation research and experience have been pointing to the complexity of implementation and, specifically, to policy, people, and places as essential interrelated influences on how implementation unfolds” (Honig 2006 p 3).

## Methodology

This qualitative case study includes a research design that utilizes four methodologies for gathering data; online access to secondary data, the survey, the focus group and the one-on-one interview.

The unit of analysis in this case study is a cross section of CTE classroom teachers in two school districts within the same county in Texas. This study explores their attitudes about factors that influence them in implementing oral English language pedagogy. The study categorizes these factors into four areas of influence, political, organizational, teacher and student. At the political level CTE teachers are asked whether their implementation of oral English language acquisition policy is influenced by methods of accountability, media exposure to the problem, the appropriateness of promoting social learning or incremental strategies of policy implementation. It also considers teacher's opinions regarding organizational expectations about the priority and accountability of implementation as shown through the promotion, coordination, monitoring, and training of oral English language pedagogy. CTE teachers are also asked about their own self perceptions of preparedness including their knowledge of the social dynamics needed for oral English pedagogy to be successful.

Finally, CTE teachers' perceptions about the readiness of the LEP students to learn are investigated in terms of whether the teachers believe that this subpopulation's academic history affects their ability or desire to implement policies designed for English language acquisition. This research also considers CTE teachers' perceptions of their level of autonomy in changing their environment to a social paradigm. The examination of their attitudes and of the context within which they form their attitudes acknowledges the complexity and situational nature of the case study (Stake 2003).

Descriptive statistics (frequencies) gleaned from the teacher survey instrument are summarized in tables that are organized by research question subsections and frequency of responses to a Likert span of possible answers - strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree. The Likert scale is an appropriate method for measuring the attitudes and opinions of the teachers and offers a way to determine their expressed value of the relative weights of their responses as determined by the favorable or unfavorable opinion of the item (Frankfort-Nachmias 2000). Questions on the survey are grouped under the four factors (political, organizational,



teacher level and student level) of influence on policy implementation found in the literature. Each section on the survey allows feedback via a comment section.

Interviews with the districts CTE and ESL specialists and the focus group of ESL experts were recorded. The interview data was transcribed and then analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques that searched for themes which helped to clarify intended meanings that incorporated and respected the respondents' unique point of view (Potter 2004). The data from the focus group was used to improve the survey questionnaire.

#### Limitations of the Study

Generalizability of this case study is made more difficult because of non-random, self-reported questionnaire survey research though the study is strengthened through triangulation of both the different types of data collected and the different types of methodologies used to obtain data. This case study is limited to the context of two school districts in Texas. "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context" (Yin 2003 p 27).

#### Definition of Terms

"Street English" refers to basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) which utilize simply and repetitive social language skills (Cummins 1984).

"Academic English" refers to cognitive academic language proficiency (CALPS) used primarily in the classroom as it uses a more sophisticated use of English vocabulary and syntax than street English (Cummins 1984).

#### Definition of Acronyms

LEP: Limited English Proficient

ELL: English Language Learner

TELPAS: Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System

NCLB: No Child Left Behind Act

TAKS: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

CTE: Career and Technical Education

ESL: English as a Second Language

ESL/ELA: English as a Second Language and English Language Arts dual certification

TEC: Texas Education Code

TAC: Texas Administration Code

PBMAS: Performance Based Monitoring Assessment System

AYP: Annual Yearly Progress

AMAO's: Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives

ESEA: Elementary and Secondary Education Act

TEA: Texas Education Agency

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Policy Implementation: Fragmentation and Complexity

Just as it is easier to “create a constitution than run it”, it is easier to create policy than to implement it (Wilson 1887). Policy implementation is subject to a high level of complexity derived from the fragmenting nature of an intergovernmental system. Further fragmentation occurs over time as socially derived understandings in organizations change through strategies that incrementally implement policy goals. “Often the responsibility to implement policy must be assigned to existing agencies at different layers of administration, any of which may be hostile or unresponsive” (Mazmanian 1989 p 28). Federal education policy, for example, created with an ambiguity that reflects the compromise needed to create the law, shifts the responsibility to achieve its goals to states, to local school districts, to schools and eventually to individual teachers in classrooms.

Separated from local politics and administration, policy making at the federal level can, and often does, assume ideal conditions for implementing highly principled ideas that may conflict with existing culture or capacity (Pressman 1973). Often multiple priorities in outcomes are imbued in a policy that is created to combat a host of issues that are perceived to be problems important enough to warrant intervention. Although the subsequent policy is touted as transparent and targeted to provide a direct solution to an ongoing issue, the political process that devolves implementation responsibility creates a tension between intent (mandates) and capacity (local resources and workload management). This makes a mockery of such a simplistic relationship between cause and effect (Moe 1987).

Sometimes the solution devised is really a policy spillover that worked as a remedy to other problems (Zahariadis 1999). But what is effective in one situation may not be effective in another. Effective implementation of policy that is generated at a level other than at the front end level of application must cope with the tension of top down hierarchical efficiency versus bottom up participation and enthusiastic compliance. The bottom up perspective or “street level” (Lipsky 1980) influence on implementation is a key component in understanding how policy is operationalized. “Policies are continuously transformed by implementing actions that simultaneously alter resources and objectives...when we act to implement a policy, we change it” (Mazmanian 1989 p 8).

#### The Changing Focus in Implementation Research

Traditional evaluation of education policy implementation has focused on outcomes in terms of achieving objectives as promulgated from federal legislation. But conflict amongst both the multitude of governmental directives and the ability for reinterpretation by various agents along the way to the application level confound isolating policy decisions that impact implementation.

Policy implementation research has evolved from an exclusive focus in the 1960’s on the implementer, their lack of capacity and their divergence from policy designer’s goals through incongruent self interest. The 1970’s and 1980’s broadened the unit of analysis from the individual to include the role of leadership as a catalyst in organizational learning and employee engagement. “Past generations of researchers tended to suggest that resources such as strong leadership or increased funding were universally important to implementation and aimed to identify the specific dimensions of leadership and the total amount of funding necessary for implementation across sites” (Honig 2006 p 19).

The past twenty years have broadened the scope of implementation studies even farther toward whole systems and culminating in contemporary considerations of networked

interdependencies with interconnected policy impacts. Contemporary researchers more often concentrate on interrelated influences to determine how implementation unfolds.

“This new generation of education policy implementation research is distinguished by three specific features: (1) the policies under investigation on the whole are significantly more comprehensive and varied than in previous decades; (2) the research aims to uncover the various dimensions of and interactions among policies, people, and places that help explain variations in policy results; and (3) the basic epistemological approach of the research reflects the importance of moving beyond universal truths about implementation (e.g. “you can’t mandate what matters”) to revealing implementation as a complex and highly contingent enterprise in which variation is the rule, rather than the exception” (Honig 2006 p 4).

Context is seen as relational and interconnected. In education policy research particularly, previous research into implementation has been limited because it sought simplified models of efficiency or effectiveness at the school level without consideration of how different outcomes are produced because of complex contextual interactions (Datnow 2006).

Policy implementation is a process that inherently is assaulted by contingencies and disruptions making anticipation of results difficult. While the classic management focus on command and control with fidelity to the policy design as an end result is still prevalent in “studies of policy dilution”, there is new attention being paid to a political perspective that tracks intergovernmental political influences which affect policy implementation (Malen 2006 p 102).

#### De-Constructing Complexity as Socially Negotiated Policy Interpretation

Indirect policy effects that are influenced by intergovernmental interactions and are interpreted within discrete contexts burden traditional evaluative criteria. Discerning both effective and efficient elements of policy implementation is complex because of the individual bias involved in problem perception (Smith 2005), ambiguity in legislative intent (Sabatier 1999; Zahariadis 1999), divergent levels of influence in interpretation at various decision making points (Judge 1998), and the fluctuating circumstances of those intended to benefit from the policy (Goodlad 2004).

The study of implementation cannot be isolated from the political policy processes which try to pin down legislative intent. Nor can the socially derived meanings of required action by organizations charged to implement the changes needed to fulfill legislative intent be ignored. Equally important to understanding policy implementation is illuminating the methodology and capacity to create a change environment by creating mutual understandings between the front end implementer and his target beneficiary.

In the search for simplistic solutions both top down and bottom up schemes of understanding implementation failure and success have often cited either compliance (narrow or broad, clear or unclear directives) or capacity (contest for or plentiful resources, or resistant or amenable culture). Limiting understanding of what influences policy implementation to either the aptitude of the top down officials to delimit behavior at the bottom or the propensity of the bottom up street level implementer to disregard or redirect policy intent does not account for the affects of indirect influences (Mazmanian 1989). Such simple structures for implementation assessment ignore political, organizational and individual ability to interpret and to self regulate their own notion of success (Denhardt 2000). Nor does it consider the beneficiary to be anything other than a rational self-maximizer who both recognizes and consistently embraces actions designed to improve his lot.

To understand what affects policy implementation a complex understanding of the interactions between policy intention, interpretive process, and assessing outcomes must be enacted. Successful policy implementation is not easily measured against legislative intent if the intent is uncertain. Comparing goals to outcomes then depends on the meaning that individuals at different points of the implementation process attribute to the policy. "Intergovernmental interpretation of policy affects the ability of implementers to clearly define acceptable and unacceptable target group behavior" (Mazmanian 1989 p 139). This becomes a social activity as the groups that interpret the policy intent and those who must enact the policy increase. The more levels of policy interpretation there are increases the likelihood of conflicting interpretations and

heightened complexity. “Too much complexity, however, is a death knell for implementation” (Fesler 1991 p 241).

The ability by implementers to de-construct this complexity into meaningful schemas that can be communicated forward is dependent on whether a foundation for negotiation of meaning is in place between and across levels of the system in which the policy is applied. “The negotiation of meaning is the central mechanism for driving changes in practice, or learning” (Coburn 2006 p 29). Organizational learning is based on this social interaction between people which is manifested in overlapping formal and informal networks of local communities. “Different distributions of negotiability in a policy design create very different conditions for learning in communities of practice” (Coburn 2006 p 43). Implementers must be able to build new schemas of understanding that are not molded into prior beliefs or expectations and be able to adapt this new knowledge to unique contexts in order to achieve effective implementation. “Schemas are specific knowledge structures that link together related concepts used to make sense of the world and to make predictions” (Spillane 2006 p 49).

#### Devolution, Local Autonomy and Standards of Efficiency and Effective Implementation

Judging the effectiveness of policy implementation requires standards of accountability. The more clearly defined and narrow the connection between the proscribed outcome and the measure to assess it, the easier it is to determine implementation success. Ostensibly “legislative intent supplies the standards for judging a program’s success or failure” (Fesler 1991 p 241). However, the Federal No Child Left Behind Act, for example, is education policy that covers a multitude of expected outcomes but leaves accountability measures up to the individual states to devise and to monitor. While it is more efficient to devolve the responsibility of monitoring education policy implementation (at least from the point of view of the federal legislators) there is the problem of goal displacement in state and local organizations and even with individuals such as teachers.

Historically, devolution of policy implementation has had a “negative trickle down of high expectations for compliance without fiscal support” (Eisinger 2004 p 338). Since the 1980’s the Federal devolution process has included a compendium of grants and mandates without clear connectivity that the grants provided nearly enough to realistically implement the policy. Often enough the ability to monitor feedback and compliance has not been fully funded at the federal level, thus bringing into question whether the policy was even efficient or effective as states and localities were left on their own to fund and to develop guidelines for standards delineating their own success (Behn 2003).

As a bi product of the increased devolution of federal to local responsibility without the funding to support implementation, there has been a growth of organizational self-reliance and an increase in local interpretation of policy guidance (Eisinger 2004). Policy implementation then has moved closer to efficiency standards than effective outcomes of increased equity, changing the federal focus of outcome based results to local standards of prudent management. The case for national standards in implementation assessment has become crucial in countering a local “race to the bottom” as self-regulated policy implementers “have proved capable of sinking below the most elementary regard for public competency” (Nivola 2002 p 351).

Federal policy makers use rules to set behavior guidelines for policy implementation but the tool of rule making can also be sourced from state agency and organizational management (Jones 1998). Rules rely on shared meaning (Ostrom 1999). Given the culture of autonomy that unfunded mandates have elicited in states and localities, formal decision rules can be thwarted through state and local standard setting that set the parameters for program eligibility. In education policy there is lax Federal control such as an inability to take any action unless and until self-reported and self-monitored programs are found to violate the law (Denhardt 2000). With self-regulation and self-monitoring, policy implementation can be distorted and non-compliance can be justified through the negotiated interpretation of rules and regulations (Miller 2007).



The ability of state and local administrators to distort legislative intent through reinterpreting rules, by hiding reports of poor performance through suppressing information, and through granting significant discretionary authority by implementation actors confounds efforts to pinpoint policy outcome failure. Research that looks for a silver bullet for implementation failure or limits causal factors misses this crucial component of complex interdependence of individual internal policy perception and external socially created environments that nurture or doom successful implementation. "Complexity produces problems that are hard to predict and interpreters of laws can be very inventive in exploiting vagaries (Fesler 1991 p 244) and ...noncompliance by subordinates and by an agency's proxies often seems the rule not the exception" (Ibid p 267).

#### Policy Drift and Incremental Implementation

The level of complexity and uncertainty in policy implementation requires that the role of the implementer is rethought. In an effort to simplify policy implementation there has been a movement toward minimal goal conflict which has fostered only incremental change (Mazmanian 1989). The role of discretion in policy implementation requires careful disentanglement of complex influences upon decision makers. Institutions and individuals resist change which makes incrementalism easier to accept (True 1999). "The time to implement policy is affected by American's distaste in offending anyone along the process which means always resorting to incrementalism" (Friedman 2008 p 373).

Policy makers that look to make considerable changes in the status quo must consider this propensity toward incremental drift in implementation. They must work to improve information to counter the limitations of those who make discretionary decisions based on bounded rationality (True 1999). To improve the alignment of goals from the design to the application level policy makers must consider incentives that are meaningful at all levels. Deconstructing implementation processes has moved beyond Theodore Lowi's distributive, regulative and redistributive typology of policy decisions to include an analysis of the social

systems in place at each decision point and how individual and group politics can affect fidelity to policy intent (Lowi 1972).

### Education Policy Implementation

To understand implementation of education policy one must consider the inter-relationships of factors that affect the social infrastructure of policy support at all levels. This multi-dimension network of interactions cooperatively creates a single vision of success that supports policy implementation. Determining a single vision is made more difficult and implementation more challenging however with such a multitude and variety of education policies. "In such contentious interconnected, and multidimensional arenas, no one policy gets implemented or is successful everywhere all the time; on the bright side, some policies are implemented and successful some of the places some of the time" (Honig 2006 p 2).

Education policies reflect broader institutional and sociocultural presumptions and assumptions. They represent accepted social values and prevailing ideologies and are legitimized as appropriate interventions to valid social problems (Dahl 1984). Both the policy system and the sociocultural environment are subject to constant change and are challenged by the time it takes to reflect change. Just as individuals vie for opportunities to change or influence policy along the implementation path, institutions and society at large do not remain neutral in the process (March 1989).

The ultimate goal in all education policy is to achieve a well-educated student. This goal is highly interpretive and therefore vague, which renders it difficult to implement. It is because it is difficult to quantify education results that it is so difficult to create a policy that specifies those results. Quantification of education results depends on how different meanings are attributed to education policy outcomes. Vague or multi-model language used in policy design will result in culturally interpreted meanings across different boundaries and contexts. Vague wording or wording that is politically charged increases the potential for distortion of policy intent and as such, the policy implementation is at the mercy of the community of meaning that is given to it.

While education organizational output is difficult to measure it is even more difficult to attribute it to specific individuals. "Output is multidimensional and difficult to measure in education, and much of what a school "produces" in terms of increased test scores or graduation rates is the result of collections of actors engaged in various activities" (Loeb 2006 p 171).

Implementation failure or success then becomes the purview of the group or individual interpreting policy intent. "Implementation failure may stem from how language in these different discourse communities contributes to the assignation of different meanings to the same policy texts (Hill 2006 p 68). Policy implementation cannot be cleaved from the socially negotiated understandings of policy intent, individual and group implementation actions, and outcomes. McLaughlin conceptualizes this complexity as the transient nature of problems and their solutions. "Problems and solutions are often ephemeral because the contexts within and through which they function change constantly - and so alter both the effectiveness of the policy response as well as the policy problem itself" (McLaughlin 2006 p 211). To arrive at a single vision of successful education policy implementation, formal and informal arenas in which policy is designed, interpreted and evaluated must be "open, accessible, and receptive to different players and their points of view" (Malen 2006 p 86). It is in this context that ambiguity is resolved and inputs as well as outputs are socially interpreted, thus reducing complexity while laying the foundation for the collective activity, cooperation and shared accountability needed for successful policy implementation.

Education policy implementation is especially subject to the instability of the implementation phenomenon noted by Pressman and Wildavsky: "the larger the set of conditions that the implementer controls the greater is the probability that the behavior of the implementer will affect the outcomes" (Pressman 1973 p 249). While acknowledging the importance of the front end implementer is a standard component of implementation literature, the intersection of interconnected processes as influencing the behavior of the front end implementer is not well discussed. Pressman and Wildavsky call this the ability for organizations and individuals to learn from their past and present mistakes and triumphs in implementation (Pressman 1973).

## Framing Policy Implementation Complexity into Four Areas: Political, Organizational, Individual and Beneficiary

Past research efforts into policy implementation have been instructed by the positivist view that there is one “true” or universally held version of reality (Hill 2006 p 70). This view ignored the influential role of social interactions to negotiate meaning within each unique policy implementation context. Management constructs that used a command and control structure took the policy as a given, leaving implementation as an efficiency problem that looked for simple solutions to fulfill the administrative role of carrying out the policy directive (McLaughlin 2006). This reduction of complexity ignored the fact that all policy is value laden and that individuals at all levels of the implementation process will both interpret and influence the policy implementation process in multiple ways depending on the context and their own individual political and cultural views bounded by their own knowledge limitations.

The political aspects of policy creation, implementation and evaluation were viewed as separate parts of a system with some feedback looping of information informing future changes. Current research must now consider politics as an integral part of implementation, interacting within and from without organizations. Implementation involves the politics and values of the policy designer, the organization administrator, the front-line implementer, and the policy beneficiary as they struggle for influence in all levels and in all contexts. The old dynamic of viewing the will, capacity and leadership potential of individual implementers as sole factors for implementation failure or success ignores broader internal and external social relationships acting on and within the context.

Mark Smylie and Andrea Evans describe how social relations in schools, particularly those in professional communities who interpret policy impacts and in communities of practice who determine norms and expectations, are axiomatic to successful implementation and innovation. They note that strong relationships built on negotiated and shared beliefs might provide incentives or may impede policy interpretation and practice as originally designed. “In

education, the degree to which social structures may be open or closed reminds us that implementation may involve complex, multilevel systems of relationships that exist not only among individuals within schools but also between schools, central offices, external change agents, policy-making bodies, and other entities”(Smylie 2006 p 192).

Complexity and interrelated individual and organizational capacity to interpret and distort policy intent has brought the importance of negotiated meaning to the fore in understanding how or even if policies are adapted in local contexts. “The complex, powerful and multifaceted nature of the implementation process now is taken-for-granted” (McLaughlin 2006 p 216). This network of inter-related barriers and incentives to policy implementation must be communicated to all levels of decision makers along the implementation chain. This complex compilation of competing factors affects perceptions of policy implementers at all decision points. It can be gathered in four distinct areas; political, organizational, individual and beneficiary.

#### Oral English Language Acquisition Policy Implementation

These factors affecting policy implementation are applicable when examining the sweeping education law known as the No Child Left Behind Act. Part of that act pertains to oral (listening and speaking) English language acquisition for limited English proficient students. The concept that oral English language acquisition policy is dependent on this inter-related network of incentives and barriers affecting policy implementation is not well developed in the literature.

The study of oral English language acquisition policy implementation provides a particularly good example of how complex social dynamics affect implementation outcomes because this policy, by its nature requires social learning in all four contexts; political, organizational, teacher and student. Because oral (listening and speaking) English acquisition policy, as a sub-policy issue of the larger NCLB Act, is more narrowly defined it confounds re-interpretation of policy intent. Limited English proficient students are to acquire listening and speaking levels of the English language. This requires that limited English proficient students

practice speaking English and that teachers know their initial oral English levels to determine whether they are improving.

This policy, through the nature of its content, mandates a change in teaching pedagogy from the traditional stand and deliver model to a social interaction model based on cooperative learning scenarios. It requires a deliberate solicitation of participation and it requires teachers to communicate and collaborate with other teachers for the purpose of creating meaningful understandings of how to benefit language learners throughout the school environment. In order to build the trust needed for students to practice speaking and listening in English, teachers will have to foster equitable relationships amongst all their students. As teachers begin to collaborate more with each other through formal and informal networks throughout the school organization they will move away from isolationism and bounded knowledge to extend their access to information.

#### Language Learning and Social Capital

Social capital is built through increased social action and social trust is formed through increased social capital. Social trust among individuals allows an organization to change. Smylie posits "...trust can create a context of predictability, stability, and assurance that can support open communication and critique, examination of taken-for-granted assumptions, and risk-taking when individuals and the group are confronted with the need to change"(Smylie 2006 p 190).

The access to networks that educational organization members and indeed the students themselves derive from increased social capital can support a consensus of support for interpreting, implementing and aligning the outcomes to policy intent. Smylie and Evans acknowledge the contextual nature of this social dynamic. "The influence of social capital on implementation may be situational, affected by its strength and content in particular settings and its alignment with the particular programs, policies, and practices at hand" (Smylie 2006 p 205).

## Language Policy

Language policy in the United States has had a long history of trying to reverse discrimination, address inadequacies in resources, and increase English language acquisition (Christian 2004; NCBE 2008). Of particular importance were Supreme Court cases that specifically addressed limited English proficiency inequities in the schools. In the 1974 Supreme Court case, *Lau v. Nichols* (414 U.S. 653), schools were to go beyond delineating education equal through the provision of equal resources, to creating equal educational opportunities that actively forestalled any disparate educative impact on limited English proficient students (Department of Education 2008c). Due to the impact of this decision regarding educating LEP students, the Office of Civil Rights established the obligation of educators to identify levels of LEP students' English language proficiency in order to determine progress in English language acquisition (Hornberger 2005).

In the 1981 *Castaneda v. Pickard* case the Court's decision to mandate not just an equal but a meaningful and accessible education for LEP students led eventually to the Office of Civil Rights' 1991 policy update; Policy Update on Schools' Obligations Toward National Origin Minority Students with Limited English Proficiency (Department of Education 2008b). In this update, educational obligations toward LEP students included three program parts, (a) soundness of educational approach, (b) proper implementation, and (c) program evaluation to monitor that language barriers are actually overcome. Implementation was specifically addressed in acquiring qualified staffing. Any recipient (school district) receiving school funding, "must either hire formally qualified teachers for LEP students or require that teachers already on staff work toward attaining those formal qualifications" (Ibid p 4).

In 2001 the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was renamed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (Congress 2002). It is within this act (Title III- Language Instruction for LEP and Immigrant Students), that the role of language, specifically the

acquisition of English was held accountable in the schools through the monitoring and reporting of English language progress for the subgroup of limited English proficient students.

#### Federal Policy for LEP Students

Based on Federal laws in the 1960s and 1970s such as the Civil Rights Act and in 1974 *Lau v. Nichols*, schools were expected to support English language learners as identified by the LEP category through enforcing compliance in three key areas: (1) equal access to all school programs, (2) not being subjected to ability grouping or being tracked into special education courses, and (3) keeping parents informed of their progress (Department of Education 2000e; (NCBE) 2008). *Lau v. Nichols* added schools' identifying and tracking progress of the level of English proficiency in language acquisition in speaking, reading, listening and writing skills (Department of Education 2008b).

In 1981 *Castaneda v. Pickard* mandated that schools provide LEP students with a meaningful education, thus discerning that equal access is insufficient if it results in ineffective education for LEP students (Ibid). In 2000 the U.S. Department of Justice released a policy update entitled "Policy Guidance Document: Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 – National Origin Discrimination Against Persons With Limited English Proficient" that advised schools that any program monitored or funded by the federal government was considered as covering all LEP students in those programs (Department of Education 2000e).

NCLB required states to closely monitor progress of sub populations of students including LEP. Also, NCLB increased expectations for teacher training including preparation for effective English language acquisition pedagogy (Department of Education 2008d). Funding for LEP education was designated under Title III and specific mandates as to continual improvement in English language proficiency and continual improvement in academic attainment were established (Department of Education 2008b). These laws form the basis for LEP program creation and implementation, as well as providing guidelines that outline criteria for teacher qualifications in serving these students (NCELA 2008). Clearly the progression of laws at the



Federal level show intent to educationally support all English language learning students – regardless of English proficiency or literacy level – through the provision of meaningful instruction, teacher training for teachers who teach these students, interventions to reduce dropout rates of these students, and the annual monitoring of how well these students attain English proficiency.

### Identifying LEP Students

Increasing numbers of Texas high school students are identified as limited English proficient (NCELA 2006). The principal method for designating students in this category is through the use of a Home Language Survey upon enrollment. Unless a student is a recent immigrant, most students who are designated limited English proficient have had the designation since their initial enrollment in school. An incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grader, then, could have been designated LEP since his/her Kindergarten enrollment. Designation is not always linear however as student mobility can affect English attainment and retention. This presents some fluidity in the category (Vasquez-Heilig 2006).

It is important to note that not all students who struggle with English language learning are identified as LEP which requires, by law, implementation of specific teaching strategies and teacher development for English as a second language (ESL) methodology (Echevarria 2006). Although many Texas LEP students are officially identified as LEP, many fear being labeled by the designation and opt out of being identified despite the fact that they still struggle with English language acquisition. These students, notwithstanding needing intervention in terms of teaching strategies and competencies in identifying English language proficiency levels, are not legally entitled to receive it. Districts change designations of who is considered LEP from year to year and LEP students who have achieved the level of advanced high acquisition are exited out of the designation as no longer LEP (Ibid). The problem of ambiguity in policy design is evident in the ability of districts to negotiate who qualifies as the policy beneficiary.

As a result of incrementalism in policy implementation Texas did not immediately phase in all NCLB objectives. Nor were all teachers held equally accountable for its implementation. In

Texas, the bar has risen annually in what is considered advanced high in language acquisition (and therefore the level at which LEP students are exited from the designation). Some formally exited LEP students find that their English proficiency is not high enough to successfully comprehend their grade level academic tests and are not successful in the traditional classroom. Despite having exited the LEP designation based on an earlier less stringent definition of advanced high, these students are often not re-designated and hence find themselves in classes with teachers unfamiliar with LEP pedagogy.

Other English language learners (ELL's) have been raised and schooled in the United States but speak a language other than English at home. This can affect their rate of English language acquisition, thus creating, in many high school classes, a compendium of English language learners all at different stages of language acquisition and identification of LEP status. Additionally these language learners are also on different acquisition levels of academic (school English) versus levels of conversational (street English) language ability (Cummins 1984, 1986; TESOL 2008). This complexity confounds policy implementation as it clouds the context, revealing the possibility for poor conditions for implementation rather than a focus on the merits of the policy itself.

#### Assessing LEP Progress at the Federal Level

NCLB calls for annual testing of limited English proficient students to determine progress in English language by level of proficiency, beginner to advanced, and in the four areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking. NCLB mandates that LEP students are required to make adequate yearly progress in English language acquisition. NCLB holds states responsible to monitor local school districts' compliance to LEP students' progress in English proficiency across the curriculum. Districts could lose funding for non compliance if LEP students are found to not be progressing in their English language acquisition.

Districts are also required to report the academic progress of LEP students. Local knowledge of how to interpret these mandates into action is assumed as well as that the specific

outcome, progress in language acquisition, will be a reflection of policy intervention. The threat of funding loss, long the stick of the Federal policy process, is assumed to be of import to all implementation actors, enough so that they will assume the role of policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon 1995) who will gladly champion changing the policy as the solution to the problem of LEP students' failure to acquire English.

In Title III Part A, (referred to as the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act), one of the specific purposes is to help LEP students become English proficient in all academic subjects. In Part B the stated purpose is the development of professional training for all educators working with LEP students (Department of Education 2008d). States have until the school year 2013-2014 to reach full compliance for adequate yearly progress. In Texas high schools, teacher accountability for implementing the social pedagogy necessary for oral English acquisition first rested with the English/Language Arts teachers. By 2007 Texas moved toward mandating all core content teachers to utilize such pedagogy that improves EL's listening and speaking skills. Enrichment teachers were the last to receive instructions to apply English language proficiency standards.

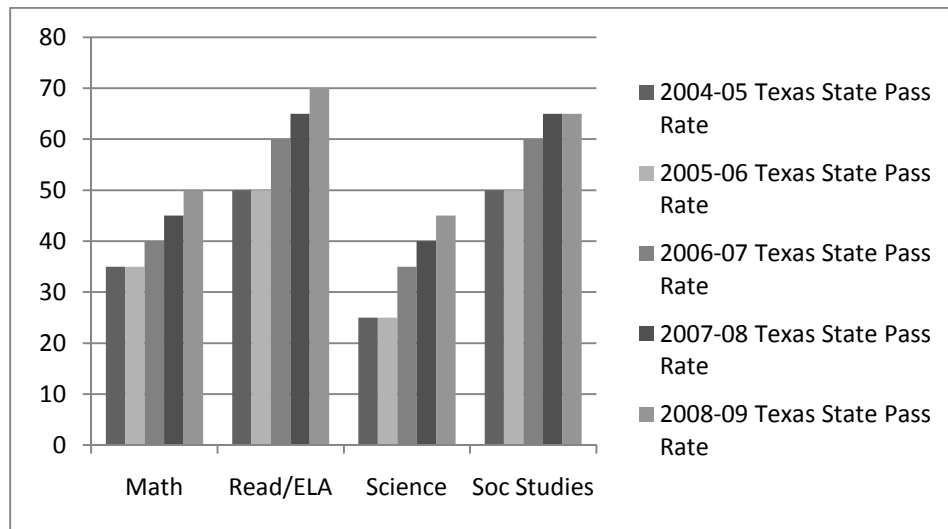
School districts are also expected to reverse the trend of LEP drop out thus increasing the complexity of policy intent for LEP student improvement. The mandate to stem all limited proficient students' dropout rates have long been established by the Executive Order issued by the President in 1998 called the American Indian and Alaska Native Education Order 13096 (NCBE 2008). English language learners decrease their potential to drop out of school when they improve their English (Darling-Hammond 2006; 2008). Student improvement in English language is a critical key in improving their academic performance. The adaptive pedagogy used in social learning improves their English language acquisition (Hudson 2009).

#### State Policy for LEP Students

Although the NCLB Act affects many different policy contexts within education, at heart for those designated as limited English proficient is the issue that states were tasked (under Title I

and Title III of the Act) to create systems of accountability for ELL's that would assure compliance with the federal provisions of (a) academic progress, (b) English language proficiency progress, (c) teacher training, (d) equal access to all programs, and (e) participation in testing. Under Title I, States must set the academic standards, establish starting proficiency data, and then determine annual measurable achievement objectives (AMAOs) to make certain that all subgroups (like LEP) will be 100% successful in passing their annual state academic tests by 2013 (Congress 2002). It is this long range target date that allowed states to determine their own incremental implementation schedule.

Limited English Proficient as a subgroup is considered making adequate yearly progress if it meets or exceeds that year's state rate and if at least 95% of the students in the subgroup are tested (Wright 2005). Every year the state of Texas phases in higher state rates thus changing the performance base each year. As noted in the following Figure 2-1 not all subjects started at the same passing rate but the Texas state passing rate has steadily increased in all subjects.



**Figure 2-1 Texas TAKS Tests Passing Rate**

Title III of the NCLB Act requires that LEP students be placed in programs that are defined as instructional courses in which they meet State academic content standards as well as develop and attain English proficiency (Department of Education 2008b). To meet AYP in

language acquisition, LEP students in Texas must progress one level (beginning to intermediate to advanced to advanced high) every year. In the state of Texas inadequate support for English language learners has been exposed in a system that has seen a dramatic increase in drop out figures for limited English proficient students with some studies showing dropout rates between 40% (Vasquez-Heilig 2006) and 60% (McNeil 2008). The effect of such high LEP dropout rates for Texas LEP students is expensive to all citizens as well as to the students themselves.

Consequences include increased unemployment, living in poverty, entering the penal system, lower health rates and ultimately living a high risk life that could maintain a cycle of progenitor dropouts (Payea 2004). High dropout rates for ELLs are indicative of a failed policy to serve their educational needs.

#### Assessing LEP Progress at the State Level

While English language acquisition policy at the Federal level is found in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, it is represented at the state level in chapter 29 (for the definition of LEP) and chapter 39 (Bilingual and Special Language Programs) of the Texas Education Code (TEC) and chapter 74 (Curriculum Requirements) of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC). Based on NCLB, Texas state law parallels the federal focus on inculcating English proficiency. It calls for teacher training on LEP pedagogy, and for reducing the dropout rate of this subgroup of students. Texas has slowly broadened the teacher accountability from the exclusive purview of the high school English/Language Arts teachers to required core content teachers and finally to enrichment teachers (Texas Education Agency 2008f). To monitor the Federal goals set for annual yearly progress for LEP students the Texas Education Agency (TEA) created the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). Besides being the vehicle for annual language testing, TELPAS promulgates a policy of teacher preparedness that assumes competency in how instruction is delivered to English language learners (Texas Education Agency 2008i).

The state education agency of Texas is responsible for providing in depth training on how to teach ELL's through annually updated TELPAS training modules. LEP students also are responsible for annual test taking (with some exceptions made for recent immigrants) on content knowledge. This system of assessments is called the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and covers subjects such as English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. LEP students, then, are annually monitored for progress in both language and content acquisition in order to satisfy Federal NCLB policy.

In Texas, accountability for English language acquisition is monitored by testing all LEP students 2<sup>nd</sup> through 12th grades using both a reading test in English called the TELPAS Reading Test (formally called the Reading Proficiency Test of English (RPTE)) along with collaborative teacher opinion to determine each LEP students' level of proficiency progress (beginning, intermediate, advanced and advanced high) in writing, listening and speaking. A composite score of overall English proficiency (1-4 corresponding with beginning to advanced high) is generated using the TELPAS reading test and the combined teacher opinion score on writing, listening and speaking levels, which is then tracked annually. Each area of TELPAS (reading, writing, listening and speaking) is weighed distinctly in the composite score and is subject to change annually. LEP students are expected to progress one level each year, limiting, in effect, English language acquisition to the four years allowed to progress from beginning level (1), to intermediate (2), to advanced (3), to advanced high (4).

Teachers who work with ELLs in the state's public schools are encouraged (the number and scope of whom are determined by the district) to both attend the TELPAS training and to attain a competency certificate. The Texas Education Agency has determined that each district serving ELLs must participate in this training and that a team of individual ELL teachers must collaborate in determining English language competency for the assessment system. The agency historically had not directed the districts to train every teacher nor did it direct which teachers must be trained, leaving the interpretation of who the policy affected to the districts.

In 2007 the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) as described by TEA updated in Chapter 74 of the Texas Administration Code (which adopts new rules for curriculum in the Texas Education Code) and communicated through the TELPAS training, were required to be implemented by school districts as an integral part of the required curriculum (Texas Education Agency 2008d). As a response to policy design ambiguity, the state education agency has had to develop increasingly narrow communiqués to districts that specified a widening participation in the changes mandated by language acquisition policy. As the policy compliance year of 2013-2014 looms closer, TEA has had to review its own efforts at incremental compliance in order to increase the level of language acquisition required to meet the expectations of full compliance. The creation of the English Language Proficiency Standards reflects that goal but it had to be integrated with already established customs that did not serve this policy outcome.

The Texas Education Agency distinguishes enrichment curriculums, such as the classes in Career and Technical Education (CTE) from foundation curriculums (Texas Education Agency 2008b, 2008c). Traditionally in the past enrichment curriculums have been exempt from implementing English language acquisition policy. Within the body of the English Language Proficiency Standards, however, all cross-curricular classes, including enrichment classes, are responsible to apply the ELPS for their English language learners; chapter 74.4 of the TAC states "...in order for the ELL to meet grade-level learning expectations across the foundation and enrichment curriculum, all instruction delivered in English must be linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student's level of English language proficiency" (Texas Education Agency 2008d).

The issue of whether the CTE teachers are subject to English language acquisition policy for LEP students is further addressed in TAC 19 subchapter 74.3 (b) where it states that "the opportunity to specifically take Career and Technical classes is considered part of the required curriculum" (Texas Education Agency 2008b). The policy that all teachers of LEP students must implement the English Language Proficiency Standards is reinforced both through the TEA Proclamation 2010 which calls for LEP resources being available to all teachers and through 19

TAC 74.4 which outlines proficiency level descriptors cross curriculum linguistic accommodations to all curriculum (Texas Education Agency 2008j).

The state, then, meets federal policy to train all LEP teachers through their “cross-curricular” notation but have had to clarify past confusion over whether enrichment teachers must apply the ELPS instructional strategies and knowledge of student English proficiency levels. Enrichment teachers had been led to believe they were exempt. The ELPS provide specific pedagogy strategies as well as student proficiency level descriptors that delineate student expectations for ELL’s English language advancement through the levels of beginning, intermediate, advanced and advanced high levels.

The four areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking, that holistically comprise English language acquisition, realistically must be addressed when teaching limited English proficient students in all subjects, core content and enrichment, in order to collectively move LEP students forward along the language acquisition continuum from beginning level to advanced high.

#### Failing to Meet Federal Policy Standards or State Gaming Policy Monitoring Systems

In Texas, as well as in other parts of the country, high school students who are categorized as limited English proficient are increasingly failing to meet the state objectives set for annual progress in language acquisition and are increasingly failing to meet the state academic standards because of their high dropout numbers (Orfield 2004). Texas high schools are losing upwards of 135,000 students before graduation, especially in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, which in some schools is disproportionately swollen with many retained LEP students in an effort to avoid increased testing at the 10<sup>th</sup> grade (McNeil 2008). McNeil contends that “holding back LEP students in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade increases their potential to drop out which in turn eliminates their potentially low scores on the 10<sup>th</sup> grade extensive academic tests” (Ibid p 6). This artificially improves the 10<sup>th</sup> grade LEP sub population scores while masking the failure of districts to successfully educate students who struggle with learning English.



Susanna Loeb and Patrick McEwan address the problem that alignment of implementation with accountability faces by noting that it is easier to game the system than it is to implement the needed changes. They conclude that gaming occurs with some frequency. Noting that “teachers and school administrators search for ways to improve measured performance without improving actual performance. This might be accomplished by excluding low-performing students from testing” (Loeb 2006 p 178).

Another way that academic and English language progress for ELLs is misrepresented by the state is with the use of waivers by the Texas Education Agency in determining the minimum number of LEP students needed to initiate sub group monitoring for federal policy implementation. Using a waiver to alter the minimum number of the sub group evades the accountability intent of NCLB while distorting the school’s sub group performance (Cullen 2006). Gaming the accountability system through changing the designation of LEP to keep under the minimum level of LEP for a school’s subgroup has been known to happen (Ibid). With only small numbers of a subgroup there is not burden to report on it (Abedi 2004). The designation of LEP then becomes a “policy construction” (Duran 2008 p 300).

#### Requiring Teachers to Implement the Policy

The Texas state agency based the speaking, listening, and writing proficiency assessment components of the TELPAS system on collaborative teacher input. Local school districts were given the autonomy to decide which teachers participated in this subjective piece of ELL assessment (Texas Education Agency 2008i). This increased decision making at the front end while also increasing autonomy in decision discretion in terms of who had to participate in the collaborative teacher assessment piece. Because some teachers were chosen to participate in the assessment instead of others, confusion ensued over who was required to implement language acquisition policy in the classroom. The subjective nature of teacher opinion in deciding student’s language proficiency levels and the arbitrary election of participating teachers coalesced to take on the priority of fulfilling federal mandates rather than becoming an integral

and important component of improving English language acquisition for LEP students.

Exacerbating the problem has been the limited consistency in who gets classified as LEP. This has created complexity and instability in determining baseline and annual proficiency levels.

The proficiency levels of listening, speaking and writing are annually established by a different group of teachers (from the previous year) and are merged with the TELPAS reading score thus further strains consistency. Beyond the subjectivity of multiple teachers collectively determining listening, speaking and writing levels for different groups of LEP students annually, lies the fact that once the students are subjectively determined to be at an advanced high level of English they are exited from the LEP designation (and annual testing for English acquisition) only to find that the standard for advanced high changes in subsequent years (Duran 2008). This puts a strain on classes of exited LEP students whose English language acquisition needs are unmet by untrained teachers.

#### Involving the Schools in Policy Implementation

Each year subsequent to the state of Texas' 2003 expansion of its English language assessment system there has been additional required training for school districts. This training not only covers how to perform the TELPAS' annual testing but it also covers improved teacher training on LEP pedagogy and school intervention in a threefold effort to (1) increase the passing rate of ELL students, (2) increase the mainstreaming of ELL students, and (3) decrease the specter of ELL drop outs at the secondary level (Texas Education Agency 2008i). Initially the training at the secondary level was directed at the high school English teachers (ESL/ELA) who also taught with an English as a Second Language certificate. ESL/ELA teachers taught curriculum which directly addressed the speaking, listening, reading and writing in English that the TELPAS was attempting to assess. Gradually the State expanded the purview of TELPAS to consider the English language learners attainment of English proficiency to be a school wide responsibility (Texas Education Agency 2008i; Galicia 2009). Although this incremental approach gave the districts and schools time to increase their individual and system capacity to embrace

and implement the policy, it also increased the risk that teachers would develop - and hold onto – the response that the policy did not pertain to them.

To this end training in the school year 2006-2007 onward included a component of targeted pedagogic strategies appropriate for all teachers of LEP students with the explicit expectation that non ELA/ESL certified teachers would also implement these strategies in their classrooms. This represented a sea change in policy interpretation and expectation for implementation.

Districts were further mandated to both teach and assess English language learners “holistically” which specifically required collaborative efforts between teachers for the benefit of their ELL students (Ibid). Parallel and not unrelated to this state expansion of English language assessment were increasing federal sanctions on states for non compliance to achieve adequate yearly progress in the academic success of all students. Attempts to keep up with the goals of adequate yearly progress redoubled efforts to improve the academic achievement of minority students (Texas Education Agency 2008c).

#### Requiring the LEP Students to Participate in Policy Implementation

Although Texas created the TELPAS system for assessing language acquisition progress for limited English proficient students, the state-supported teacher training stressed that English as a Second Language pedagogic strategies and cooperative learning strategies were appropriate for all students as they increased the social interactional aspects of communication (Texas Education Agency 2008i). LEP students were expected to be able to improve their English oral and listening skills as well as their academic knowledge through social interaction (Burton 2000; Young 2008).

Additionally educators of ELL students were now expected to communicate and collaborate together regarding the needs and proficiency levels of their students (Timperley 2008). At the secondary level this meant a shift in teaching and learning strategies in order to

better reach the ELL population as well as improve instructional delivery for all students. Increased dialogue between teachers regarding their ELL students and increased dialogue between their LEP and non LEP student population were expected as part of the overall schema of implementing state TELPAS policy and federal NCLB policy. This mandated action of social interaction to increase teacher knowledge and student access to English language acquisition is unique to English language acquisition policy. Although the importance of increasing knowledge through forming supportive networks and improving equity and participation in the classroom through increasing social capital have been promoted in educational research as positive for improved learning, the changes needed to implement this new dynamic have been lacking on a voluntary basis.

#### LEP Demographics and Implementing the Policy: Surprised Stakeholders

State demographers in Texas point to an exponential increase in school children whose home language is other than English. Already the state of Texas is a minority majority state for school age children (NCES 2008; NCELA 2006; Swanson 2009). The use of best practices on how to teach a growing diverse population as well as creating a networked environment of support for English language learners is critical to increasing and sustaining attendance and student success as defined by high school graduations (Spriggs 1998). Not all stakeholders believe they are responsible for implementing policies that are intended to improve LEP academic performance and increase their English language acquisition. "Many Career and Technical Education teachers do not feel competent designing and implementing accommodations for LEP students" (Walter 2002 p 8).

#### Effect of LEP Growth in Career and Technical Education Classes

The growth in ELL attendance in Career and Technical Education classes has grown in tandem with the shifting demographics (Bragg 2000; Gray 1991; Swanson 2009). Courses in Career and Technical Education offer a real world application of skills necessary for gainful

employment (Lynch 2000). While these hands on practical classes form a receptive background for those students struggling to acquire English, their teachers have not been the primary target for implementing language acquisition policy. Teachers whose classes are directly tested through the Texas Academic Skills (TAKS) system (e.g. English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies) have increasingly been held equally accountable for implementing policies that promote addressing the needs of special populations like limited English proficient.

The LEP population in the CTE classes has grown along with the increase in the LEP student population in Texas thus forming concentrations of LEP students who are both struggling with English language acquisition and in acquiring academic knowledge. Educator concerns about tracking large groups of LEP students into career strands that are traditionally low paying have raised awareness that classes in CTE could not have a lowered academic standard (Rubin 2004). Although CTE classes do not have annual state subject testing like the Texas Academic Skills testing in other content classes, the CTE classes have not been immune to the reform efforts to improve education. In fact, studies have shown that workplace literacy demands have increased dramatically as workers now encounter a “much wider variety of print material which they can orally discuss and apply with greater comprehension” (Mikulecky 1982 p 19). A 2007 study, however, negatively connected TAKS scores with CTE students (Shaw 2007). The 2007 study recommended that as CTE course offerings have now expanded their subject areas to reflect high skill, high wage jobs that stress higher workplace demands for literacy and communication, they must now improve their core academic instruction (Ibid).

Not all LEP students who attend CTE classes are dual coded LEP and CTE for assessment purposes. Only those LEP students who are following a coherent sequence of CTE classes or are enrolled in a college-preparatory program for a technical career are considered part of the CTE program. This leaves many LEP students who take random CTE courses as electives needing pedagogy intervention but finding they are not part of policy accountability measures that insure it (Shaw 2007).

Those CTE courses considered part of the coherent sequence have been included in assessment compliance with federal adequate yearly progress resulting in LEP students who are attending these coherent sequence of CTE classes being held accountable to their campuses, school districts and state for passing all their regular TAKS tested content classes subject to a minimum student sub population of thirty LEP students (Texas Education Agency 2008h). The Texas Education Agency assesses the success of Career and Technical Education programs by monitoring seven indicators of accountability.

The Performance Based Monitoring System (PBMAS) collects this information and analyzes it to look for “data trends” (Texas Education Agency 2008e). If the data trends in indicator #2 (TAKS scores for sub population LEP) show LEP students in the CTE classes not annually passing all of their TAKS tests at the PBMAS standard or state rate then the district is placed on increasingly egregious levels of intervention due to failure to meet adequate yearly progress (Texas Education Agency 2008h). Using the criterion of the multiple scores of each CTE/LEP student’s TAKs tests for their non-CTE classes, the state determines whether the Career and Technical Education departments in each district are serving the needs of their LEP students. However, as many CTE students, who are limited English proficient but only taking CTE classes as electives are not put into the accountability system as dual CTE/LEP students, the perception of need for language acquisition policy implementation in CTE classes is lowered because there appears to be fewer English language learners attending CTE classes. The pressure to address accountability measures and the lack in meeting the educational needs of ELLs should drive all Texas education stakeholders but especially CTE teachers to improve LEP instruction and to increase oral English practice in the classroom environment.

The Texas Education Agency, through cross referencing accountability for LEP students in CTE classes with their passing rates on all the TAKS tests has exacerbated the need for CTE teachers to adopt new teaching and learning strategies, such as those promulgated by the TELPAS and NCLB policies. This new reality has underscored the potential benefit of cross collaboration with other ELL teachers who have already transformed their classroom

environments to support English language acquisition (Shaw 2007). For CTE teachers, unused to socially connecting to networks that support English language learners and knowledge about their needs, this benefit of collaboration may not be immediately evident.

#### Career and Technical Education Classes Mitigating LEP Dropout

Career and Technical Education classes are of critical importance to the limited English proficient population as they form an anchor in high school, reducing drop outs among the LEP students because these classes represent future employment and as such are highly motivating (Allen 1998; Hudson 2009). Employment is necessary for survival for the many LEP students who are also classified as low socioeconomic students. Low socioeconomic students are already in perilous risk of school failure not only as a group status but because they often have little family, peer and community support and little individual social capital to overcome that lack (Portes 2003). The fact that LEP students are disproportionately dropping out affects not only their own chances for successful integration into society but it also affects the economic viability of their community. De La Rosa sums up this individual and community travesty by stating, "Dropping out is the surest way of perpetuating the cycle of poverty and crime that many students are born into" (De La Rosa 1998 p 270). At the secondary level in High School, teachers of subjects not directly tested through the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills system may be perceived by districts and/or campuses as the least needy of the training provided by the state through the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System.

Kenneth Wong (2007), in his seminal book *The Education Mayor: Improving America's schools*, discusses how the greater community is intimately concerned with the choices made by focusing too narrowly on test scores in only those classes directly held accountable to federal monitoring. There should be a strong focus on inculcating well-prepared future employees of highly skilled jobs. "Schools and teachers respond to a narrow focus on standardized test scores by targeting resources in ways that fragment the curriculum and undermine improvements in teachers. Teachers' routine curricular and instructional practices remain largely unchanged"

(Wong 2007 p 96). The slow implementation of oral English language pedagogy into all classrooms with LEP students has increased this fragmentation in teacher accountability leading to organizational change.

In sum, four critical realities have refocused attention on the importance of successfully teaching the limited English proficient students attending CTE classes and consequently the implementation of language acquisition policies in these classes. First, the increase in ELL attendance in CTE classes, with its hands on curriculum that supports the pedagogic strategies endorsed in the TELPAS training create both a growing group and a unique naturally motivating environment for ELL's to increase their academic English attainment. Second, LEP students attending the CTE classes are monitored by the state and at the federal level in terms of how well they do on passing all their content exams and school districts are judged on success or failure to meet adequate yearly progress based on those results. Third, communities have acknowledged the value of a well trained and bilingual workforce as globalization becomes a local issue. Finally, as students see direct purpose or relationship to future employment in these classes, they are less apt to drop out of school (Lynch 2000). But the successful intersection between limited English proficient students and success in CTE courses is jeopardized by the traditional lack of training (both pre-service and in service) for CTE teachers in language acquisition pedagogy (Walter 2002; Shaw 2007; Frantz 1996). Negotiation between individual schools, districts and the state regarding for whom policy is intended (coding LEP) and who is responsible to implement it are ongoing, postponing the "organizational learning needed to create a model of behavior that legitimizes the policy and provides a structure for its system wide implementation" (March 1975 p 145).

Enrollment by LEP students in CTE classes continues to grow as the classes offer real world problem solving opportunities within real job contexts that is compelling for students both as a natural arena in which the LEP student can apply English language skills and as a motivator to stay in school but not all the teachers of these assorted skill based classes are prepared to teach them. Many of the new CTE content classes train for high skill public oriented jobs which would



benefit from highly trained bilingual employees (Moses 2009). Thus, CTE teachers unable to form successful relationship with their LEP students push them out of the very programs that would benefit both them and their communities.

The problem of limited English proficient students dropping out of school is a growing one and is challenging both educational institutions as well as communities. The under-education and subsequent underemployment of LEP students is a growing detriment to Texas' economic well being (Orfield 2004; Bridgeland 2006). As the requirements for meaningful employment increase, the challenge and responsibility to prepare an increasingly diverse student population also increases. However, state policies like the ELPS and assessment tools for determining English language proficiency levels like the TELPAS which aim to improve the outcomes for these students are invalid if not utilized in the classroom.

#### Social Aspect of Language Learning

There has been a shift in teaching from role modeling to cheer leading (Chomsky 2002) to examining inequities of access to “tangible institutional resources and the people who control these resources”(Stanton-Salazar 1995 p 116). Limited English proficient students build up English proficiency through oral practice in context of the target language. The social context must be collaborative and supportive and must not be outside the “zone of proximal development” in which learning occurs through interaction and communicative activities (Vygotsky 1978). If English language learners are isolated linguistically from their peers because their instructors do not know how to engage them, they are not given an opportunity to build the social capital they need to build knowledge. Students must engage with each other and with their instructors as mediators in language acquisition, “students simply do not retain for long what they learn by imitation from lectures, worksheets, or routine homework” (Hill 2006 p 71).

Studies have shown that isolation from within the classroom through racial or linguistic based seating arrangements results in lower participation and increased non-engagement with both peers and between the isolated students and their instructors (Rubin 2004). These students

fall further and further behind in their ability to communicate effectively. Learning is a social process and as such teachers with ELL's must facilitate communication in a proactively oral environment in which each student's voice is heard and valued (Darling-Hammond 2000).

#### Language Acquisition Policy Mandates Social Interaction

Knowledge is socially constructed (Dewey 2007; Young 2003, 2008; Kozulin 2003; Vygotsky 1978). Acquiring oral English skills requires the opportunity to speak English. Policy that mandates interaction between peers and interaction between teachers and their students contradicts prominent American ideals such as individualism, independence and self reliance that have dominated classroom instruction resulting in the standard pedagogy of lecture –note taking- individualized memorization- regurgitation on multiple choice tests (Ageyev 2004). “The image of a loner, a single individual struggling to survive, alone, in isolation on an uninhabited island, has been used as a metaphor for western child development” (Ibid p 434). Students learn more effectively when they are able to discuss and to write about what they are learning (Wiersma 2008). The notion that we learn and especially that we acquire language best through collaborative means is fully developed in language acquisition policy that requires not only collaborative learning techniques in the classroom but also among the teachers (Martinez 2004; Burke 2004). For teachers, unaccustomed to a school culture in which formal and informal communication in a variety of networks that focus on countering isolation is a norm, this is a complete paradigm shift (Morrissey 2000).

Oral language acquisition policy follows the theoretical constructs of Lev Vygotsky in that he reoriented learning theory from an “individualistic to a sociocultural perspective” (Kozulin 2003 p 16). Vygotsky's idea of a zone of proximal development (ZPD) focused on the relationship between instruction and development or learning with the teacher acting as a co-mediator between the student and his environment which includes his interactions with his peers. In this way the student both learns from and acts upon his environment. Vygotsky noted “...that an essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning

awakens a variety of developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in collaboration with his peers” (Vygotsky 1978 p 90).

#### Implementing Policy Forces Change; for Teachers, Students and Schools

Teachers at the secondary level are unaccustomed to the level of personal knowledge they must have about each of their English language learners. Traditionally they have not been so student-centered nor have they been tasked to create support networks for themselves and their students (Sergiovanni 2000). Few educators understand the underlying meaning of English proficiency (Duran 2008), nor are they able to separate out their ELL’s academic language deficiencies from their content knowledge deficiencies (Bailey 2004; Brown 2000; Freeman 2001). The No Child Left Behind Act specifically requires that teachers of ELLs be able to do just that. Teachers who are unaware of their student’s academic abilities in their native language tend to frame all English language learners as having “deficit abilities” (Black 2006 p 215). The use of this label groups all LEP students into a paradigm that profiles English language learners as unable to learn in English.

To counter their students’ language “problem” some teachers divest their responsibilities toward LEP students through the use of a peer student translator which, perhaps unjustifiably, implies a foreknowledge of that student’s academic knowledge as well as both their Spanish and English listening and speaking skills. Translation does not equate to teaching. The net effect of this custom is to ignore the child (Osterman 2000) and to distance the zone of proximal development between teacher and student and between LEP and non LEP students (DiPardo 2004).

It is the educator’s job to know their student’s level of understanding in order to deliver assistance in the zone of proximal development where it will be most meaningful (Darling-Hammond 2000; Dunn 1998). The intra-class segregation of language learners directly contradicts federal and state law (Orfield 2005; Alim 2005). Teachers must reconceptualize what

successful teaching looks like in terms of setting the standards for developing classroom environments that prize interaction rather than individual competitive practices that prize isolation. It has been well established that learners in cooperative rather than competitive or individualist learning environments are better able to apply reasoning and communication skills (Darling-Hammond 2001, 2006).

Language acquisition policy discards the competitive or isolationist models for cooperative models of instruction that socially construct knowledge and enhance language acquisition through direct practice (Duran 2008). It is in the classroom that ELL's hear the academic English that will distinguish their oral English proficiency. All teachers, responsible for teaching ELL's, need to provide opportunities for the "meaningful application of academic English in the context of learning" (Bailey 2004 p 189). As teachers move from "simply dispensing knowledge to becoming organizers of learning opportunities" (Reis 2005 p 3), they must confront the ineffectual and inefficient realities of their "impersonal and highly competitive schooling environments" (Suarez-Orozco 2001 p 2). Teachers must know their content but even more importantly must know how and in what context distinctly different pedagogical skills should be applied to maximize learning (Kennedy 2008). The one size fits all silent classroom no longer is acceptable practice.

Implementing language acquisition policy in the classroom forces an increasing awareness that human development and competence emerge through socialization processes (Duran 2008). Changing the culture of the classroom from an isolationist paradigm to a social one is to change the dynamics of the relationship between teachers and their students and LEP students with non LEP students. Teachers must become partners with their students, to be jointly responsible for the process of learning and language acquisition (Freire 1970; Dewey 1938).

Implementing change requires a "personal involvement" (Zemelman 2005 p 269) which can be extremely discomfoting to teachers who then pass on their resentment to those students for whom the change is targeted (Taylor 2003). How much change is possible is greatly

dependent on the teacher and in the context. Change is a complex process that is dynamic (Fullan 2001; Schein 1984; Lewin 1947). The success of policy implementation is dependent on this process.

Students also must change how they engage in school. The shift to recognizing that oral language is socially developed requires a shift from student passivity and refocuses attention on how well students are able to use their listening and speaking English skills to engage in their own meaning making (Zemelman 2005). Students who move beyond passive absorbers to active participants move themselves into the zone of proximal development and become responsible for their own understanding of their learning needs. Active participation increases internal motivation to learn (Osterman 2000). LEP students must risk breaking through imposed isolation by overcoming their natural defiance against or resistance to non LEP cultural dominance. They must learn to assert their right to a comprehensive education while still upholding and valuing their culture. They must trust that their peers and their teachers are willing to interact with them and are interested in learning with and from each other which will eventually force change in social positionality. They must overcome their aversion to personal risk that has manifested itself in a behavior of silence to counter the potential assumption that their silence symbolizes a lack of literacy or oral English ability (Ibid). It is the student's level of engagement that will lead to educational self empowerment for ELL's. Erickson states "Vygotsky and the zone of proximal development are all about engagement and the role of risk" (Erickson 1987 p 344).

John Dewey noted in 1938 that the "non-social character of traditional schools is seen in its value of silence" (Dewey 1938 p 63). Institutional support for language learning requires embodying all LEP students with the assurance that institutional representatives are there to not only ensure their success but to help to develop relationships of support that provide roadmaps and act as guideposts toward access to the privileges of the dominant culture. Instead, communities are still stuck with a factory model geared toward information accumulation and perpetuation of the existing social order (Rallis 1995). School organizations have bought into a process that sees education as the filling of students with information which necessitates that

students accept a role of passive receptor (Freire 1970; Darling-Hammond 2006). Implementing the collaborative and noisy features of language acquisition policy counters this predominant paradigm.

John Goodlad recognized that schools, as organizations, have a “preexisting culture that seeks to preserve and perpetuate itself” (Goodlad 2004 p 104). Schools that support isolationist cultures grow disengaged students, frustrated teachers and administrators who are unlikely to effect change (Ibid). The efficacy in implementing policy that supports dynamic classroom activity in a non competitive, non isolationist paradigm depends on whether there is a whole school culture of collegiality and interdependency.

There is a power of culture, at the school organizational level and at the classroom level that can create systemic failure or can manufacture success (Koyama 2004). Administration attitudes toward implementing a policy that engages and empowers students traditionally disenfranchised reflect the shared values of the organization. Speaking English well is tantamount to being invited to be part of the social fabric of the school (Fuller 1987). Not speaking English well leads to an imbalance of power between the LEP and non LEP students; a “culture of silence of the disposed” (Freire 1970 p 30). Power relations and imbalances that exist in the classroom cannot be ignored because they eventually play out in society which heightens the importance of implementing a school environment where minority students can access the culture and language of power – the codes of language and behavior that they will need to succeed (Delpit 1988).

Schools that give mixed messages to teachers about whether they support whole school implementation of environments conducive to English language acquisition shatter patterns of shared basic assumptions (Schein 1984). They create confusion about responsibility for policy implementation (who it affects), about how the policy is communicated (what it is exactly), and even about whether the policy has legitimacy (why anyone should implement it). Reform policies, such as addressing the oral English acquisition needs of LEP students, represent a change in

expectations of the students themselves (participation). They demand change in how teachers teach (pedagogy), in how the school organization communicates and gauges success (less on pushing ELL's out to raise test scores but on collaborative and collective efforts to create welcoming social environments that keep students in school and raise English acquisition performance). Reform requires consideration whether politics should be allowed to distract (e.g. through Media misdirection toward controversy or distortion of State interpretation of Federal policy) educational professionals from educating all children to the best of their potential.

### The Dynamics of Implementing Policy

Kurt Lewin noted that reform has two parts to it, change of policy and implementation. Implementation is affected by the organization's power dynamics that "reflect an environment of competition for the interest and commitment of legitimate authority" and with those who most directly apply the policy (Lewin 1947 p 76). Complexity is part of policy implementation that is under woven through different governmental layers. Policy is changed before implementation through many different venues such as individual and organizational interpretation of the scope of its intent, the time frame needed to communicate it, whether the policy created at one level of the policy chain is even feasible (has resources and expertise) to implement at the "street level" (Lipsky 1980), or if the target population that the policy is intended to "fix" would even benefit from its implementation. This creates shifts in goal attainment due to this complexity of intergovernmental organizational interpretation of objectives (Mazmanian 1989). It also reflects the myriad of stakeholders involved who react to the policy in their own way based on their own values which makes implementation of English language acquisition policy challenging.

Traditionally, implementation has been considered from a top down perspective, starting with a policy and then examining to what extent its objectives are achieved (Sabatier 1986). Both top down and bottom up approaches to accessing policy implementation consider the possibility of goal displacement due to human and environmental policy adaption.

## Considering Policy from the Top Down or from Bottom Up

Pressman and Wildavsky's seminal read on implementation uses a top down lens to consider impediments such as stakeholder priority, resource scarcity (not funding the policy and the cost of time), and the ability of the federal government to coerce or at least overcome resistant local actors. The top down approach also considers inducements to policy implementation such as simplicity of the original policy and strong monitoring or evaluation at the point of service (Pressman 1973). The idea of a bottom up approach to policy implementation requires taking a closer look at the values and beliefs of those who are at the operational level (Mazmanian 1989).

Both the forward mapping idea of the top down approach and the backwards mapping idea of the bottom up approach are relevant in considering the successes and failures of implementing language acquisition policy (Ibid). Both methodologies of assessing implementation have merit. Local policy administrators will always be interested in how to guide and constrain behavior in order to carry out mandated policy while it is useless to try to understand the complexities on implementation without consulting those who directly intersect with it.

But implementation is not static. In order to get a complete picture of the challenges any policy faces with implementation, the unique circumstances of the total environment must be considered; the political, organizational, individual at the front line and the targeted beneficiary. In organizations like schools, the role of social interaction as crucial to the successful implementation of English language acquisition policy must be valued by all stakeholders to ensure systemic change toward a more humanizing and effective pedagogy.



## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

In educational research the use of quantitative methodology limits researchers to only “rough indicators of knowledge” (Kennedy 2008 p 363). Qualitative research methodologies consider patterns of behavior that are not delimited in scope to recurring causal themes but also consider the processes and environment that influence the patterns themselves.

Qualitative methodology is used in this case study as a tool to better understand how the phenomenon of oral English language acquisition policy implementation is influenced by complexities in the organizational environment it is applied to, and by the behavior patterns of those teachers and students intrinsically affected by the process. The inquiry process in this case study is bounded by a specific environment, time and subjects acting within and upon that environment. It considers “what is important about that case within its own world” (Stake 2003 p 140).

This case study utilizes a structure that assumes learning occurs differently in different contexts and as such there is a “situated cognition perspective that defies the separation of context and knowledge construction” (Merriam 1998 p 46). Oral English language acquisition is highly dependent on environment. The case study is framed by the theories that language learners create social capital through advancing their English proficiency (Stanton-Salazar 1995) and that knowledge is mutually constructed in a social context with their English speaking peers (Vygotsky 1978). Both the culture of the classroom in terms of breadth of social learning opportunity (e.g. strategies of cooperative learning) and the depth of attention to the direct use of

English language in discourse (e.g. strategies of oral participation) as vehicles for knowledge generation are examined (Vygotsky 1978; Foucault 1971).

#### The Intended Audience and Researcher Positionality

This study is intended for use by school districts with Career and Technical Education programs that are experiencing an increased number of limited English proficient students. The school districts in which the study is conducted are in the well established first ring suburbs outside a large urban city and, as such, are not yet majority minority in population but have experienced a significant in-migration of limited English proficient students in their schools. It is assumed that the information presented in this study on the factors that affect implementation of listening and speaking pedagogy by CTE teachers at the high school level will help drive future district policies that promote change in the culture and in the support structure of these high schools. The strategic information provided by this study will also assist further outlying suburbs that will continue to experience an increase in LEP minority students due to demographic trends.

The support for implementing these pedagogical tools that target listening and speaking skills will directly benefit language acquisition and academic success of English language learners. The importance of creating social capital through the application of a social pedagogy paradigm is emphasized. The paradigm is created as a result of effective implementation of cooperative learning and peer collaboration. This strongly supports the connection between language acquisition and social capital as the driver for staying in high school as a short term goal and lifelong financial success through increased job opportunity as a long term goal.

This study considers social reality as contextual and real time bounded. An effort has been made to ensure that participants are treated equally; that they are given an opportunity to define their context, and that they are not questioned in substantially different time periods. It also recognizes that differing points of view affects how reality is presented (Saukko 2008). Interviews and focus group data are recorded and transcribed and participants have the opportunity to review them for accuracy.

It is this researcher's contention that all interviews are interactional and as such have effectively collaborative outputs (Holstein 2004). Understanding of the significance of the phenomena is furthered through the organization of the responses into categories that can be later analyzed for strength (Dewey 1938). Coding the responses and categorizing them in themes manages the data into comprehensible patterns that can be analyzed meaningfully (Baker 2004). Response flexibility is built into the survey through inclusion of additional comment boxes. Strength of themes derived from the literature as well as frequency of unanticipated themes gleaned through the open comments illuminate patterns of behavior affecting implementation of English language acquisition policy.

To facilitate the interpretation of the language and physical symbols that belie the paradigms of social values beneath them, this researcher recognizes and communicates her moral responsibility to both respect and report the participant's point of view but also to acknowledge her own lack of conventional objectivity. In doing so the research resulting from the interview, focus group and survey processes become less an objectifying determination by the researcher, but a more mutual development of the truth of the matter through opportunities to clarify intended meaning. It also examines the impetuses behind the rationale that drove the conclusion.

It is important to note that the researcher, as a long time educator and respected member of the area's administration cadre of ESL departments, will understand the unique verbiage and issues germane to the culture of participants. While all attempts toward eliciting and representing responses solely from the participants will be made, it is also understood that all identity is socially constructed and as such drives understanding and mutually constructed meaning (Christians 2008p 201; Holstein 2004; Fontana 2003). Concerns about researcher influence while conducting the interviews are mitigated via both the self reflection in the style of Sandra Harding's 'strong objectivity' which seeks to confront one's own biases before analyzing data (Harding 1991) and in careful use of content analysis that is sensitive to underlying power issues and complexity in social interactions (Potter 2004). In a compromise between personal bias and

objectivity the categories for data analysis are preset. These categories are gleaned from the literature but chosen by the researcher thus displaying a potential bias. Through open ended questioning techniques in the interview process and available comment sections in the survey, this researcher lessens the bias of categorical choice in that new categories are possible.

### Research Questions and Sub Research Questions

What are the factors that impact the implementation of a collaborative social integration model for ELL student learning in Texas Career and Technical Education classes?

- To what extent are factors political?
  - To what extent are factors organizational?
  - To what extent are factors individual at the teacher level?
  - To what extent are factors individual at the student level?
1. To what extent are factors political?
    - a. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive oral English language acquisition policy to be idealistic at the federal level and not realistically implementable at the local level?
    - b. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive the methodology of reporting LEP/CTE adequately yearly progress through the TELPAS system to be a reasonably accurate indication of oral English language acquisition policy implementation?
    - c. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that the importance of oral English language acquisition policy implementation is directly affected by media visibility of related issues like immigration?
    - d. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that their time implementing oral English language acquisition policy should be financially supported through stipends or additional benefits?

- e. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that their content area is so fragmented that all ESL policy including standardized pedagogy is inapplicable to them?
  - f. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that the current policy of using non CTE testing assessment data (TAKS and TELPAS) for LEP is appropriate for determining LEP student success in CTE classes?
2. To what extent are factors organizational?
- a. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that strategies for improving LEP student's English listening and speaking abilities are expressly defined in a school wide body of knowledge?
  - b. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that they are explicitly monitored by administrators for implementing LEP English speaking and listening instructional strategies?
  - c. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that responsibility for LEP student success in oral English acquisition is well communicated and coordinated campus-wide?
  - d. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that the organizational norm for discipline is based on classroom silence and peer isolation?
3. To what extent are factors individual at the teacher level?
- a. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that they have been trained in implementing oral English language acquisition pedagogy?
  - b. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that they have built up informal networks of support between themselves and their peers that facilitate implementation of oral English acquisition pedagogy?
  - c. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that they know their LEP student's academic language proficiency and literacy levels in their primary language?

- d. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive English language acquisition to be a direct responsibility of the ESL/ELA teacher?
4. To what extent are factors individual at the student level?
- a. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive LEP and non-LEP resistance to mutual social collaboration on class assignments?
  - b. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive LEP inability to engage in meaningful class dialogue due to under education or lack of literacy?
  - c. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that LEP students are self-aware of their own level of listening and speaking academic English?
  - d. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that LEP students are able to use their oral English skills on the job site in an apprentice or job shadowing situation?
  - e. To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that LEP/Non LEP collaboration improves behavior?

### Research Design

The research design includes four key methodologies for gleaning data, online access to secondary data, the survey, the focus group and the one-on one interview. Other methodologies such as ethnographic methods of observation were rejected, principally because of their vast situationally specific time demands (Miller 2004a). Teachers and administrators have extremely busy schedules that are constantly filled with a variety of meetings. In order to obtain their cooperation in participating in the study, it was imperative to find methodologies that least inconvenienced them. Communicating via email and offering the survey online fulfilled this requirement. Accommodating the administrators and specialists with interview times on their work sites and a scheduled focus group at their convenience also addresses this issue. All secondary data is online and publically available. The purpose of the interviews is to uncover responses that may be hidden in traditional surveys and thereby unearth a richer data set. They are conducted to get a privileged insight beyond superficial responses (Baker 2004).

Through the use of multiple methods, this case study reveals the perceptions of the faculty, who form the front line of oral language acquisition policy implementation. Data triangulation, methodological triangulation, and analysis triangulation are used to paint a picture of a single phenomenon. They strengthen the veracity of the research findings, consequently reducing threats to construct and external validity. Through direct surveying of the CTE teachers and indirect questioning of knowledgeable and interested stakeholders about the practices of those teachers, as well as examining online information about CTE programs and LEP student outcomes, patterns that explain and describe phenomena affecting oral English language acquisition policy implementation develop from the exploration of different points of view on the same issue. "It is through this triangulation of data that a representation of reality that cannot be seen objectively emerges as a montage of patterns" (Denzin 2008 p 7). The case study format permits flexibility in the choice of methodology to both offer explanatory evidence and to test theory. The use of a case study design allows a particular environment to be examined closely and for phenomena therefore to be interpreted in a specific context (Merriam 1998).

The organization of a study that considers more than one viewpoint, (e.g. triangulates input), adds structure about the knowledge gleaned (Miller 2004a). The case study format allows for a variety of methodology to help drive the process toward a deep understanding of the phenomena of interest. "In choosing what to examine, the focus is on the case itself while the methodology used to draw out inferences combines the qualitative techniques" (Stake 2003 p 124). The use of pattern-matching in the analysis of this case study strengthens the internal validity of this design as it predicts patterns of teacher attitudes that are compared with actual attitudes gleaned through surveys and interviews (Yin 2003).

The unit of analysis in this case study is a cross section of fifty-nine CTE classroom teachers in two districts within the same greater metropolitan areas in Texas. This study examines their understanding of ELL instructional strategies and their perceived ability to implement them. It explores their intuition about organizational expectations about the priority and necessity of implementation. The study asks these CTE teachers about their perception of federal

and state mandated policies and of the personal relevancy to the teachers regarding their use. It also queries their impression of LEP student capacity. This composite approach toward CTE teacher perception of factors affecting oral English language acquisition policy gives insight into the implementation process at the classroom level. The examination of their attitudes and of the context within which they form their attitudes acknowledges the complexity and situational nature of the case study (Stake 2003).

### Subjects and Demographic Distribution

This study was conducted in the state of Texas. Texas has become a majority minority state due to an influx of Latinos and other ethnic groups (Girtman 2010). Tracking the growth of Hispanic students provides a window into the increasing importance of oral English language development.

In 2008, Hispanic students, as a percent of all K-12 students, garnered 44% of all public school enrollments in the state (Fry 2010). Of the 2,028,000 Hispanics enrolled in K-12 public education in Texas, 78% do not speak English at home (Ibid). The majority language for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in Texas is Spanish (NCBE 2008). Not all Hispanic students speak Spanish as their primary language, but many do. In fact, there is a continuum of oral academic English language proficiency among the Hispanic population as well as with all non-native English speaking students.

The Texas Education Agency has divided the state into twenty education regions. This study takes place in one of these education regions. Student enrollment overall has increased during the academic years 2006/07 to 2008/09 within the education region in which this study takes place. The percentage of Hispanic students enrolled in the region has also steadily increased over this three year time span. As shown in Table 3-1 below, the annual total student growth rate in this Texas region over three years is 2.16%, while the annual growth rate for Hispanic enrollment is 5.72%.



**Table 3-1 Region A, County A, Districts A&B Hispanic Growth Rates 2006-09**

	Total Enrolled 2006-07	Total Enrolled 2008-09	Annual Growth Rate	Hispanic Enrolled 2006-07	Hispanic Enrolled 2008-09	Annual Hispanic Growth Rate	Percent Hispanic 2008-09
District A Total	22541	22576	0.08%	6505	7308	6.17%	32.37%
District B Total	28015	30759	4.90%	5406	6337	8.61%	20.60%
County Total	314695	324618	1.58%	105151	115542	4.94%	35.59%
County Mean	(N=16) 19668.44	(N=16) 20288.63		(N=16) 6571.94	(N=16) 7221.38		
Standard Deviation	22791.97	22070.18		11549.79	12101.05		
Region Total	499537	521135	2.16%	143418	159812	5.72%	30.70%
Region Mean	(N=10) 49953.7	(N=10) 52113.5		(N=10) 14341.8	(N=10) 15981.2		
Standard Deviation	98592.74	102308.7		32781.1	36184.93		

As shown in Table 3-2 below, the annual total student growth rate in this Texas region over three years is 2.16%, while the annual growth rate for Limited English Proficient the annual rate is 7.11%.

**Table 3-2 Region A, County B, Districts A&B, LEP Growth Rates 2006-09**

	Total Enrolled 2006-07	Total Enrolled 2008-09	Annual Growth Rate	LEP Enrolled 2006-07	LEP Enrolled 2008-09	Annual LEP Growth Rate	Percent of LEP 2008-09
District A Total	22541	22576	0.08%	2872	3359	8.48%	14.90%
District B Total	28015	30759	4.90%	2516	3077	11.15%	10%
County Total	314695	324618	1.58%	48456	55131	6.89%	16.98%
County Mean	(N=16) 19668.44	(N=16) 20288.63		(N=16) 3028.5	(N=16) 3445.69		

Table 3-2 *Continued*

Standard Deviation	22791.97	22070.18		5722.47	6321.74		
Region Total	499537	521135	2.16%	64825	74051	7.11%	14.20%
Region Mean	(N=10) 49953.7	(N=10) 52113.5		(N=10) 6482.5	(N=10) 7405.1		
Standard Deviation	98592.74	102308.7		36184.93	17190.94		

There are ten counties located within this Texas education region. As depicted in Table 3-1 above, the county in which this study is located had a total student population of 324,618 in 2008-2009 with an annual growth rate of 1.58%, and a Hispanic student population of 115,542 with an annual growth rate of 4.94%. Table 3-2 above shows a LEP student population of 55,131 and an annual LEP growth rate of 6.89% over three years. In the academic year 2008-2009 Hispanics comprised 35.59% of students enrolled in K-12 public school in county A while the percent of LEP students comprised 16.98%. Within county A there are sixteen school districts. As shown in Table 3-1 above, the 2008-2009 mean district size in this county is 22,289. The variation across districts within the county is evidenced by a standard deviation of 22070.2 which reveals a substantial dissimilarity in enrollment size across districts.

Although region A has experienced a larger annual student growth rate (2.16%) over three years than the 1.58% that county A has experienced, both show a steady increase. The increase in student growth has brought new challenges to the school districts as they struggle to identify subgroups of students based on targeted needs per federal and state policy requirements that monitor the educational attainment of individual subpopulations.

Districts A and B within county A were targeted as districts to participate in this study as both have experienced growth in Hispanic and LEP subpopulations, are similar in size and are both located in suburbs just outside the geographical jurisdiction of large (over 50,000 students) urban school districts. The subject districts are part urban and part suburban due to their proximity in the first outer ring of a large urban area. As shown in Table 3-1 above, district A has

only a small annual student growth rate over three years (0.08%) compared to the county rate of 1.58% and the region rate of 2.16% but it has a substantial annual growth rate in Hispanic and, as shown in Table 3-2, in LEP students. The annual growth rate of 6.17% for Hispanic students in district A is larger than the three year annual rate of 4.94% rate for Hispanics in the county or the three year annual rate of 5.70% in the educational region. The annual 8.48% growth rate of LEP students over three years in district A is larger than the 6.89% of the county but only slightly larger than the three year annual LEP growth rate of 7.11% of the educational region. This indicates a flat overall growth rate for district A but a continuing concentration of Hispanic and LEP students within and around the district.

In district B, as shown in Table 3-1 above, the three year annual growth rate of 4.90% in total student enrollment, the 8.61% rate for Hispanic student enrollment and, as shown in Table 3-2 above, the 11.15% rate for LEP student enrollment are larger than the three year annual growth rates of 1.58%, 4.94% and 6.89% respectively in the county. Compared to the region, however, while district B has a larger growth rate for total student enrollment than the region's 2.16%, and has a larger growth rate in LEP student enrollment than the region's 7.11%, it has a smaller growth rate in Hispanic students than the region's 5.70%. This may indicate a larger growth of non Hispanic LEP students in district B compared to the region. Unlike district A's flat student growth rate of .08%, district B indicates a steady growth overall of 4.90%. In district B as in district A there is a concentration of Hispanic students within and around the district.

Corresponding to steady growth in Hispanic and LEP students in the two districts is a steady increase in the Bilingual/ESL program enrollment. As shown in Table 3-3 below, Bilingual/ESL program enrollment for district A has an annual growth rate of 8.49% over three years. District B also is growing its Bilingual/ESL program with an annual growth rate of 12.85%.

**Table 3-3 Bilingual/ESL & CTE Program Growth Rates for Study Districts 2006-09**

Academic Year	Total Enrolled Bilingual ESL Program District A	Percentage of Enrollment B/E District A	Total Enrolled Bilingual ESL Program District B	Percentage of Enrollment B/E District B	Total Enrolled CTE Program District A	Percentage of Enrollment CTE District A	Total Enrolled CTE Program District B	Percentage of Enrollment CTE District B
2006 to 07	2,836	12.6	2353	8.4	5067	22.5	5418	19.4
2007 to 08	3,019	13.7	2737	9.2	4388	19.9	7704	26
2008 to 09	3,318	14.7	2958	9.6	5034	22.4	7855	25.6
Annual Growth Rate	8.49%		12.85%		-0.33%		22.49%	

As shown in Table 3-3 above, enrollment in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs was stagnant in district A over three years with an annual growth rate of -.33% while they grew in district B with an annual growth rate of 22.49%. Because of the variability in district's designation procedures for limited English proficient, it is difficult to correlate LEP student participation in CTE classes.

The increase in Hispanic and LEP populations in the district are used to project increased LEP participation in CTE classes. Testing data in the Performance Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS), which counts those CTE students who have been dual coded LEP and eligible to take TAKS tests, also indicates the presence of LEP students in CTE classes. As the criteria for determining LEP/CTE dual coding fluctuates between districts (some requiring that LEP students take an entire strand of CTE classes before being dual coded and others coding all LEP students who take any CTE classes as dual coded), increasing Hispanic and LEP student designations as well as expanding CTE programs suffice to indicate an increase in LEP students in either casual or strand CTE class enrollment. District population data and campus program participation is gleaned through the Public Education Information System (PEIMS) provided by the Texas Education Agency.

The subjects in this case study are all the Career and Technical Education teachers in district A and district B. A total of one hundred and eighty-six CTE teachers were asked to respond to the survey. Fifty-nine teachers responded for a response rate of 32%. Additional data was gleaned from English as a Second Language (ESL) Coordinators, Directors and ESL experts. Four of these administrators and experts were asked to participate in a single focus group session for the purpose of providing input regarding question relevancy, format, and length of the teacher survey. Two CTE specialists and two ESL specialists from each of the two districts in the study were interviewed to provide additional data. The ESL and CTE Directors of each district were also interviewed. Altogether eight interviews were conducted.

#### Research Instruments

The qualitative nature of the study focuses on data obtained through four methods; analysis of secondary online data, a focus group of district level ESL coordinators, semi-structured interviews of district CTE and ESL Directors and Specialists and CTE teacher surveys. The open ended questioning of the focus group and a semi-structured questioning format in the one on one interviews reveal how these administrators and specialists view the barriers and the incentives CTE teachers encounter implementing a collaborative social integration model for LEP students. The use of a Likert scale in the survey instrument allowed the CTE teachers a range of available answers.

#### Qualitative Methodology in a Case Study Design

Qualitative research methodology considers the context, the social interaction of the participants and the researcher and the temporal nature of reality (Denzin 2008). Through multi-methodology and opportunities for participants to clarify responses a clearer picture or socially derived understanding between the researcher and the participants of the phenomena emerges as it exists in its current state.

Policy creation and policy implementation are in a constant state of change as are the opinions and understandings develop between people. Foucault reminds us that reality is continually under construction (Holstein 2004). This case study utilizes pooled responses in a capsulated time frame with a bounded scope of participants in order to attain a concentrated or deep view into the problem and its causal factors in this time and place.

The appropriateness of using qualitative methodology is evident as the initial categorizing and descriptive analysis of themes relating to barriers and incentives for implementation of a collaborative social integration model for oral English acquisition is directed by information gleaned by both practitioners and researchers in the field. Closer analysis of the strength of the categories and themes is achieved in this study through the depth of the questioning and the variety of questioning methodology. The questions are grouped into the four areas of influence on policy implementation; political, organizational, teacher and student. These four areas of influence are gleaned from the literature as pertinent to implementation barriers.

The election of the case study as the format for the research study was chosen because of this flexibility in methodology. Although generalizing from a single case study is suspect in its representation to a larger population (because the scope is narrow and the participants are not chosen at random), the value of pooling the responses to generalize the results is strengthened through a larger sample size (Silverman 2005; Holstein 2004).

In this case study the triangulation of responses from three different factions of stakeholders (CTE teachers, district specialists and administrators) provides unique insight into the phenomena that may be present in other school districts. The case study is further framed by the theory that language learners create social capital by advancing their English proficiency and that knowledge is mutually constructed in a social context with their English speaking peers. Both the culture of the organization in terms of breadth of social learning opportunity (strategies of cooperative learning) and the depth of attention to the direct use of English language in discourse

(strategies of oral participation) as vehicles for knowledge generation are examined (Vygotsky 1978; Foucault 1971).

The analysis and subsequent explanation of the research findings is strengthened through the use of theory triangulation (e.g. related theoretical lenses from which to view a single phenomenon). The theory that social capital is built through verbal interaction, and the theory that learning takes place in the zone of proximal development where mutually negotiated meaning makes new knowledge generation both frame the tenets of oral English language acquisition policy.

#### Procedures

The decision to use surveys for the CTE teachers and interviews for the specialists and administrators was based on both practicality (there were 186 potentially participating teachers, 4 specialists and 4 administrators), and the assumption that the administrators have, as leaders in their fields, more in-depth knowledge to share about the research question and would respond well in a semi structured interview format. The semi-structured interview process allows for more detail in response which might shed more light on complex aspects of the research question (Fontana 2003). The survey in this case study pools the entire population of CTE teachers in two different districts. The CTE teachers were invited to respond to the survey instrument through the use of individualized access codes that were provided to each teacher. There was one survey format. Surveys were electronically administered. Participants self selected demographic data such as identification of their education title, sex, whether they are bilingual and length of educator experience. Survey responses were analyzed using pre-coded categorization of themes generally defined as politic, organizational, teacher and student influences on implementing the social integration model required for oral English acquisition. The task of the focus group was restricted to examining the survey for both content and format and became a pilot test for the survey instrument.

Descriptive analyses, including response frequencies, are applied to ascertain strength of teacher opinions. Response frequencies gleaned from the survey instrument are summarized in tables that are organized by the research question subsections. The Likert scale is an appropriate method for measuring the attitudes and opinions of the teachers and offers a way to determine their expressed value of the relative weights of their responses as determined by the favorable or unfavorable opinion of the item (Frankfort-Nachmias 2000). Questions on the survey are grouped under the four areas of influence (political, organizational, teacher level and student level) on policy implementation found in the literature. The qualitative technique of pattern analysis is applied to the four open ended comment sections on the survey instrument.

Interviews with the CTE and ESL specialists and directors as well as the focus group of ESL Coordinators are recorded. The resultant dialogues are transcribed and analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques that search for themes which help to clarify intended meanings that incorporate and respect the respondents' unique point of view (Potter 2004). There is a different set of open ended questions for the CTE and ESL directors compared to the CTE and ESL specialists. All questions are categorized to reflect specific research sub questions. Administrator and specialist interview responses are compared to teacher responses in the same categories. New themes discovered in the interview process are compared to any new themes presented by the teachers in the survey's open comment section.

The procedure used to identify the schools, the teachers, the specialists and the administrators is based on comparing public information available on the Texas Education Agency website. The percentage of LEP increase over a three year period was considered (looking for growth) as well as proximity of the districts within the same region that surrounds a large urban district. The resulting two districts were examined to confirm the existence of CTE programs as well as their increasing LEP population (Texas Education Agency 2008a).

A letter to the superintendent of each district seeking permission to conduct the study was conducted. A response letter of permission was requested. Subsequent email



communications to the teachers outlined the study parameters, asked for their participation and included the response letter from the district leader who gave permission for the study. An informed consent form was e-mailed to the participating teachers.

The administrators and the district specialists were contacted for the interviews via email after securing the response letter from the district leader. Focus group participants volunteered. Consent forms were obtained and appointments for the focus group and the interviews were made. Efforts to maintain the confidentiality of survey, focus group and interview responses were always paramount. The inclusion of a 'reasonably informed consent' form that insures an explanation of the purpose of the study, the risks and benefits to the participants in contributing to the study and the procedures used to collect data and to evaluate it is utilized with respect to the participants (Frankfort-Nachmias 2000).

#### Analysis methodology

The desire to analyze the data as the result of the unique situation that this case study offers is balanced by a suggested agreement of patterns or trends that can be applied to contexts not bounded by this study. The use of triangulation through multiple methods of gleaning data and in analyzing it increases the reliability of the results (Silverman 2005 p 121). Special attention to language used, for example, when analyzing the discourse used in the interviews will add to the richness of meaning that is possible when face to face interactions occur (Miller 2004b; Silverman 2005).

#### Threats to Validity and Reliability

Because a case study is grounded in its context it can be difficult to replicate. It might prove to be difficult to replicate this study exactly as it uses such a unique set of participants. It is assumed that their opinions and perceptions of the research problem are representative only in the context of this case study.

The participants are not randomly selected for participation. Although the entire population of CTE teachers is solicited to participate in this case study, each teacher self-selects whether or not they will participate. The interviews were conducted solely by the researcher thus reducing possible reliability bias due to differences in interviewing technique. The survey web address and individualized access codes were sent electronically through email and the participating CTE teachers answered a survey instrument with the same set of questions and with the same standardized instructions.

To strengthen content validity, the researcher convened a focus group of ESL experts who had an opportunity to explore the topic and to give suggestions for clarity and consistency of the questions proposed for the survey before they were presented to the participants. By applying multiple methodologies there was an attempt by the researcher to strengthen the triangulation of data that directly answers the research question.

CHAPTER 4  
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Subjects

One hundred and eighty six teachers were contacted to participate in the online survey. Fifty-nine teachers participated leading to a 31.7% participation rate. Partially completed surveys were not used. Two CTE directors, two ESL directors, two CTE specialists and two ESL specialists who worked in the districts were interviewed to provide additional perspective. The rate of participation from each district was within ten percentage points of each other.

The Research Objectives

This research examines factors that affect policy implementation. A specific policy, implementation of the oral English component of the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) in Texas, is examined to further understand the factors affecting the implementation of a classroom environment in which academic English is improved for LEP students through peer collaboration and practice. The research question is the following:

What are the factors affecting the implementation of a collaborative social integration model for ELL student learning in Texas' Career and Technical Education classes?

- To what extent are factors political?
- To what extent are factors organizational?
- To what extent are factors individual at the teacher level?
- To what extent are factors individual at the student level?

CTE teachers were presented with forty-nine survey questions that covered four sections, including an open comment section. The specialists were asked fifteen questions and the

administrators were asked six questions (see appendices for instruments). The questions were pre-categorized into political, organizational, teacher and student factors except the following biographical questions Q45 (teaching field), Q47 (male/female), and Q48 (years of experience), and the open comment sections on the survey instrument.

An open comment section followed each of the four sections on the survey. The data gleaned in the four comment sections were treated to pattern analysis to confirm appropriate placement in an existing category or attributed to a relevant new category. Each category contained key questions, that, when answered would generate rich data about influential factors affecting this policy implementation delimited by the category parameters. Multiple questions in the survey, the interviews and in the review of secondary data from federal, state and district online websites addressed these key questions in order to provide multiple data sources and question redundancy (See appendix for data source and category grid).

#### The Focus Group

The purpose of the focus group was to provide an open forum in which English language acquisition experts could review, reflect and respond to the validity of the survey questions and the format of the instrument. Four bilingual/ESL administrators, each from a different non-participating district, and one publishing expert in ESL materials came together to review the instrument.

Their feedback covered the scope of the questions themselves, the format of the instrument, and the narrative introducing it. This pilot group for the survey instrument recommended a reduction of acronyms, the inclusion of an "I don't know" choice and to simplify specific questions. Any unclear word choice was clarified or eliminated except eliminating all use of either the acronym "LEP" or "ESL" as these terms are still integral to federal and state vernacular and used in common oral language, especially by non experts in the field. All three terms, "LEP", "ESL" and "ELL" are therefore used according to appropriate context in this study.

Demographic Data Summary

The specialization areas for CTE teachers range widely within sixteen possible fields as shown in Table 4-1 below.

**Table 4-1 Specialization Areas and Response Rate on Teacher Survey**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Agriculture & Food	8	13.6	
Architecture & Construction	5	8.5	
Arts, A/V Tech & Communications	3	5.1	
Business Management & Administration	5	8.5	
Education & training	5	8.5	
Health Science	4	6.8	
Human Services	3	5.1	
Information Tech	6	10.2	
Law & Public Safety	2	3.4	
Marketing	8	13.6	
Science, Tech, Engineering & Math	8	13.6	
Other specify	2	3.4	
Total	59	100.0	4.971

The CTE teacher content specializations are divided by area, including those most often represented in the teacher questionnaire; Marketing, Science, Tech, Engineering & Math and Agriculture. Four areas of possible CTE content specialization are not represented by the fifty-nine teachers who responded to the survey, and they include: Finance, Hospitality and Tourism, Manufacturing, and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics.

ESL education is clearly not well represented as a specialty among the CTE teachers in the study districts as shown in Table 4-2 below. Only five percent of teachers respond that they had such a specialization. While ESL certification does not guarantee implementation of listening and speaking strategies for oral English acquisition, the low level of certification indicates a lack of fundamental knowledge about pedagogy for this targeted subgroup. The respondents reflect the CTE faculty total study population that is fifty-nine percent female and forty percent male (Crockett 2010). As shown in Table 4-2 below, 57.6 percent of the respondents are female and 42.4% are male.

**Table 4-2 CTE Teacher Characteristics**

Characteristic	Number	Percent (n=59)
ESL Certified	3	5.1%
Fluent in Second Language	6	10.2%
Female	34	57.6%
Male	25	42.4%
0-5 Years of Experience	12	20.3%
6-10 Years of Experience	22	37.3%
11+ Years of Experience	25	42.4%

The teacher respondents are generally experienced in their field, with forty-two percent of respondents having eleven years or more of teaching experience. The smallest group is the beginning teachers, which comprise twenty percent of respondents. The overrepresentation of veteran teachers could explain the lack of ESL certification in CTE courses as the need for ESL certification has increased in tandem with the increasing enrollment of students who are limited English proficient. The increasing concentration of limited English students poses new challenges for veteran teachers who have not had either prior training or prior contact with English language learners.

CTE teacher's lack of fluency in a second language is also a potential obstacle in serving the needs of ELL students. As shown in Table 4-2 above, ninety percent of CTE teachers are not fluent in another language, suggesting a possible lack of familiarity with basic tenets of language acquisition theory. Two comments made by teachers on the 'open comment' section of the survey

provide some details on this issue. The first respondent expresses concern at the expectation that CTE students get exposure to English through immersion in the classroom. The second respondent expresses a concern that expecting bilingualism in CTE teachers would add to their scarcity as it is already difficult to find teachers who specialize in such narrow subject matter as those content fields under the Career and Technical banner.

### Political Factors Affecting Implementation

Six categories of political influence are examined to determine to what extent CTE teachers believe political issues affect their implementation of oral English language policy. Teachers who are skeptical that implementation will bring about desired policy results or who disbelieve the research outcomes that undergird the policy might be less likely to produce the internal motivation necessary to implement the policy. Those teachers who profess that they are affected by political issues that surround the target beneficiary of the policy and the way they are portrayed in the Media might fluctuate in their response to policy implementation. How realistic or difficult they think implementation would be and whether they think that it is possible to apply similar instructional strategies across all of their subject areas could impact if and how well CTE teachers implement the policy.

#### An Idealistic Policy that is Impossible to Implement

The first political category considers the extent to which the CTE teachers believe that oral English language acquisition policy is idealistic at the federal level and difficult, if not impossible to implement at the local level. As depicted on Table 4-3 below, sixty-nine percent of the teachers agree or strongly agree that implementing oral English instructional strategies is idealistic as a policy. Twenty-six percent disagree or strongly disagree, while only five percent do not know. This response indicates that CTE teachers may be influenced by their perception that the current policy on oral English language acquisition is idealistic and one they cannot fully implement.

**Table 4-3 Oral English instructional strategies, such as increasing student talk time, is Idealistic as a policy Q3**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	5	8.5	
Agree	36	61.0	
Disagree	11	18.6	
Strongly Disagree	4	6.8	
Don't Know	3	5.1	
Total	59	100.0	.929

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) argue that implementation should not be divorced from policy (Pressman p 143). Faulty implementation is often singularly blamed on activities that were not carried out, but the problem may be that aspirations are set too high (Ibid p xxv). The teacher's belief that oral language policy is idealistic hints at the perception that there is a mismatch between means and ends. If teachers view a policy as idealistic, then implementation may be jeopardized.

As shown in Table 4-4 below, sixty-six percent of the CTE teachers disagree or strongly disagree that changing instructional strategies would not substantially improve how well LEP students speak English. Twenty-five percent of the teachers agree or strongly agree that changing instructional strategies would not substantially improve how well LEP students speak English. Eight percent do not know. This response could indicate that a majority of CTE teachers believe that implementing new instructional strategies targeted toward improving oral English language acquisition would be beneficial to LEP students.



**Table 4-4 Changing Instructional Strategies will not improve ELL's spoken English Q4**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	2	3.4	
Agree	13	22.0	
Disagree	31	52.5	
Strongly Disagree	8	13.6	
Don't Know	5	8.5	
Total	59	100.0	.919

In addition, a substantial proportion of the respondents, thirty-three percent, either do not believe that the targeted instructional strategies required of the policy will actually make a difference in student outcome or they just don't know. Lessons from low-performing schools with high LEP student enrollment that have turned around to high performing schools show that teachers whose classes reflect an environment in which there is daily practice of collaborative work are offering their students an opportunity for academic English practice through structured conversation, reflection, and inquiry (McFadden 2009). The substantial proportion of teachers in this study who disbelieve in or are not sure about a positive outcome when oral English pedagogy is implemented could reflect their lack of knowledge about the pedagogy requirements of a collaborative model in which oral academic English is regularly practiced. Or it could reflect their unfamiliarity with the academic research which undergirds the policy that states changing instructional strategies is beneficial to oral English acquisition (TEA 2008d).

Mazmanian and Sabatier argue that full compliance to policy directives is dependent on individual actors' behavior (Mazmanian 1989). These front-end implementers assess the relative costs and benefits to themselves in terms of the probability of noncompliance detection, potential penalties, their belief in the policy's legitimacy and the cost/benefits to the target group (Ibid). As is seen in Table 4-5 below, sixty-six percent of the teachers acknowledged that the new ELL policy

requirements for listening and speaking academic English are only partially applied. Ten percent disagree or strongly disagree that they are partially applied, while twenty-four percent do not know. It is unclear why so many teachers perceive that there is such a failure to fully implement oral English policy or why so many do not know whether or not it is partially implemented. This acknowledgement of partial policy application by teachers suggests that an incremental approach is occurring (Datnow 2006). It is possible that because the state has only incrementally included enrichment teachers in the implementation of English Language Proficiency Standards – LEP policy in Texas – the enrichment teachers have delayed implementation efforts. The lag in implementation at the state level encourages the possibility that CTE teachers are influenced by the incremental approach itself. As a result of incrementalism, accountability (who is responsible) and implementation expectations (how much of the policy must be applied before penalties are imposed) may not have been clearly communicated to this group of teachers yet.

**Table 4-5 New Requirements in LEP policy are only partially applied Q11**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	5	8.5	1.359
Agree	34	57.6	
Disagree	5	8.5	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	
Don't Know	14	23.7	
Total	59	100.0	

The district specialists interviewed note that there are problems with accountability systems that force ELL students to take tests in English when they are not yet fully ready to do so. CTE teachers may be influenced by this political category and particularly by their hesitance to accept the policy itself as relevant. The response by administrators to this policy differs from

teachers, particularly as it connects to NCLB. The district level response reflects the belief that CTE teachers fully implement oral English instructional strategies although some administrators acknowledge that the teachers do need more training on LEP pedagogy in general. An administrator noted in the interview process that State and Federal requirements do not always match up in terms of the expectations for pedagogy change in the classroom.

#### AYP Accountability Reporting

Adequate yearly progress (AYP) is a federal accountability construct that is measured and reported by each U.S. state. In Texas the TELPAS system measures oral English proficiency progress. It uses the opinions of teachers to partially determine that progress. Teachers appear unaware of how these measurements work and how they affect the AYP rating of the CTE program. As shown in Table 4-6 below, the CTE teachers are split with twenty percent agreeing that the TELPAS rating system is accurate and twenty-two percent disagreeing. Approximately sixty percent of teacher respondents chose the “don’t know” category suggesting a clear break between policy awareness and application in the classroom. Pressman argues (1973) that policy making at the Federal level can, and often does, assume perfect knowledge and conditions at the local level, or site of implementation.

**Table 4-6 TELPAS is an accurate method to determine English Proficiency Q5**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Agree	12	20.3	
Disagree	13	22.0	
Don't Know	34	57.6	
Total	59	100.0	1.279

When asked whether or not they believe it is appropriate that the oral assessment portion of the accountability system is applied to the CTE classes as an indicator for AYP, fifty-one percent agree that oral English accountability should not be connected with CTE AYP reports. As

shown in Table 4-7 below, the remaining of the responding teachers are split between twenty-five percent believing that the association of oral English development and the CTE program's annual progress is appropriate and twenty-four percent answering that they do not know. This response suggests a lack of CTE teacher understanding of the purpose of the TELPAS for rating English proficiency levels, but also the impact of the accountability system for this sub-population on the CTE program's AYP rating. Even those who expressed familiarity with the TELPAS system indicate disagreement over its accuracy in predicting oral English proficiency levels. A respondent's comment in this section of the survey captures this confusion.

“I think CTE teachers may need help with understanding how TELPAS works i.e. seeing an actual assessment of one of their own students. This could give better insight to the effectiveness of such a rating... how can we really know how well the system is if we don't see how a given student was assessed and compare the results with our experience with that student?”

This lack of familiarity with the accountability system, doubts about its accuracy and teacher's perception that oral English progress should not affect CTE program AYP scores may intersect in a manner that negatively impacts teacher implementation in the classroom.

**Table 4-7 Applying measures of oral English progress for AYP should not be connected with CTE classes Q6**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	3	5.1	
Agree	27	45.8	
Disagree	13	22.0	
Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	14	23.7	
Total	59	100.0	1.292

Using Non-CTE Data for Determining CTE Student Success

A key findings in Shaw’s (2007) report on Texas CTE programs is a performance gap between CTE/ELL and non-CTE ELL students on the TAKS tests. As shown in Table 4-8 below, CTE teachers are asked about the influence of using state test data in determining LEP student success in their classes. Fifty-eight percent of the responding teachers disagree or strongly disagree that using aggregate core content TAKS test scores is an accurate way to determine their success in CTE classes. Only twenty-six percent agree or strongly agree while seventeen percent do not know. Dual coded CTE/LEP students and core content/LEP students are held to different standards, and their scoring affects the CTE program’s AYP in markedly different ways. If a core content/LEP student does not pass that content’s (e.g. Math) particular area’s test, then that program area (e.g. Math) is held accountable in AYP for that students failure to pass just that content area’s test. In contrast, the CTE/LEP student is held responsible to pass all his or her core content tests as an aggregate measure in order to improve the CTE program’s AYP. The results shown in Table 4-8 show that CTE teachers object to using aggregate test scores in AYP reporting of CTE program effectiveness. This dual standard by the state for assessing AYP in individual programs may also impact policy implementation by CTE teachers.

**Table 4-8 Using aggregate LEP/CTE core content TAKS scores is appropriate in determining CTE program effectiveness Q7**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	14	23.7	
Disagree	30	50.8	
Strongly Disagree	4	6.8	
Don't Know	10	16.9	
Total	59	100.0	1.025

On Table 4-9 below, forty-four percent of the CTE teachers do not know if the state TELPAS system for determining English proficiency levels is a good predictor for success in CTE classes. Only twenty percent agree that it is a good measure, and thirty-six percent do not agree. This suggests that CTE teachers are unfamiliar with what the state TELPAS system is measuring as English proficiency (TEA 2008i, 2008l).

**Table 4-9 TELPAS scores for oral English proficiency are good indicators for success in CTE classes Q8**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Agree	12	20.3	
Disagree	20	33.9	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	
Don't Know	26	44.1	
Total	59	100.0	1.235

#### Media Perception of LEP Student Issues

Denzin avers that social life is socially constructed by its participants (2003). CTE teachers are aware of the media's portrayal of ELL's academic progress and 'deficiencies'. Sixty-two percent of the respondents agree or strongly agree that the urgency of implementing listening and speaking instructional strategies is driven by media visibility. As shown in Table 4-10 below, seventeen percent disagree or strongly disagree that media exposure of LEP students' academic progress influence this policy implementation while twenty percent do not know.

**Table 4-10 The urgency of oral English policy implementation is driven by media visibility of ELL academic progress Q9**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	2	3.4	1.236
Agree	35	59.3	
Disagree	9	15.3	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	
Don't Know	12	20.3	
Total	59	100.0	

Denzin argues that Media is not passive, that it calls for a civic transformation in which the people and their everyday challenges are fused with public issues and the public arena (2003). The CTE teacher respondents suggested that they do not leave their subjectivity to media influence at the school house door. Seventy-two percent of the respondents agree or strongly agree that LEP related issues that are discussed in the media such as poverty and immigration affect the creation of a collaborative classroom environment. As shown in Table 4-11 only twenty-one percent of the teachers disagree or strongly disagree while eight percent did not know.

**Table 4-11 Political issues affect the importance of applying a collaborative learning environment for oral English acquisition in CTE classrooms Q10**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	8	13.6	1.236
Agree	34	57.6	
Disagree	8	13.6	

Table 4-11 - *Continued*

Strongly Disagree	4	6.8	
Don't Know	5	8.5	
Total	59	100.0	1.083

The specialists, however, object to this characterization of the CTE teachers. The majority of them disagree that the teacher's media exposure to LEP issues is a factor in how well they implement oral English language acquisition policy. One specialist agrees that media influence is a factor in policy implementation but limits the influence to the district administrative level only. The survey data suggests that the media influences how relevant CTE teachers deem oral English language acquisition policy, and how they implement it – fully, incrementally, or not at all. Conversely, the data suggests a disconnect between the opinions of the district ESL and CTE specialists and the teachers themselves in terms of how much the media's attention to LEP issues influences teachers.

#### Merit Pay or Remuneration

The subject of extra pay for teachers or non-financial compensation for extra or exemplary work, has received much media attention (Clotfelter 2007). This issue is particularly contentious when discussing extra pay for teachers working with 'at-risk' populations such as LEP students. Eighty-three percent of the CTE teacher respondents agree or strongly agree that their time implementing oral English language policies should be financially supported through stipends or additional benefits such as lower class sizes. Seventeen percent disagree. Their responses are shown in Table 4-12.



**Table 4-12 Augmenting CTE instruction with oral English strategies should be compensated with lower class sizes or stipends Q2**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	9	15.3	
Agree	40	67.8	
Disagree	7	11.9	
Strongly Disagree	3	5.1	
Total	59	100.0	.691

The specialists, however, believe that teachers do not want merit pay for implementing LEP policy mandates. In addition, the specialists in interviews express disbelief that a system of CTE teacher merit pay based on student test scores would increase the likelihood of implementing LEP oral English instructional strategies. The specialists' perspective is one that Darling-Hammond (2002) argues is prevalent among administrators. She suggests that administrators tend to see teachers as interchangeable parts and that the teachers have a collective perspective about students. The collective response of the specialists that characterizes teachers as willing to change their instructional strategies to improve ELL student learning solely because of their passion to teach substantiates her argument. But changing the teacher's collective perspective about the students to the point of implementing a collaborative classroom environment is not so easily attributed to a common altruistic teacher behavior. The teachers in their survey responses clearly communicate that additional pay or benefits are an important component to implementing an oral English supported environment. This disconnect between specialists and teachers may impact the policy implementation, particularly when the expectations for engaging in additional work (e.g. using new strategies for oral language acquisition) are to differentiate instruction according to language proficiency levels.

## The Uniqueness of CTE as a Multi-Subject Field of Study

As shown in Table 4-13 below, half of the CTE teacher respondents believe that their subject matter is too diversified to effectively apply LEP oral English acquisition policy standards like collaborative learning environments and pedagogy. Forty-nine percent agree or strongly agree that CTE classes are too fragmented in content to apply similar instructional strategies throughout the courses. Forty-two percent disagree or strongly disagree. Eight percent had no opinion.

**Table 4-13 Due to content diversity, applying the same LEP pedagogy in all CTE classes is not possible Q1**

	Frequency	Percent	Std. Deviation
Strongly Agree	3	5.1	
Agree	26	44.1	
Disagree	20	33.9	
Strongly Disagree	5	8.5	
Don't Know	5	8.5	
Total	59	100.0	1.001

That so many of the teachers (49.2%) doubt that there can be a standardization of LEP strategies across all CTE subject areas indicates a lack of general knowledge about the targeted pedagogy for oral English acquisition. According to the state, as documented in the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), recommended instructional strategies to improve oral English such as increasing peer collaboration have universal applicability across content curriculum (TEA 2008d). Administrators generally agree that implementing the ELPS is useful to achieving NCLB goals and specialists support that implementation does not unduly burden teachers to the point of making further remuneration reasonable.

Most specialists do not see a problem with policy burnout among teachers or that CTE teachers are even particularly aware of or care about the connection between oral English acquisition in CTE classes and AYP monitoring through the Performance Based Monitoring System (PBMAS). As one specialist puts it, “No, there is no disconnect (between Federal policy and local implementation) among the teachers. TELPAS has been here and is staying, so there is not a lot of pushback for further strategy training like the ELPS - which they realize they are already doing”. The teachers, however, do care about how realistic policy mandates are to implement in the classroom and their implementation efforts are swayed by how English language learners’ issues are portrayed in the media.

Results of this political category suggests a disconnect between the district level/administrator perception of the ease with which the CTE teachers can easily integrate the ELPS with ongoing behaviors in the classroom and the teachers own perception that the entire TELPAS system is suspect in terms of what it hopes to achieve and how realistic it is to implement it. This disconnect could reflect the lack of cohesive district-wide training noted by a specialist when she said, “ELPS training can be campus-based, not TELPAS usually, it's a Principal's decision”. It also could reflect a lack of implementation expectations as another specialist notes “no, the CTE teachers are not in that loop yet”, that an incremental approach to policy implementation would produce.

#### Organizational Factors Affecting Implementation

Five categories of organizational influence are examined to determine to what extent teachers believe that the school system as an organization affects their implementation of oral English language policy. Sergiovanni argues that teachers’ efficacy is helped or hindered by the level of organizational support they receive and the messages that leadership proffers (2000). This category considers the CTE teachers’ perceptions about organizational support through its expectations, monitoring, mentoring, communication and handling of student behavior.

“Teachers count in helping schools be effective. But whether they will help students in a particular school or not depends on whether they are invested with enough discretion to act, get the support they need to teach, are involved in continuous learning, and are led by effective leaders” (Sergiovanni 2000 p 140).

#### Defining and Disseminating LEP Pedagogy Expectations

Researcher Sharon Rallis posits that public schools, as organizations, are stuck producing a traditional school experience that is grounded in the scientific management principles of Taylor (1911) and whose purpose is to train and sort children to fit into existing roles in a static workforce (1995). Changing to a collaborative teaching model conducive to oral English acquisition requires a clear vision of what that is and it requires organization-wide dissemination.

Using the internet to post information in a school district’s online network is a common strategy to inform all district members. Table 4-14 shows that fifty-one percent of the respondents disagree or strongly disagree that oral English instructional strategies are posted online and are easily accessible to them at their schools. Twelve percent agree that the information is posted online while thirty-seven percent do not know if oral English instructional strategies are posted online. The large proportion of teachers who do not know could have been responding that they have never looked for the information or they could have looked for it but have not found it.

If teachers are not independently able to find information about integrating new pedagogy such as collaborative learning then the organization might be expected to be disseminating this information through coordinated efforts at full district training. In the interview process, one specialist notes that although LEP instructional training is generally integrated in professional learning communities - which are site based - the ESL teachers are exposed to this training on district staff development days in which ESL teachers meet together and then are assumed to carry the information to the campus level. This might represent a possible breakdown in policy communication as noted by a teacher comment on the survey, “The ESL teachers don’t tell us

anything”. Another specialist notes, “There are district initiatives that call for continuous improvement in which campuses can choose to embed LEP instructional strategies”.

An administrator noted, however, that “there is no tracking system for CTE teacher training”. As such it would be difficult to know if they attend staff development sessions that stress LEP pedagogy.

**Table 4-14 Oral English instructional strategies are posted online Q12**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Agree	7	11.9	
Disagree	27	45.8	
Strongly Disagree	3	5.1	
Don't Know	22	37.3	
Total	59	100.0	1.105

Teachers do believe that they are familiar with cooperative grouping and peer learning techniques as fifty-eight percent affirm that these techniques have been modeled in campus staff development sessions. As seen in Table 4-15 below, twenty-seven percent disagree that this practice is in place while fifteen percent do not know. This response supports the specialists and administrators impression that LEP training for CTE teachers is self selected, and could indicate a non-uniform coverage of demonstrating such techniques district-wide.

**Table 4-15 Campus staff development sessions model cooperative grouping and peer learning Q15**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Agree	34	57.6	
Disagree	14	23.7	

Table 4-15 - *Continued*

Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	9	15.3	
Total	59	100.0	1.088

Osterman argues that that if all students are accepted through positive expectations of success, their anxiety is lowered and their academic achievement improves (2000). Understanding how oral English proficiency affects literacy is an important component of professional development. The wide-spread availability of the training determines its status as a priority for organization members. As seen in Table 4-16 below, forty-seven percent of the respondents do not know if their district offers on campus training on how oral English proficiency affects literacy. Thirty-one percent responded in the affirmative and twenty-two percent responded in the negative.

**Table 4-16 Districts offer campus training on how oral English proficiency affects literacy Q16**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	17	28.8	
Disagree	12	20.3	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	
Don't Know	28	47.5	
Total	59	100.0	1.374

The results would suggest that while some campuses have offered this training, others have not or have not included the CTE teachers. Timperley (2008) posits that there is an emergent professionalism in which a culture of collaboration breaks down teacher isolationism. Communication that is layered both horizontally and vertically is the key in generating whole

school participation. However, as shown in Table 4-17 below, most of the study's (fifty-eight percent) CTE teacher respondents disagree that policy updates about oral English pedagogy are communicated to them through multiple mediums. Twenty-one percent agree while twenty percent do not know.

**Table 4-17 Policy updates on LEP pedagogy are communicated in multiple mediums Q22**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	2	3.4	
Agree	11	18.6	
Disagree	31	52.5	
Strongly Disagree	3	5.1	
Don't Know	12	20.3	
Total	59	100.0	1.079

This finding indicates that teachers are not getting first hand access to knowledge about LEP oral English policy mandates. The teachers who do not know could be implying that the information could be available but they are either not interested in it or that it is difficult to retrieve.

In contradiction to the perceptions of the CTE teacher survey respondents, the specialists overwhelmingly affirm that every staff development session models cooperative grouping and peer teaching through collaboration and communication. This incongruity between district and campus perceptions can be explained through the custom of self selection of staff development opportunities. This self selection of staff development is detrimental to promulgating wide-spread use of any policy and the instructional techniques of oral English policy are no different. This could especially be true for CTE teachers who, as enrichment teachers, have traditionally not been expected to improve their LEP student's oral English and so would not self select sessions that champion changing pedagogy through creating a collaborative environment.

Monitoring for LEP Pedagogy

“Not monitoring teachers work to ensure compliance with school and official policy reflects some resistance in implementing curriculum, assessment and pedagogic policy” (Erickson 1987 p 4). The extent, to which the school organization monitors teacher implementation of oral English pedagogy, reflects its relative importance to competing policy mandates. As shown in Table 4-18 below, forty-six percent of respondents disagree that they are monitored by administration for using oral English language objectives. Twenty-seven percent thought they are monitored for using oral English pedagogy and twenty-seven percent do not know.

**Table 4-18 CTE teachers are monitored by administration for using oral English language objectives Q14**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Agree	16	27.1	
Disagree	26	44.1	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	
Don't Know	16	27.1	
Total	59	100.0	1.145

As shown in Table 4-19 below, thirty percent of the teachers do not think the district is monitoring whether they are changing their instructional methodology according to student data, while twenty-four percent do think so. The majority of teachers do not know, however, as this make up forty-six percent of the responses.



**Table 4-19 Districts monitor how CTE teachers change their instruction according to student data Q 17**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	13	22.0	
Disagree	18	30.5	
Don't Know	27	45.8	
Total	59	100.0	1.308

Teachers who do not believe their lesson plans or their pedagogy are monitored for alignment with student data may be less inclined to perform such actions. They may feel that implementation is discretionary. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989) argue that policy implementation is significantly tied to the discretionary authority of the implementers. If teachers are not evaluated for implementing the policy then they are indirectly authorized to ignore it. Mazmanian and Sabatier argue further that “behavioral compliance is generally related to individuals’ assessment of the relative costs and benefits to them” (1987 p 37). As shown in Table 4-20 below, forty percent of the respondents disagree that their evaluation is tied to implementing oral English acquisition strategies. Forty-one percent do not know while only nineteen percent agree that this is a factor.

**Table 4-20 Evaluations depend partly on implementation of oral English pedagogy Q29**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Agree	11	18.6	
Disagree	22	37.3	
Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	

Table 4-20 - *Continued*

Don't Know	24	40.7	
Total	59	100.0	1.198

The majority of the specialists agree that pedagogy is monitored but they disagree through what venue. Some ESL specialists attribute monitoring to the CTE principals and district administrators while some CTE specialists attribute monitoring to the ESL department. Other specialists thought this function occurs in ongoing staff development sessions and through the state performance based monitoring systems. The administrators in their interviews all stated that pedagogy is not monitored. Pedagogy, the delivery system of curriculum, is a key component of oral English language acquisition policy. If it is not monitored, or if there is confusion in communicating who is responsible for monitoring it, the CTE teachers might well feel that it is not an important component of their teaching.

A Culture of LEP Mentoring

“Workplace learning is value laden and is a contextual social process” (Conlon 2003 p 7). Burke (2004) avers that teacher mentoring is key to sharing what works in education. Sixty-three percent of respondents do not believe that district specialists observe and demonstrate how to apply listening and speaking instructional strategies in the context of their classes. Nineteen percent agree that they do while nineteen percent do not know as shown in Table 4-21 below.

**Table 4-21 Specialists demonstrate how to apply oral English strategies in the context of CTE classes Q18**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	10	16.9	
Disagree	34	57.6	

Table 4-21 - *Continued*

Strongly Disagree	3	5.1	
Don't Know	11	18.6	
Total	59	100.0	1.001

The teachers who responded that they do not know could be added to the sixty-three percent that overwhelmingly disagree that the specialists provide this service because if they had done so then these teachers who responded that they did not know should have answered in the affirmative. The responses reflect that eighty-two percent have never experienced this kind of direct mentoring for oral English instructional strategies.

As shown in 4-22 below, fifty-eight percent disagree that there is a school-wide culture of support and mentorship in observing effective teaching and application of targeted instructional strategies with English language learners. Twenty-seven percent agree and fifteen percent do not know.

**Table 4-22 There is a school-wide culture of support/mentorship in observing teaching with LEP strategies Q19**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	15	25.4	
Disagree	33	55.9	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	
Don't Know	9	15.3	
Total	59	100.0	.982

The specialists confirm that the CTE teachers do not utilize the mentorship capabilities of the district or campus LEP expertise. They emphasize that LEP expertise is needed in translation

services not in teacher training per se and that any advice sought for teacher intervention occurs primarily at the administrative level. The administrators focus mainly on mentorship as a happenstance activity, a component of a particular teacher training or via individual request. Some administrators believe increased mentorship would be helpful while others acknowledge that it does not happen. The data reflects an organizational image of mentorship based on teacher deficiency rather than a positive way to encourage implementation of new pedagogy applications.

#### Communication and Coordination of LEP Policy Mandates

Shown in Table 4-23 below, sixty-one percent of the teachers disagree or strongly disagree that school-wide responsibility for ELL's success is well communicated. Thirty percent agree or strongly agree while nine percent do not know.

**Table 4-23 School-wide responsibility for ELL success is well communicated Q20**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	2	3.4	
Agree	16	27.1	
Disagree	34	57.6	
Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	5	8.5	
Total	59	100.0	.880

The specialists confirm that further communication and coordination of LEP training after the state sponsored minimum is not coordinated well. The specialists are unsure if there was any follow up training after online state TELPAS training. Some cite that it is the responsibility of the accountability department, individual Principals, or some other district department to pick up the coordination of further training and /or communication with the teachers.

**Table 4-24 Responsibility for improving oral English is coordinated campus-wide Q21**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	3	5.1	
Agree	10	16.9	
Disagree	28	47.5	
Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	16	27.1	
Total	59	100.0	1.193

Successful schools literature stress the importance of clear communication and collaboration both vertically and horizontally throughout the school organization (Burke 2004, Coburn 2006, Darling-Hammond 2002). Table 4-24 above shows that fifty percent disagree or strongly disagree that the responsibility for improving oral English acquisition is coordinated campus-wide. Twenty-two percent agree or strongly agree and twenty-seven percent do not know. From the teacher's perspective, splitting LEP teacher training between different departments and leaving coordination of it to individual Principals and/or disparate district personnel, clouds communication channels and the chain of responsibility for implementation.

#### LEP Student Behavior Policies

Dewey notes that the "non-social character of traditional schools is seen in its value of silence" (1938 p 63). Implementation of any new change in the classroom environment can be challenged if the change causes discipline problems. Encouraging oral communication and collaboration amongst the students also encourages English immersion and engagement. Zemelman argues that "the antiquated school norm of silent classrooms must be abolished; ironically, when teachers enforce the standard of silence, they are in a very real sense making learning illegal" (Zemelman 2005 p 16). The teachers in this study do not see discipline as a

negative outcome of encouraging collaboration between their LEP and non LEP students. As shown in Table 4-25 below, eighty percent of the CTE teacher respondents disagree or strongly disagree that discipline issues for LEP students discourage collaboration activities in class. Fourteen percent agree or strongly agree and seven percent do not know.

**Table 4-25 Discipline Issues for ELL's discourage collaboration activities in class Q13**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	7	11.9	
Disagree	40	67.8	
Strongly Disagree	7	11.9	
Don't Know	4	6.8	
Total	59	100.0	.759

Survey results indicate that rarely do the teachers feel that organizational responses to behavioral problems are applied to LEP students in their classes. The strong response by the CTE teachers (eighty percent disagreeing that discipline issues discourage collaboration activities) as shown in Table 4-25 would indicate that ELL's are willing to participate in collaborative learning activities if provided.

#### Teacher Factors Affecting Implementation

Six factors are examined in order to determine to what extent the teachers themselves are factors that affect implementing oral English acquisition policy. "In the implementation process policy is complied with, mediated or resisted and unintended consequences abound" (Troman 1996 p 7). Teacher isolationism has been replaced by the social construction of professionalism which requires a more flexible and collaborative partnership with the whole school environment (Ibid). Whether teachers are trained, derive information and support from their peers, are familiar

with language learning and how to differentiate instruction accordingly impacts how well they are able to implement oral English acquisition policy.

If the teachers do not feel that they are responsible to enact the changes expected in instructional strategies or if they do not feel that they should be responsible for promoting social relationships between their English language learners and non English learners they could be creating an environment in which the LEP student feels isolated and are therefore less apt to participate (Erickson 1987).

“The more alienated the students become, the less they persist in doing schoolwork. Thus they fall farther and farther behind in academic achievement. The student becomes either actively resistant – seen as salient and incorrigible – or passively resistant – fading into the woodwork as an anonymous well-behaved and low-achieving student” (Ibid p 350).

#### LEP Pedagogy Training

Freire paints a bleak picture of the traditional relationship between teachers and their students. “The teacher-student relationship is fundamentally narrative. The teacher talks about reality as if it were motionless static, compartmentalized and predictable; he fills the student” (Freire 1970 p 71). Teachers must engage their students. Modern best practices require teachers to do more than just fill up students with facts (Zemelman 2005).

Policies that require a change in pedagogy to a collaborative social integration model for ELL student learning require teacher training in order to be implemented. But the lack of certification in ESL instructional techniques (ninety-five percent) among the CTE teachers would indicate a lack of a foundation of a similar knowledge base on English language acquisition teaching skills.

Specialists and administrators quibble when describing the amount of district or campus level training the teachers receive on oral English acquisition. The responses vary from “quite a bit” to an acknowledgement that CTE teachers are “in the pipeline” to be trained. There is general

agreement that, although LEP pedagogy training has been available, CTE teachers have not self selected to partake of it.

**Table 4-26 Teachers are well trained in oral English pedagogy Q23**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	2	3.4	
Agree	13	22.0	
Disagree	40	67.8	
Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	2	3.4	
Total	59	100.0	.706

The teachers (as shown in Table 4-26) perceive that they are not well trained in listening and speaking instructional strategies. Twenty-five percent agree or strongly agree that they are well trained. Seventy-one percent disagree or strongly disagree that they are well trained while three percent do not know. These responses reveal a strong perception that CTE teachers feel inadequately trained in LEP pedagogy.

#### Teacher Participation in Informal Networks of Peer Support

When only some members of an organization change then others are left behind and do not have the opportunity for intrapersonal learning (McGill 1974). Through informal communication teacher competency can be improved. Honig (2006) argues that being part of professional community improves understanding of policy intent which increases the likelihood of implementation. In schools teachers can combat isolationism by being on formal committees or being a part of an informal group that shares knowledge. Honig states, "Researchers have come to reveal that people's participation in various communities and relationships is essential to



implementation. For example, researchers have shown that teachers within schools and districts, are situated in professional communities that help shape their beliefs and worldviews and ultimately their interpretations of policy messages” (Honig 2006 p 17).

**Table 4-27 Teachers have extended school-wide networks of support for ELL pedagogy Q24**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	2	3.4	
Agree	23	39.0	
Disagree	26	44.1	
Strongly Disagree	3	5.1	
Don't Know	5	8.5	
Total	59	100.0	.935

As shown in Table 4-27 above, forty-two percent of the respondent teachers agree or strongly agree that they have built up informal networks of support between themselves and their peers for ELL pedagogy while forty-nine percent disagree or strongly disagree. Eight percent did not know.

Despite the ambivalence of the teachers on whether they have created support networks, the specialists thought that there is a strong informal teacher support group for ELL issues. Although some mention that the strength of the network depends on the individual campus, several specialists feel strongly that support exist everywhere. The specialists describe joint CTE and ESL trainings with the caveat that these were conducted in the past or that they happen according to Principal request.

As shown in Table 4-28 below, the majority of respondents believe that they collaborate with district personnel regarding listening and speaking strategies for ELL's.

**Table 4-28 Teachers collaborate with district support staff on oral English pedagogy Q25**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	29	49.2	
Disagree	23	39.0	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	
Don't Know	5	8.5	
Total	59	100.0	.902

Fifty-one percent agree or strongly agree while forty-one percent disagree or strongly disagree. Eight percent do not know. Overall both the teachers and the specialists present a picture that informal support networks and collaborative efforts at informal meetings or trainings are site dependent and outdated. A teacher notes on the survey comment section that the ESL teachers do not share information with CTE teachers which could erode peer support.

#### Knowledge of Native Language and Literacy Levels

Diane August posits that “English language learners vary profoundly in prior schooling and the opportunities they have had to develop high levels of language and literacy in the home language” (2002 p 21). Not knowing a student’s proficiency level in either his or her native language or in English can lead to teacher’s making assumptions about learning readiness. Administrators acknowledge in their interviews that most of the CTE teacher would believe that having a fellow LEP student translate is an effective mode of content dissemination. As shown in Table 4-29 below, the teachers bear this out with fifty-five percent agreeing or strongly agreeing that they regularly utilize bilingual students to translate key concept to ELL’s. Such a high percentage of teachers engaging individual students -whose native language proficiency they

have no way of confirming - to then teach other students in that native language reflects a general misconception about effective ways to improve academic English acquisition.

**Table 4-29 Teachers regularly utilize bilingual students to translate key concepts to ELL's Q31**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	31	52.5	
Disagree	22	37.3	
Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	3	5.1	
Total	59	100.0	.814

This custom also clusters students according to native language and deprives them of social integration with native English speakers. There is consensus among specialists that there have been intermittent occasions for teachers to self-select district sponsored opportunities to learn Spanish. They note that either learning Spanish or learning ESL strategies is dependent on self selection by the teachers.

A bilingual CTE teacher notes in the comment section of the survey that non-native English speakers should be immersed in English because spoken Spanish in the classroom environment can be distracting not only to English speakers but to those non native English speakers who do not speak Spanish. According to the biographical data in Table 4-2, ninety percent of the survey respondents are not bilingual. Nor is it clear if those that are fluent in another language speak Spanish. Knowledge of a second language can help a teacher distinguish between student's language and literacy issues because they themselves have experienced the different patterns of language acquisition.

Using students to translate to their peers complicates implementing oral English pedagogy in two ways. First holding LEP students accountable to implement the policy themselves via independent oral academic English practice and second by teachers assuming that the students they pick to translate are bilingual enough to not only translate correctly but to teach the English equivalency of the content.

Knowledge about Differentiating Instruction

As shown in Table 4-30 below, fifty-one percent of the teachers believe that their assignments include assessments in oral English skills appropriate to their LEP student's individual levels while forty-four disagree or strongly disagree. Five percent do not know.

**Table 4-30 Assignments include oral English assessment appropriate to English proficiency and literacy levels Q27**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Agree	30	50.8	
Disagree	25	42.4	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	
Don't Know	3	5.1	
Total	59	100.0	.766

However, as shown in Table 4-31 below, only thirty-four percent agree or strongly agree they are able to differentiate the English proficiency levels of their LEP students. Fifty-four percent disagree or strongly disagree while twelve percent do not know.

**Table 4-31 Teachers can confidently list speaking and listening proficiency levels Q30**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	19	32.2	
Disagree	30	50.8	
Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	7	11.9	
Total	59	100.0	.952

As shown in Table 4-32 below, sixty-two percent disagree or strongly disagree that they regularly change instructional strategies between subject knowledge levels and English proficiency levels. Thirty-two percent agree that they do and five percent do not know.

**Table 4-32 Teachers change instructional strategies between subject knowledge and English proficiency levels Q32**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Agree	19	32.2	
Disagree	35	59.3	
Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	3	5.1	
Total	59	100.0	.730

Specialists thought that CTE teachers are aware of how to differentiate instruction with ELL's but the teachers clearly do not posture themselves as adept at differentiating instruction due to English language proficiency. A few note that this ability was site or teacher dependent.

## Responsibility for Oral English Pedagogy

As shown in Table 4-33 below, sixty-four percent disagree or strongly disagree that the responsibility for oral English instruction lies with the English language arts teachers and not with the CTE teachers. Thirty-two percent agree or strongly agree while three percent do not know.

**Table 4-33 Oral English pedagogy is the responsibility of the ESL/ELA teachers not CTE teachers Q26**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	3	5.1	
Agree	16	27.1	
Disagree	33	55.9	
Strongly Disagree	5	8.5	
Don't Know	2	3.4	
Total	59	100.0	.811

In the comment section some teachers support the idea that oral English pedagogy should remain in the purview of the ELA teachers while other teachers do not agree, citing the importance of training in strategies that help all subgroups. CTE teachers overall tend to believe that they are also responsible for implementing oral English pedagogy although there is still a residual group that does not believe this applies to them.

## Promoting Social Networking for LEP Students

Stanton-Salazar (1997) argues that social capital is fostered through the creation of social relationships with those who open doors to institutional support. The CTE teacher respondents do not question the importance of their role in helping LEP students create relationships.

**Table 4-34 Fostering social networks of support For ELLs is an appropriate goal of the CTE teachers Q28**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	2	3.4	
Agree	44	74.6	
Disagree	6	10.2	
Strongly Disagree	3	5.1	
Don't Know	4	6.8	
Total	59	100.0	.908

As shown in Table 4-34 above, seventy-eight percent agree or strongly agree that fostering social networks of support for ELL's among English speaking peers and educators is an appropriate goal of the CTE teacher. Only fifteen percent disagree or strongly disagree while seven percent do not know.

Survey results indicate mixed messages about the teacher's ability to assess and differentiate between English language proficiency and literacy levels. Despite a lack of bilingualism or ESL training, teachers extensively used students to translate to their peers. Despite their lack of training in LEP pedagogy, the teachers accepted responsibility to improve their student's oral English and to support their student's acquirement of social capital through fostering social networks.

#### Student Factors Affecting Implementation

Six factors are examined in order to determine to what extent LEP student factors affect CTE teachers implementing oral English acquisition policy. Timperley and Alton-Lee (2008) argue that practice and perception of student ability are interdependent and that if a teacher's social

construction of a student is low then her or his expectation of that student's ability to learn will be low as well (Timperley 2008).

Teachers who believe that LEP students resist practicing oral English with their non-LEP peers because they are either (a) undereducated or illiterate, (b) are unable to communicate their linguistic needs, (c) unable to apply academic oral English on the job, (d) are not accepted by their non-LEP peers or (e) are doomed to drop out of school altogether may not envision the changes that oral English policy implementation require as worthwhile. Alternatively, if teachers believe that LEP students who collaborate with their non-LEP peers improve their acceptance in the group dynamic of the classroom then teachers might be more likely to increase peer interaction, if only to promote "community through socially constructed knowledge" (Dewey 1963 p 20). Timperley and Alton-Lee's research cite the depth of knowledge that the teacher has about student ability and their own depth of pedagogical knowledge as critical in shaping their teaching practice (Timperley 2008).

#### Resistance to LEP and Non-LEP Social Collaboration

The American educational system has had a long history of looking at a student deficit model rather than at defects in the school culture (Burke 2004). If the teacher believes that LEP students are unwilling or unable to interact with non-LEP students then implementation of a collaborative environment is stymied. Kozulan posits that "a major task for the teacher consists of creating conditions under which the learning activity makes sense for the students and...then organizing the students' learning activity as interaction and cooperation..."(2006 p 270).

Seventy-six percent of the CTE teacher respondents disagree or strongly disagree that there is reluctance on the part of LEP students to work on assignments with Non-LEP students. As shown in Table 4-35 below, twenty-one percent agree or strongly agree while three percent did not know.



**Table 4-35 ELL's resist participation in group assignments with non-ELL's Q34**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	11	18.6	
Disagree	42	71.2	
Strongly Disagree	3	5.1	
Don't Know	2	3.4	
Total	59	100.0	.662

Despite the CTE teacher's belief that ELL's do not resist working with non-ELL's, they acknowledge the propensity of LEP students to cluster with their native language dominant peers. In Table 4-36 below, sixty-six percent agree or strongly agree that ELL's consistently choose other ELL's as their assignment partners. Twenty-seven disagree or strongly disagree while seven percent do not know. This would strongly indicate that, given the opportunity, LEP students cluster and isolate themselves from non-LEP students but, when asked to collaborate with non-LEP students they did not show reluctance or resist.

**Table 4-36 ELL's choose other ELL's as their assignment partner if they are allowed Q35**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	38	64.4	
Disagree	15	25.4	
Strongly Disagree	1	1.7	
Don't Know	4	6.8	
Total	59	100.0	.858

Some administrators indicate in the interviews that when LEP students are expected to participate in academic activities with their English dominant peers they become frustrated and “act up” because they cannot read well and that this frustrates themselves, their teachers and their peers. Other administrators note that they have not observed this kind of social collaboration on assignments in the classes.

**LEP Student’s Under-education or Lack of Literacy**

Shown on Table 4-37 below, fifty-four percent of the CTE teacher respondents agree or strongly agree that LEP students’ prior under-education affects their ability to engage in meaningful class dialogue. Twenty-seven percent disagree or strongly disagree while nineteen percent do not know.

**Table 4-37 Due to prior under education ELL's are limited in participating in oral English discussions Q36**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	2	3.4	
Agree	30	50.8	
Disagree	14	23.7	
Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	11	18.6	
Total	59	100.0	1.191

On Table 4-38 below, fifty-one percent agree or strongly agree that lack of oral English proficiency is indicative of a lack of literacy which hinders participation in classroom dialogue. Thirty-six disagree or strongly disagree while fourteen percent do not know. The teacher’s lack of

bilingualism and unfamiliarity with language proficiency assessment systems such as the TELPAS suggest that they would not know if their students were highly literate in their native language. The teachers seem to be making a capacity judgment with this question, directing associating lack of oral English language with lack of literacy.

**Table 4-38 Lack of oral English proficiency indicates a lack of literacy for ELL's making it difficult to participate in dialogue Q37**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	29	49.2	
Disagree	17	28.8	
Strongly Disagree	4	6.8	
Don't Know	8	13.6	
Total	59	100.0	1.074

In discussing the obstacles to LEP students' oral participation in CTE classes, administrators do not join the majority of teacher respondents in citing either LEP student's under-education or their lack of literacy. Instead they offer the possibility that individual teachers have not been trained to let the students speak. Some comment that differing English proficiency levels can affect the outcome of discussion participation.

#### Teacher's Perceptions of LEP Student's Self-awareness of their own English Proficiency

LEP students struggle to attain advanced levels of academic English. Cummins (1984) called this type of context-reduced English Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALPS) and said it included skills such as comparing, classifying, synthesizing, evaluating, and inferring. He called day-to-day language social survival English or Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS). Moving ELL's from BICS to CALPS requires knowing where each student's

language proficiency level is in order to move it to the next level. As seen in Table 4-39 below, fifty-one percent of the respondents agree or strongly agree that ELL's are fully self aware of their own listening and speaking levels. Thirty-six percent disagree or strongly disagree while fourteen percent do not know.

**Table 4-39 ELL's are fully self aware of their own oral English proficiency levels Q38**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	3	5.1	
Agree	27	45.8	
Disagree	10	16.9	
Strongly Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	17	28.8	
Total	59	100.0	1.370

But when the CTE teacher respondents are asked if their ELL's are able to tell them what they need from them to improve their oral English only thirty-six percent agree or strongly agree that their students can give them this information. As shown in Table 4-40 below, fifty-six percent disagree or strongly disagree while eight percent do not know.

**Table 4-40 ELL's are able to tell teachers what they need the teachers to do to help them improve Q39**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	20	33.9	
Disagree	30	50.8	

Table 4-40 - *Continued*

Strongly Disagree	3	5.1	
Don't Know	5	8.5	
Total	59	100.0	.887

Eighty-one percent of the CTE teacher respondents agree or strongly agree LEP students prefer not to be called on because they feel their English proficiency level is too weak to communicate effectively. As shown in Table 4-41 below, only fourteen percent disagree and five percent do not know.

**Table 4-41 LEP students prefer not to be called on due to their weak English communication abilities Q44**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	3	5.1	
Agree	45	76.3	
Disagree	8	13.6	
Don't Know	3	5.1	
Total	59	100.0	.773

These results indicate a CTE teacher perception that despite LEP students being self aware of their own English proficiency levels, they are unable to communicate their resultant needs to their teachers. The teachers indicate that the LEP students feel handicapped to communicate effectively by their own limitations in oral English ability.

LEP Student's Ability to Apply Oral English on the Job

“ The school to career approach – characterized by the integration of academic and vocational learning, an emphasis on closer links between schools and employers, and the design of learning experiences outside the classroom is emerging as a strategy for restructuring the high

school experience so as to better prepare young people for both academic and occupational advancement” (Goldberger 1996). As shown in Table 4-42, fifty-eight respondents disagree or strongly disagree that the majority of their ELL’s would be able to apply good oral English skills in a high skill, real world job environment while thirty-six agree or strongly agree.

**Table 4-42 The Majority of ELL's would be able to apply good oral English skills in a real world environment Q40**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Valid Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	20	33.9	
Disagree	34	57.6	
Don't Know	4	6.8	

However it is doubtful that the CTE respondents have had that much contact with prospective employers to know how well their LEP students apply their English skills. As shown in Table 4-43 below, seventy-six percent do not know if employers had commented that their non-native English students avoid speaking English with customers when placed in an apprentice or job shadowing situation. Fourteen percent disagree and ten percent agree.

**Table 4-43 Employers have commented that non-native English students avoid speaking English with customers in apprentice situations Q41**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	5	8.5	
Disagree	8	13.6	
Don't Know	45	76.3	
Total	59	100.0	11.116

Such a large percentage of respondents signaling that they do not know what employers think about how LEP students utilize English in the workplace could indicate that this is not a problem due to good bilingual skills possessed either by the student or customers or both. Or it could indicate that LEP students are not often placed as job apprentices. The specialists note that while CTE teachers recognize the positive benefits to bilingualism, there also has been teacher frustration with the student's lack of academic oral English use. They further noted that oral bilingualism alone is not as helpful on the job as full reading and writing bilingualism.

**LEP Student's Dropout Rates Mitigated by Oral English Application**

Bridgeland posits that "81% of the dropouts surveyed said that what might have helped them stay in school was if teaching and curricula were more relevant and engaging and if the connection between school and work was more enhanced" (Bridgeland 2006 p v). As shown in Table 4-44 below, eighty-two percent of the respondents agree or strongly agree that engaging ELL's in spoken English practice lowers LEP student's dropout potential. Only three percent disagree and fifteen percent do not know.

**Table 4-44 Engaging ELL's in spoken English practice in CTE classes lowers LEP dropout rates Q33**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	8	13.6	
Agree	40	67.8	
Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	9	15.3	
Total	59	100.0	1.200

Although the intent of the Career and Technical Education strands is to eventually connect students with real world career experience, in reality specific limiting factors such as

confusion about how school-to-work activities fit into state and federal level accountability systems hinder successful outcomes (Iver 2001). When CTE teachers are asked to what degree the specter of drop out with the LEP sub population affect placement in an apprentice or job shadowing situation, fifty-nine percent do not know. As shown in Table 4-45 below, sixteen percent of teachers agree or strongly agree that placement is a concern while twenty-six percent disagree or strongly disagree that this affected placement. The teachers could be indicating that they do not project a potential for absenteeism or dropping out of the apprentice situation for LEP students or they could be reflecting a lack of program emphasis in the apprentice or hands on aspect of the career and technical education field of study. This response could also indicate that job placement for CTE students is not at the teacher level or that assessment of this activity is not widely shared among the teachers.

**Table 4-45 The high rate of drop out for ELL's makes teachers hesitate to place them in apprentice jobs Q42**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Valid Strongly Agree	1	1.7	
Agree	8	13.6	
Disagree	11	18.6	
Strongly Disagree	4	6.8	
Don't Know	35	59.3	
Total	59	100.0	1.222

**LEP and Non-LEP Student's Collaboration Improves LEP Student Acceptance**

There is strong agreement among the specialists and administrators that were interviewed that a collaborative model is positive for student acceptance and is effective in achieving student success. As shown in Table 4-46 below, eighty-three percent of the CTE



teacher respondents agree that increasing ELL/non-ELL student collaboration improves group dynamics of peer acceptance. Three percent disagree and fourteen percent do not know.

**Table 4-46 Increasing ELL/non-ELL student collaboration improves peer acceptance Q43**

	Frequency	Percent	Std Deviation
Strongly Agree	7	11.9	
Agree	42	71.2	
Disagree	2	3.4	
Don't Know	8	13.6	
Total	59	100.0	1.136

A few specialists believe that peer integration and collaboration is helpful for reversing the isolation that ELL's can experience in school. These specialists are particularly supportive of the center model in which the CTE classes are located in a remote location separate from the high schools. They feel that because students come from several different high schools they are less apt to cluster by race or school affiliation.

LEP students need to practice oral academic English in order to improve their proficiency. Teachers who believe that these students' English is too weak to communicate perpetuate their linguistic and academic dependency on their native language by utilizing translation as a preferred instructional methodology. Teaching limited English proficiency students in a social environment requires teachers to provide daily collaborative activities in the target language of English. Allowing LEP students to cluster with other LEP students on group assignments impedes this transition to an environment in which cross-cultural trust and acceptance is built up (Osterman 2000). Although on the survey teachers support the goal of helping LEP students foster social networks of support, some administrators note that they haven't observed this kind of social collaboration in the CTE classrooms while others mention frustration on the part of the teachers and the students due to the low reading and writing levels of the LEP students. Social

integration of the students may be more prone to happen in districts that have a separate facility for CTE classes, as a few specialists note. Stanton-Salazar (1997) argues that the “root cause of racial minority children dropping out of school is a lack of trusting relationships in school” (p 36). Learning is a social process. Rallis summarizes, “From Dewey’s learner centered environment to Vygotsky’s role of social interaction, learners need to interact with others who know things they do not know” (1995 p 44).

The majority of CTE teachers in this study assign low levels of prior education and literacy to their LEP students and most CTE teacher respondents believe that their LEP students prefer not to be called on due to their inability to communicate effectively. Although the teachers clearly believe that LEP students do not resist working with non-LEP students and that increased practice in speaking English would lower the dropout rate for LEP students, they also believe that student deficit in English language ability limit their ability to apply their English successfully in a job shadowing or apprentice situation.

#### Summary of the Factors Affecting Policy Implementation

“It has been argued that implementation analysis is simply a new term for public administration” (Mazmanian and Sabatier 1989 p 43) and as such it must consider complex relationships between different spheres of influence. Political processes that create laws such as the No Child Left Behind Act devolve implementation responsibility to states and school districts and eventually to teachers who then are subject to tensions between federal, state and local level interpretations of intent (mandates) and capacity (knowledge and capability to carry out the mandates). This study examined barriers to policy implementation that moved beyond the micro view of teacher compliance to discern a macro view drawing on political, organizational, teacher and student influences to understand teacher behavior in policy implementation.

This study showed that CTE teachers are highly influenced by political factors in the implementation of oral English language policy. Teachers are influenced by events outside the schoolhouse door. They are individuals who access prior knowledge, cultural beliefs, and current

events to interpret and construct meaning from their interactions with the environment of which policy is a part (Spillane 2006). This data suggests that media coverage of issues related to English language learners influences the urgency of implementing new instructional paradigms designed to help LEP students improve their academic English. Many teachers agreed that political issues such as immigration and poverty affect the importance of applying a collaborative learning environment for oral English language acquisition in CTE classrooms. Teachers also affirmed that policy is only partially implemented when policies are perceived to change often. Although incremental strategies by the state made core content teachers accountable for oral English acquisition before CTE teachers as enrichment teachers were required to do so, most of the CTE teachers acknowledged their responsibility to serve LEP student's needs.

CTE teachers acknowledged that policies that increase student talk time were idealistic and not realistically implementable. They did not agree with the manner in which the CTE program was held accountable for LEP student progress but they also expressed ignorance in the way that proficiency standards and LEP student accountability for oral English progress actually worked. One teacher succinctly commented on the survey "I think CTE teachers may need help with understanding how TELPAS works i.e. seeing an actual assessment of one of their own students".

Malen argues "education policy represents value laden issues so policy implementation becomes a political process that reflects the power of contending groups" (2006 p 86). District specialists and administrative personnel agreed in interviews that the state TELPAS training is a useful accountability instrument for federal NCLB compliance. Although some acknowledged that CTE teachers still needed training on the English Language Proficiency Standard (ELPS), most agreed that the TAKS and TELPAS data were helpful in projecting how LEP students would perform in CTE classes. One administrator did note the push and pull effect on policy implementation of jockeying between federal, state and local interpretations of policy when he said "state requirements and federal requirements do not always match up which can impact what we do at the local level".

Teachers and district personnel were in different corners regarding the controversial and political issue of merit pay as well. Teachers strongly supported merit pay or remuneration such as lower class size for implementing additional instructional strategies for the LEP student sub population but the administrators and specialists strongly resisted this idea. They dismissed the idea of extra pay citing instead teacher passion for teaching the students although some acknowledged it would “get their attention”. A district specialist summed up administrative sentiment by saying “Most teachers are addicted to the magic element of seeing a child learn and are not here for the money”. Another area of difference between administrators and teachers was the use of TELPAS. There was not the same sense of value by the teachers that TELPAS was a universally applicable pedagogy teaching tool and a useful determinant of student English proficiency levels.

As front-end implementers teachers can receive a barrage of messages, mixed messages or even a vacuum of messages from federal and state policy makers, local education officials, immediate supervisors and peers which creates the potential for the distortion of policy implementation and accountability (Hill 2006). Data from this study suggests that overwhelmingly, teachers were highly influenced by the organizational factors presented in this study. Policy implementation is a “social process of learning within and between communities of practice” (Coburn 2006 p 26). The teacher’s perceptions of the lack of communication and access to information about LEP instructional strategies, follow up training, and mentorship throughout the school organization were particularly noteworthy. The confusion about and lack of monitoring for LEP pedagogy implementation was also pervasive among the teachers. Teachers clearly refuted administrator’s claims of a system-wide support system that valued mentoring, communicating and delineating school-wide responsibility for the implementation of a collaborative social integration model for oral English language acquisition.

Researchers have connected the importance of member participation in their organizations with effective implementation. Instead of relying on either individual interpretation of policy intent and compliance to that ideal or on small groups such as administrators alone to interpret policy

and dictate group behavioral responses, policy interpretation and implantation has shifted to networks of stakeholders. Professional communities as a whole help shape beliefs and ultimately create a communal interpretation of policy message (Honig 2006; Coburn 2006; Martinez 2004). The connectivity between teachers, district specialists and administrators did not reflect communal interpretations of LEP policies. Many teachers simply did not know the policies or their implications. Although the district specialists and administrators cited a community in which information is freely shared both in vertical and horizontal directions and made claims that there were professional communities set in place for peer learning, the perceptions of the teachers who responded to the survey did not support this view of the organizational environment.

Teacher factors affecting implementation of a collaborative social integration model for ELL student learning were mixed. Although teachers generally felt they lacked training in oral English instructional techniques, there was a mixed perception about their own ability to still apply differentiating instruction and assessment. CTE teachers strongly agreed that they had a responsibility in implementing oral English pedagogy and in promoting LEP social networking. But they lacked ESL certification or first-hand knowledge of language acquisition processes through personal bilingualism.

In the interviews the administrators were sympathetic to the teachers utilizing students to translate curriculum, understanding it as a natural response to speed up communication. There were, however, a significant (40%) number of teachers who did not stifle oral English practice in the class through the perpetuation of communication solely in the LEP student's primary language. The teachers in this study acknowledged their lack of training in LEP instructional strategies. This lack of expertise affects policy implementation that requires a change in instructional methodology. Perhaps most striking in terms of a teacher factor that could affect oral English policy implementation was the conviction that meeting the needs of these LEP students was their responsibility.

“What implementers see is influenced by what they expect to see” (Spillane 2006 p 51).

Although teachers believed that a collaborative social integration model was positive for student acceptance and that LEP students did not resist efforts to implement this model, the CTE teachers did not seem to be influenced to change their instructional strategies to incorporate this model. The CTE teachers that responded noted the LEP student’s willingness to participate in non-LEP grouping strategies but they also noted a high propensity to cluster in LEP-only groups. This would indicate that teachers continued to allow this social and linguistic isolation.

The CTE teachers seemed to have low expectations of how well their LEP students could perform. Survey results indicated that CTE teachers believed that their LEP students were not able to communicate what help they needed in improving their oral English although a majority of the teachers also believed that the students were aware of their own English-language proficiency levels. This seemed to indicate that the CTE teachers believed that ultimately improving oral English proficiency was the responsibility of the student.

Many believe that LEP students are deficit in prior learning and literacy levels and they attributed this deficit to a reticence to participate in oral class discussions and to be successful in a real world job situation. Despite strong perception of student need for oral English practice, teachers did not seem optimistic that LEP students could participate in oral discussions. Although some administrators acknowledged their conviction that they themselves and the teachers as well thought oral bilingualism was a positive attribute in the job market, they and the teacher’s perceptions of LEP students’ lack of academic English proficiency diminished this advantage.

Implementing a policy that advances a social pedagogy paradigm in CTE classes requires the initial belief that LEP students will be able to successfully participate and communicate points of view that are of value to non-LEP students. This study discerned that although political clarity in policy intent and accountability, organizational support and communication, teacher competency and attitude were all influential factors affecting the implementation of a collaborative environment conducive to oral English acquisition, the greatest threat was the perception the

teachers had of their LEP students' lack of ability to perform academically well in such an environment.

#### Implications for Future Research

This study demonstrated that CTE teacher's perceptions of the politics surrounding the policy itself and how it is monitored and reported strongly affects the extent to which they implement it. The study also showed that many CTE teachers don't know or have opposing perceptions of what those monitoring systems are. It also explained that teachers do not garner all their perceptions of ELL issues and of ELL language and literacy deficits at the school house door but are in fact influenced by media representation.

A study that considers using an intervention that makes connections and distinctions between literacy and language ability would be useful in determining to what extent a school organization can mitigate media generated biases regarding LEP literacy levels.

A study that uses an intervention of monitoring and mentoring teachers district-wide in implementing oral English pedagogy would be useful in establishing to what extent this would improve teacher's perceptions of their ability to utilize oral English instructional strategies.

A study that demonstrates how both LEP and non-LEP students thrive academically in a collaborative and socially integrated classroom model would improve CTE teacher expectations.

APPENDIX A  
ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



### Administrator Interview Questions

64. What percentage of the CTE teachers would you estimate believe that having a fellow LEP student translate is an effective way of getting the content out?

65. Are the CTE teachers monitored for oral English pedagogy? By whom?

66. Is implementing the listening and speaking ELPS in CTE classes useful for achieving NCLB goals?

67. What training do CTE teachers receive regarding LEP pedagogy?

68. Does the district provide peer collaboration time to observe LEP pedagogy in practice? Who does this?

APPENDIX B  
SPECIALIST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### Specialist Interview Questions

49. Are administrators and district personnel monitoring CTE teachers for pedagogy?
50. Does use of LEP pedagogy affect salary or benefits like smaller class size?
51. Are cooperative grouping and peer teaching through collaboration and communication demonstrated in district and campus staff development sessions?
52. Is there any campus follow up training to online state TELPAS training?
53. Do CTE teachers utilize the mentorship capabilities of district or campus LEP expertise?
54. Is it your impression that there is a strong informal peer group support system for LEP issues?
55. Do you see a policy burnout or disconnect between Federal policy and local implementation among CTE teachers, a “this too will pass” attitude?
56. Are CTE teachers aware of using collaborative pedagogy to differentiate instruction?
57. Have CTE and ESL departments held joint trainings or have had informal meetings with CTE teachers?
58. Is there a district initiative for teachers learning Spanish?
59. Is there a strong sense in the CTE department that bilingualism is a great benefit in a job apprentice situation?
60. Do you think there might be discipline issues in using a collaborative model?
61. Do LEP students in CTE classes participate in class discussions, if not what are the obstacles?
62. Does the waxing and waning of media attention to immigrants or limited English speakers’ issues affect the priority of LEP pedagogy implementation?
63. Do you think stipends for performance pay based on test scores will influence teachers to use oral English acquisition pedagogy?

APPENDIX C  
CTE TEACHER SURVEY

## Survey Questionnaire for Career and Technical Education Teachers

In Texas, instructional strategies to improve oral (listening and speaking) English for all limited English proficient students are outlined in the English Language Proficiency Standards or ELPS. The ELPS policy establishes specific strategies in curriculum delivery. This pedagogy includes cooperative grouping strategies that connect strong English speakers with weaker ones, additional and deliberate planning to increase academic speaking practice, accommodations in the choice of vocabulary, repetition of verbal with written instruction, and teacher collaboration in the continual assessment of English language improvement. Many teachers find that they still need to use these tools with students in their classes who are no longer designated limited English proficient (LEP) but who still struggle to master academic (beyond basic communicative) English.

This survey is conducted to gather perceptions about oral (listening and speaking) English language attainment in Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes. For each of the statements below, please indicate the extent of your perceptions according to the following scale: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, or don't know. The comment section is included for clarification purposes, not to replace any individual questions. All responses are confidential and there are no right or wrong answers. All responses will be pooled in a multi district analysis. Your perceptions and time are greatly valued.

### The Survey

Check your most appropriate field:

Agriculture & Food\_\_\_\_, Architecture & Construction\_\_\_\_, Arts, A/V Tech & Communications\_\_\_\_, Business Management & Administration\_\_\_\_, Education & training\_\_\_\_, Finance\_\_\_\_, Health Science\_\_\_\_, Hospitality & Tourism\_\_\_\_, Human Services\_\_\_\_, Information Tech\_\_\_\_, Law & Public Safety\_\_\_\_, Manufacturing\_\_\_\_, Marketing\_\_\_\_, Science, Tech, Engineering & Math\_\_\_\_, Transportation, Distribution & Logistics\_\_\_\_, other\_\_\_\_. **Q45**

ESL Certified? Yes \_\_\_\_\_, No\_\_\_\_\_ **Q46**

Fluent in Second

Language? Yes\_\_\_\_\_, No\_\_\_\_\_ **Q70**

Check one: Male\_\_\_\_\_ Female\_\_\_\_\_ **Q47**

Check one: Teaching experience 0-5 years\_\_\_\_\_6-10 years\_\_\_\_\_11+ years\_\_\_\_\_ **Q48**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
<b>Q1</b> Due to the variety of content in CTE courses, applying the same oral English instructional strategies in all classes is not					

possible					
<b>Q2</b> Augmenting CTE instruction with listening and speaking strategies for LEP students should be compensated with lower class size or stipends					
<b>Q3</b> Oral English instructional strategies, such as increasing student talk time, is idealistic as a policy					
<b>Q4</b> Realistically, changing instructional strategies will not substantially improve how well limited English speakers speak academic English					
<b>Q5</b> The Texas English Language Assessment System (TELPAS) rating system that uses collaborative teacher opinion to determine listening and speaking levels of limited English proficient students is an accurate methodology for determining English proficiency levels					
<b>Q6</b> Applying measures that rate the progress of oral English improvement for English language learners as part of the district's annual yearly progress measure should not be connected with CTE classes					
<b>Q7</b> Using the limited English proficient (LEP) student subgroup passing rate of all LEP/CTE student TAKS scores to determine CTE program effectiveness for English language learners is appropriate					
<b>Q8</b> The TELPAS listening and speaking scores of beginner, intermediate, advanced and advanced high are a good indicator for how successful the LEP student will be in CTE classes					
<b>Q9</b> The urgency of implementing listening and speaking oral English instructional strategies in CTE classrooms is driven by media visibility of English language learners academic progress					
<b>Q10</b> Political issues, (e.g. immigration and poverty), affect the importance of applying a collaborative learning environment for oral English language acquisition in CTE classrooms					
<b>Q11</b> There have been so many changes in federal policy on how best to help English language learners that new requirements are only partially applied					
Comments:					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
<b>Q12</b> Instructional strategies for improving academic English listening and speaking abilities are prominently posted online at my school					

<b>Q13</b> Discipline issues for English language learners discourage collaboration activities in class					
<b>Q14</b> CTE teachers are monitored by administration for using oral English language objectives for English language learners					
<b>Q15</b> Campus staff development sessions model oral English instructional strategies of cooperative grouping and peer learning by grouping teachers in pairs or small groups					
<b>Q16</b> The district offers on campus training for discerning how oral English proficiency affects literacy					
<b>Q17</b> The district monitors how CTE teachers change their instructional methodology according to student data					
<b>Q18</b> District specialists observe and demonstrate how to apply listening and speaking instructional strategies in the context of CTE classes					
<b>Q19</b> There is a school-wide culture of support and mentorship in observing effective teaching and application of targeted instructional strategies with English language learners					
<b>Q20</b> School-wide responsibility for English language learner success is well communicated					
<b>Q21</b> The responsibility for improving oral English acquisition is coordinated campus-wide					
<b>Q22</b> State policy updates regarding LEP pedagogy are communicated in multiple mediums to CTE teachers					
Comments:					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
<b>Q23</b> I am well trained in listening and speaking instructional strategies for English Language Learners					
<b>Q24</b> I have an extended school wide informal network of support for guidance on implementing ELL listening and speaking instructional strategies					
<b>Q25</b> I collaborate with district support staff regarding listening and speaking instructional strategies for English Language Learners					
<b>Q26</b> I feel that using listening and speaking strategies to improve English language learners' academic English is the responsibility of ESL/ELA teachers and not appropriate for CTE teachers					
<b>Q27</b> My assignments include assessment in listening and speaking skills appropriate to individual student's literacy and English levels					

<b>Q28</b> Fostering social networks of support for English language learners among native English speaking peers and educators is an appropriate goal of the CTE teacher					
<b>Q29</b> My evaluation depends partly on how well I implement English listening and speaking pedagogy					
<b>Q30</b> I can confidently list the English speaking and listening levels of my LEP students as beginner, intermediate, advanced or advanced high					
<b>Q31</b> I regularly utilize bilingual students to translate key concepts to English language learners					
<b>Q32</b> I change instructional strategies between subject knowledge levels and English proficiency levels in my lesson objectives on a regular basis					
<b>Q33</b> I believe that engaging English language learners in spoken English practice in CTE classes lowers those student's dropout rate					
Comments:					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
<b>Q34</b> English language learners in my class resist participation in group assignments with non-ELL's					
<b>Q35</b> English language learners consistently choose other English language learners as their assignment partners when that option is available					
<b>Q36</b> Due to prior under education English language learners are limited in their ability to participate in oral discussions					
<b>Q37</b> Lack of oral English proficiency is indicative of a lack of literacy for English language learners making it difficult to participate meaningfully in classroom dialogue					
<b>Q38</b> English language learners are fully self aware of their own English listening and speaking levels					
<b>Q39</b> English language learners are able to tell me what they need from me to help them improve their oral English					
<b>Q40</b> The majority of the English language learners in my classes would be able to apply good oral English skills in a high skill, real world job environment					
<b>Q41</b> Employers have commented that non-native English speakers avoid speaking English with customers and co-workers when placed into an apprentice or job shadowing situation					
<b>Q42</b> My concern about the high rate of high					



school drop out for English language learners makes me hesitate to place them in apprentice or job shadowing situations					
Q43 Increasing ELL/non-ELL student collaboration improves group dynamics of peer acceptance					
Q44 LEP students prefer not to be called on because they feel their oral English is too weak to communicate effectively					
Comments:					

APPENDIX D  
RESEARCH CATEGORY GRID

Categories for Research Questions		Data Source		
<b>How Politics Affect Oral English Acquisition Policy Implementation</b>	<b>Secondary Data</b>	<b>Interviews</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Focus Group</b>
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive oral English language acquisition policy to be idealistic at the federal level and not realistically implementable at the local level?		Q55, Q66	Q3, Q4, Q11	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive the methodology of reporting LEP/CTE adequately yearly progress through the TELPAS system to be a reasonably accurate indication of oral English language acquisition policy implementation?			Q5, Q6	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that the current policy of using non CTE testing assessment data (TAKS and TELPAS) for LEP is appropriate for determining LEP student success in CTE classes?			Q7, Q8	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that the importance of oral English language acquisition policy implementation is directly affected by Media visibility of related issues like immigration?		Q62	Q9, Q10	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that their time implementing oral English language acquisition policy should be financially supported through stipends or additional benefits?	Fed/State/ District Websites	Q50, Q63	Q2	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that their content area is so fragmented that English language acquisition policy including standardized pedagogy is inapplicable to them?			Q1	√
<b>How School Organizations Affect Oral English Acquisition Policy Implementation</b>	<b>Secondary Data</b>	<b>Interviews</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Focus Group</b>
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that strategies for improving LEP student's English listening and speaking abilities are expressly defined in a school wide body of knowledge?	Campus Website and links to district and state sites	Q51	Q12, Q15, Q16, Q22	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that they are explicitly monitored by administrators for implementing LEP English speaking and listening instructional strategies?		Q49, Q65	Q14, Q17, Q29	√

To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that there is a organizational culture of teacher mentorship that sponsors observation of peer teachers applying oral English pedagogy?	District ESL dept Website	Q53, Q68	Q18, Q19	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that responsibility for LEP student success in oral English acquisition is well communicated and coordinated campus-wide?		Q52	Q20, Q21	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that the organizational norm for discipline is based on classroom silence and peer isolation?			Q13	√
<b>How Teachers Affect Oral English Acquisition Policy Implementation</b>	<b>Secondary Data</b>	<b>Interviews</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Focus Group</b>
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that they have been trained in implementing oral English language acquisition pedagogy?		Q67	Q23, Q46	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that they have built up informal networks of support between themselves and their peers that facilitate implementation of oral English acquisition pedagogy?		Q54, Q57	Q24, Q25	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that they know their LEP student's academic language proficiency and literacy levels in their primary language?	District data on avg immigrant LEP intake test scores	Q58, Q64	Q70=Bilingual/n o, Q31	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive their ability to differentiate instruction based on their knowledge of English proficiency levels, content literacy and use of collaborative strategies?		Q56	Q27, Q30, Q32	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive English language acquisition to be a direct responsibility of the ESL/ELA teacher?			Q26	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that they should promote social networks of support for LEP students?			Q28	√
<b>How Students Affect Oral English Acquisition Policy Implementation</b>	<b>Secondary Data</b>	<b>Interviews</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Focus Group</b>

To what extent do CTE teachers perceive LEP and non-LEP resistance to mutual social collaboration on class assignments?	Q69	Q34, Q35	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive LEP inability to engage in meaningful class dialogue due to under education or lack of literacy?	Q61	Q36, Q37	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that LEP students are self-aware of their own skill levels and levels of listening and speaking academic English?		Q38, Q39, Q44	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that LEP students are able to use their oral English skills on the job site in an apprentice or job shadowing situation?	Q59	Q40, Q41	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that LEP students in CTE classes engaged in oral academic practice tend not to drop out of school		Q33, Q42	√
To what extent do CTE teachers perceive that LEP/NonLEP collaboration improves behavior	Q60	Q43	√
Misl			√
CTE field		Q45	√
Male/Female		Q47	√
Teaching Experience		Q48	√

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## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Kelley Crockett began her education in Mexican schools, spent part of her college years in Spain and finished her Master's degree in Chile. She has taught bilingual students in Austin ISD and worked many years with immigrant students in Fort Worth ISD's language centers. Formerly the Pre-K-12 Bilingual Coordinator for Arlington ISD, she teaches Ethics to graduate students at the University of Texas –Arlington.

Winner of many awards for educational excellence such as the Pier One Academic Chair for Excellence, the Texas Association for Chicanos in Higher Education award for advancing the education of Hispanics, and University scholar, Kelley is also one of the first educators to achieve National Board Certification in English as a New Language.

Her community outreach has included being a member of the St. Rita School Advisory Board Finance Committee, a board member of TexTESOL V, Hispanic Woman's Network, Pi Alpha Alpha and President of the Exchange Club in Yuba City/Marysville, California.

She has two grown boys and two patient Shelties.