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INCLUSION OF STUDENT FEEDBACK IN THE EVALUATION OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

DISSertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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2002

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the inclusion of M.A. students' feedback in the evaluation of ESL teacher education programs. M.A. students (n=101), also referred to as preservice teachers in the present study, from ten different ESL teacher preparation programs volunteered to fill out questionnaires. A subgroup of these volunteers participated in individual interviews that allowed for clarification of the questionnaire answers and more detail about M.A. student inclusion in internal program evaluation and perceived benefits. While most of the questionnaire information is coded quantitatively and represented in various tables to show mean and standard deviation, the information from the questionnaire open-ended questions is represented in quotes. The M.A. students first identified the program curricular components that they felt to be effective in preparing them to be ESL teachers. These quantitative data from the questionnaires describe values placed upon the curricular components via a Likert-scale. These data are discussed by program type. Also included in
the study are qualitative data from open-ended questions on the questionnaire and follow-up interviews with a smaller focus group of volunteer participants. Both the open-ended questions and the interviews allowed subjects to discuss their perceptions of their respective programs, the idea of internal program evaluation and perceived benefits for both program and students. Other data are shown in tables and in text to provide more in-depth information.

The present study also presents M.A. students' suggestions for their involvement in internal evaluation of their program. These perceptions provide suggested framework for the inclusion of M.A. student feedback in program evaluation. Both the evaluation process and the perceptions gleaned from the interviews are seen to have potential benefits for both student and program. The study demonstrates how students feel empowered by participation in their program's evaluation. A program's administration may be interested in the results that may show whether its goals are being met or perceived as effective. The final purpose of the study is to provide a set of recommendations for the on-going inclusion of student feedback in the evaluation of teacher education programs in general, and especially in the field of ESL.
First, I would like to thank my Ph.D. program and dissertation adviser, Dr. Keiko Samimy. She was always understanding and fair throughout my program. She also provided me with the encouragement needed during the dissertation process that helped me to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Her advice was especially valuable in the editing stages of the dissertation. I wish to express my gratitude to my dissertation co-adviser, Dr. Anna Soter, for her extremely helpful feedback, especially in the editing stages. I would also like to thank my third committee member, Dr. Diane Belcher, for her helpful advice. To all three members, I give my gratitude for their insight, advice and patience throughout the process.

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Bowman, had an M.A. in History and completed Ph.D. coursework in Psychology. Despite the difficulty of losing my parents within 16 months of each other while writing my dissertation, I felt their presence and encouragement to continue.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a second language training programs were developed only in the 1940's and a professional organization, TESOL, Inc., was not created until 1966 (TESOL, 1989). Since the area of ESL has only begun to be developed as a field of study in this century, there are few guidelines for the creation or specific evaluation of ESL teacher education programs. Although the chief professional organization for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) has guidelines for the preparation of teachers of ESL (TESOL, 1989), they have not been used specifically for program evaluation in teacher education.

Teacher education for English as a second language (ESL) is situated in various university divisions such as, Linguistics, English, and within colleges of Education that have different curricula and requirements depending on a
variety of factors. Ramanathan, Davies and Schleppegrell (2001) discuss the diversity in the organization of the programs and list some of the factors that contribute to this diversity such as, home department, departmental connections, community concerns, faculty interest, curriculum perspective, and state requirements. They also state that alumni, as well as current student feedback, and the perceived needs of these students can affect curricular decisions and "inform the culture of the program" (Ramanathan et al., 2001, p. 294). The multitude of factors that influence an ESL teacher education program can, therefore, make evaluation difficult.

The Statement of Core Standards for Language and Professional Preparation Programs (TESOL, 1989, p. 203) and guidelines were designed to be "part of an ongoing self-study to be conducted by the staff of a program" (p. 203). Part C of the guidelines provides the information for the "objectives and features of a teacher preparation program" (p. 209) that include: Academic Specialization, Pedagogy, Another Language, Evaluation of Candidates and Staff and Facilities. Ramanathan et al. (2001) recognize the development of specific standards for the certification of pre-K-12 teachers by TESOL; however, they state that these
externally-created guidelines are purposefully broad due to the diversity of the institutions that contain the involved teacher education programs.

Research of Teacher Education program evaluation provides some ideas for the development ESL Teacher Education programs. Ramanathan et al. (2001) described two different TESOL programs with the hope that by "raising meta-awareness of how TESOL practitioners contribute to sustaining program cultures in specific ways ... [it] may ultimately enable practitioners to act in ways that lead to the improvement of their programs" (p. 281). Hutcheson and Moeller (1995) state, "it is critical ... that the programs already existing be evaluated" (p. 32). Their study of a middle level teacher education program encouraged reflection in college courses so students could "think and reason" (Hutcheson & Moeller, 1995, p. 32) and as "a way ... to improve teaching practices ... promote reflection ... and [offer] a means [of] validating their knowledge of teaching and learning" (p. 32-33). Hutcheson and Moeller (1995) believed the preservice teachers could improve their educational experience through involvement. The program may improve as well through the process of meeting its students' needs. The present study provides some
information about preservice teacher inclusion in teacher education program evaluation, an area that has little research.

This present study reports the information gathered from M.A. students in ten different ESL teacher preparation programs at ten different institutions. These students were asked to identify the curricular components that they discerned to be effective in preparing them to be ESL teachers and consider the benefits of student participation in teacher education program evaluation. Access to students through professors who were willing to participate in the distribution was the first step in identifying subjects for this study. The number of subjects was further limited by the students who actually returned questionnaires and who were willing to participate in interviews. Demographic information about the subjects was also gathered in the questionnaire to provide description of the programs and their students. Quantitative information will show the students' perceptions of their curriculum and qualitative information from interviews will build upon information from the questionnaires' short-answer questions about program evaluation. In the interviews, they were asked to envision how M.A. student
feedback included in an internal program evaluation could be beneficial for both program and student. The purpose of the research is to provide a set of recommendations for the on-going inclusion of student feedback for program evaluation and list the benefits that might be gleaned from this participation for both the student and the teacher education program.

1.1 Significance of the Study

The evaluation of teacher preparation programs has often been externally conducted, such as accreditation reviews by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or The American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). NCATE standards Category 1 (Design of professional education) section I.A.3. refers to regular and systematic evaluations, “including ... student assessment and collection of data from students, recent graduates and other members of the professional community” (NCATE, 1987, p. 16). Teacher Education programs follow the guidelines prepared by such learned societies for specialized areas in order to justify
curriculum, maintain membership and, uphold a quality program. These types of evaluations for accreditation purposes tend to be "evaluations of programs as they exist on paper, with some attempt to verify the written description during the brief time a visiting team is on campus" (Nelli & Nutter, 1984, p. 4). However, the use of the guidelines for internal review or curriculum/program restructuring is not guaranteed just because they exist. It is dependent on the cooperation of the university’s or the program’s administration.

Evaluation guidelines are limited even for foreign language teaching programs. ACTFL has revised standards that will not be presented to NCATE until 2003 (www.actfl.org). However, the "ACTFL Provisional Program Guidelines for Foreign Language Teacher Education" claims that they are designed to serve "a program developmental function" (ACTFL, 1994, p. 71). While the ACTFL provisional guidelines are not meant for accreditation or monitoring purposes at this time, they do state that the programs for foreign language teachers can use the guidelines to help assess the program "from several perspectives, draw conclusions regarding the overall effectiveness ... and plan for future improvements" (p. 71) of the teacher education
program. ESL teacher education programs could use TESOL guidelines in the same manner. According to the TESOL Directory of 1989, all but one of the programs endorse the TESOL guidelines. The extent to which the guidelines are followed vary from program to program.

It is important to consider the efficacy of different forms of evaluation. One way in which departments can incorporate program evaluation internally is to include student portfolios. This method of evaluation has become popular because of its “potential value to reflect on growth and needs of both students and then instruction” (Hus & Begeron, 1997, p. 2). One requirement of a portfolio can be a reflective essay in which student teachers “reflect on their development as a teacher” (MacDonald, 1997, p. 7). Research of students’ teaching beliefs and perceptions of the teacher education program builds on the knowledge base for teacher education in general. While portfolio review has provided some insight, rarely does it refer to the program as a whole. Neither has portfolio assessment been used widely in ESL teacher preparation programs (Gaies, 1992; MacDonald, 1997). However, portfolios can be used in a variety of ways, one of which is assessment at the end of a program. MacDonald
(1997) states that "the standard portfolio allows the department to verify that the basic knowledge, skills, attitudes and values are met uniformly throughout the program" (p. 12) while considering the individual student's focus. Hus and Bergeron (1997) agree that portfolios can be used for program assessment in a preservice teacher education program because of their ability to provide "the department with important data that may have otherwise been unavailable using traditional means" (p. 4). The mutual collaboration between the faculty and students that may materialize from portfolio review may also strengthen the program (Hus & Bergeron, 1997, p. 4).

Another type of evaluation, departmental self-studies, which are sometimes connected to annual reports, may seek out student opinions. However, the source of these opinions may simply be data from student evaluations of instruction (course evaluations) and other demographic student information that is gathered from applications and recent graduates. Self-studies, or internal evaluations, may be precursors to an external evaluation using the same guidelines for discussion. Moore, Hopkins and Tullis (1993) conducted a survey of teacher educators' perceptions of NCATE standards as teacher education program guidelines.
that indicates that the educators believe the NCATE standards would improve the quality of a teacher education program. In addition, the teacher educators see the theoretical and practical side of teacher education and the perceptions of students and faculty as being equally important in a teacher education program. It appears that in order to be effective, evaluations need to consider a variety of viewpoints and aspects of the program and provide the kind of data needed for the chosen purpose.

Discussions and/or data from an evaluative process may provide information about beliefs and perceptions as well as more objective, quantifiable data. Research on preservice and in-service teachers' beliefs and perceptions has been of special interest to qualitative researchers (Bright & Vacc, 1994; Brousseau et al., 1988). Schrier (1995) states, "the process of professionalization of an occupation is in part determined by both its members shared knowledge and their shared commitment to extend that knowledge" (p. 112). Preservice teachers, if given the opportunity to participate in research, especially as it relates to their education, may see reflection and inquiry as an ongoing process that will help strengthen the profession.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

The preparation of ESL teachers is currently accomplished in a number of different ways and through several related fields of studies. This diversity makes the evaluation of preparation programs challenging. Just as NCATE provides guidelines for the preparation of teachers for the accreditation process and ACTFL provides guidelines for the preparation of foreign language teachers, TESOL has created external guidelines to provide direction for ESL teacher education programs. However, despite the modifications made in the K-12 context, the general guidelines are not "relevant to preparing ESL teachers to teach at the tertiary and adult levels or for the range of contexts in which ESL/EFL teachers" (Ramanathan et al., 2001, p. 279) may currently find themselves. The TESOL guidelines are not attached to any accreditation procedure for the time being and, therefore, only carry authority because of TESOL's standing as a professional organization.

Despite the recognition of the importance of program evaluation, the evaluation of English Language Teacher, whether as a second language or a foreign language,
preparation programs has not received much attention (Gaies, 1992; Day, 1991, White, 1998). White (1998) acknowledges a growing body of research in quality teacher evaluation, but states that in the meantime, "scant attention has been given to the evaluation of the various aspects of...teacher education" (p. 134), especially in connection to English Language Teaching (ELT). As more research is conducted in this area, ESL teacher educators can use the recommendations for ESL teacher preparation provided by TESOL as a starting place. Program evaluation could be an important contribution to the professionalization of the field.

The evaluation of ESL teacher preparation programs may include "evaluation for accountability and evaluation for improvement" (Mackay, 1994, p. 142). External review from an accreditation agency or comparison with TESOL Guidelines may be used as a measure. Internal review could also take the guidelines and address "the specific concerns of teachers and learners to improve aspects of the programme" (p. 142). There are a number of ways in which the internal evaluation can be carried out. Gaies (1992) states that formal performance-based internal measures may be used along with "qualitative measures ... to evaluate a program"
Internal evaluation for teacher education programs may incorporate student participation through portfolio review, student evaluation of instruction, or perhaps alumni surveys. The qualitative data gathered in such an evaluation could provide richer and broader type of data to consider in program improvement.

The present study provides an internal evaluation situation in which the subjects are encouraged to reflect on the program and the evaluation itself. Program self-studies, whether conducted as part of annual reports or with pending accreditation, may provide beneficial data. These internal evaluations may also consider the students' point of view as stakeholders in the process of teacher preparation. Pajares (1992) states "[a]ttention to the beliefs of teachers and teacher candidates can inform education practice in ways that prevailing research agendas have not and cannot" (p. 329). A teacher's experience as a learner prompts certain thoughts, actions during and interpretations about the experience of teaching (Maxson & Mahlios, 1994; Su, 1994). Preservice teachers' beliefs influence their perceptions and classroom behavior. Recent
research proposes that these beliefs also affect the interpretation of knowledge in the university classroom. (Kagan, 1992; Pajares, 1992; Johnson, 1990).

The benefits of internal evaluation, especially in relationship to the inclusion of M.A. students beyond course evaluations are also considered in the present study. The benefits of the student feedback could include the empowerment of students by giving them a voice and provide useful information for the program administration by showing whether its goals are being met or perceived as effective. The collected data shows whether or not preservice teachers perceive or agree with this benefit. The perceived benefits to students and program may encourage ESL teacher education programs to conduct internal and/or external evaluations.

The recommendations for the continued use of student input in program evaluation can benefit both the student and the program. The responses of the preservice ESL teachers may also help identify perceived effectiveness of these preparation programs. The information provides a different perspective of the program than that of the faculty or outside agencies. The involvement of preservice teachers in professional development assists them to
understand the program and "help[s] them become effective advocates for their profession" (ACTFL Guidelines, p.75).

1.3 Research Questions

The following primary and secondary research questions guided this study.

Primary Research Questions

1. Do preservice ESL teachers (M.A. students) see their input as an effective part of teacher education program evaluation?

   a. In what ways can this input be incorporated into an internal evaluation?

   b. In what ways will the students and teacher education program benefit from the student input?

2. Do preservice ESL teachers in master’s programs perceive some parts of their preparation curriculum to be more effective in preparing them to be ESL teachers than other parts?
2. a. Which curricular components are perceived to be more effective in preparing an ESL teacher? Less effective? Of no importance?

b. Do the components chosen as more effective vary from program to program? If so, how do the choices vary?

Secondary Research Question

1. In what ways do the programs follow the TESOL Guidelines or not?
1.4 Definitions of Terms

Belief: Rich (1990) defines beliefs about teaching as a “system or implicit theories held by the teacher” (p. 81). A belief can be viewed as an idea or theory that a statement or orientation is true. Student teachers often have beliefs of what is considered “good teaching or” even before student or practical teaching experience.

Curricular Components: These are parts of the curriculum in the teachers’ preparation. They may include: linguistics, education, pedagogy, methodology, testing and evaluation courses, and practicum/practice teaching.

Effective Teacher Education: A program in which preservice teachers are provided with opportunities to strengthen the knowledge and skills needed to become an ESL teacher. In this study, the focus is on effective curricular components although the effectiveness of instruction and curriculum decisions, among other criteria are also of importance.

Empowerment: In general, it is a process of individual and/or collective transformation in order to achieve socio-political reform (Sumsion, 1994). More specifically, Arnold
(1992) relates empowerment to the concept of “knowledge is power”, a knowledge base and reflection (p. 2). Consequences may be personal and professional growth for preservice teachers through the opportunity to reflect and have a voice in their education process.

**English as a Foreign Language**: English as a foreign language (EFL) refers to English instruction given in a community in which English is not the main language of communication e.g., English courses given in Spain.

**English as a Second Language**: English taught to nonnative speakers in a community where English is the main language of communication. Also referred to as ESL e.g., intensive English courses on an American university campus.

**Experienced Teachers**: For use in the present study, this term refers to teachers who have at least three years of teaching experience.

**Intensive English Program** (IEP): A non-credit bearing program located on-campus to help international students improve their English proficiency. Graduate students studying to become ESL teachers are sometimes able to do their practical teaching experience at these IEP’s.
Minimal experienced teachers: In the present study, this term describes preservice teachers who have less than one year of experience, usually in some type of practicum setting.

Novice Teacher: For the purposes of this study, novice teacher refers to a preservice teacher who has no classroom teaching experience.

Pedagogical Knowledge: According to Shulman (1987) pedagogical knowledge refers to the way in which knowledge is passed on in any subject. This knowledge includes teaching and learning theories and learning strategies.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge: According to Shulman (1987) pedagogical content knowledge refers to the combination of content and pedagogy in relationship to the different topics, learning styles of the students and presentation in the classroom. This type of knowledge is usually the focus of specialized methods courses e.g., ESL Reading methodology.

Perception: Perception refers to an understanding based on one’s beliefs and/or experiences. According to Horak and Blecha (1982), a preservice teacher’s “beliefs about teaching ... may influence ... ratings of course/instruction at the higher educational level” (p. 5), that
is, his/her perceptions or the course/instruction. One’s belief of good teaching could influence a student teacher’s perception of his/her practical teaching experience. Other research looks at how experience might affect one’s beliefs about teaching. Tabachnick et al. (1982) determined that a 15-week student teacher experience "did not result in a homogenization of teacher perspectives" (p.41).

**Preservice teachers**: In the context of this study, this term refers to students who are studying at the Master’s degree level to become teachers. They may also be referred to as prospective teachers or PST's and M.A. students.

**Program evaluation**: "the systematic collection of information about the effectiveness of the various components of an educational program" (Gaies, 1992, p.14).

**Value**: This is the placement of importance on various curricular components by the preservice teachers.
1.5 Basic Assumptions

It is assumed that:

1) ESL teachers do receive training/education in teaching English as a Second Language.

2) Preservice teachers who participate in the study will be able to identify and place importance on those curricular components that they perceive to be more effective in their ESL teacher preparation program.

3) Student input is beneficial in program evaluation.

4) Preservice teachers who participate are representative of the individual program population.

5) The responses on the survey and in individual interviews were honest.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study focuses on English as a second language (ESL) Teacher Education program evaluation. Its goal is to provide recommendations for the on-going inclusion of ESL teacher candidates in the program evaluation process. The first section of the review of literature discusses Teacher Education in terms of reforms, evaluation and standards of assessment. It also connects these topics to English as a Second Language Teacher Education. In the second section, a discussion of the role of Reflection and Reflective Inquiry in preservice teacher education is presented, not only because of interest in the current trends in teacher education research, but also because reflection is required of the subjects in this study. In addition, Research on Perceptions & Beliefs of teachers (section three) follows with a discussion of how teachers, future teachers and
teacher educators relate to and contribute to various aspects of teaching and Teacher Education. Finally, in section four, I review research that specifically examines English as a Second Language Teacher Education and program evaluation.

2.1 Preservice Teacher Education

Teacher Education program evaluation needs to be seen in association with Teacher Education program organization, recent research and reform. Teacher Education has gone through a variety of reforms in the past century. Grow-Maienza (1996) describes how reform at the beginning of the twentieth century took teacher education out of normal schools, where knowledge of content was the basis of preparation, and into "the structure of teacher education as we know it today ... teacher education programs began to be comprised of three components still widely held: academic studies, professional studies and practice teaching" (p. 515).
The "progressive period ...[reflected] an advancement of the knowledge base that evolved with a focus on the need for teacher education institutions to be sensitive to social realities and democratic ideals" (McAninch and Raths McAninch, 1996, p. 382). This period of teacher education led to a period of social reconstruction, which was "a rejection of the conformist role for teachers and teacher educators ... and can be traced back to the early shapers of the modern foundations curriculum at [Teachers College at] Columbia" (McAninch and Raths McAninch, 1996, p. 383). A behaviorist slant on teacher education came about as the century passed the halfway mark. The present study examines the organization of ESL teacher education programs as they currently exist through document analysis and preservice teachers' perceptions of their respective programs. However, the historical foundations of teacher education must also be considered.

Zeichner and Liston (1990) affirm that it is important to study the "historical roots of contemporary reform proposals" (p. 3) in order to make informed decisions for the future. Additionally, Schwartz (1996) maintains that the evolution of teacher education has influenced the present type of preparation. For example, in the 1980's,
such reports as "A Nation at Risk" (National Commission on the Excellence in Teaching, 1983), the Carnegie Forum on Education and The Economy (1986) and the Holmes Group Report (1986), which called for the professionalization of teaching based on a content knowledge base, can be traced back to the narrower idea of "behavioristic knowledge bases of the 1960's and 1970's" (Zeichner & Liston, 1990, p. 6). Shulman (1987) suggested that teacher knowledge would include such category headings as: content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts and knowledge of educational philosophical and historical grounds (p. 8). Shulman's (1987) categorization of a teacher education knowledge base was part of the professionalization call. Earley (1995) states that the Holmes Group, which has undergone a metamorphosis "from an ad hoc group to a professional organization" (p. 17), also called for a shift of teacher education "to the graduate level and establishment and administration of professional development or teaching schools" (p. 17) and promoted the call for professionalization.

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Thus, recent changes in Teacher Education cannot be assumed to be completely new to the field. As stated above, changes in the field often have roots in earlier movements in the same or related fields. Previous research findings can guide future research into new areas or help avoid some obstacles. It may help to be informed about a program's organization, history, goals (mission statement), the major stakeholders and their different perspectives when conducting program evaluation.

2.1.1 Teacher Knowledge Base Research

An emerging knowledge base for teaching has been produced by interesting research in the field of Teacher Education and continues to influence ongoing research. Shulman (1987) organized the knowledge base for teacher education into seven different categories that include pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (p. 8). For the purpose of this study, I have chosen to focus on Shulman's (1987) domains of pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge due to the focus on the curricular components in ESL teacher education. Continued research on pedagogical content knowledge, which focuses on a teacher's
specific knowledge of teaching a particular subject matter (Cruickshank, 1996; Grossman, 1989, 1991; Hollingsworth, 1987; Shulman, 1987) explores an “understanding of how particular topics are ... adapted” (Shulman, 1987, p. 8) to effectively teach specific content. In addition to the methods classes that are specific to content, pedagogical content knowledge draws upon a student teacher’s experience as a learner, “subject matter knowledge ... [and] observation...” (Grossman, 1991, p. 192). The present study asks subjects to consider the effectiveness of their respective ESL teacher education programs and specific curricular components such as, second language acquisition courses and practice teaching experience.

Pedagogical content knowledge is of special interest because “it identifies the distinctive bodies of knowledge for teaching ... [and] the blending of content and pedagogy” (Shulman, 1987, p. 8). Research has delved into this area, for it is not just a matter of identifying the knowledge for this category that matters, but how it is to be taught and used. Acquiring such knowledge is difficult due to the fact that it requires “developing a conception of the subject matter and how to teach it” (Grossman, 1999, p. 15). Over the years, pedagogical content knowledge
coursework has become an accepted piece of the knowledge base and a major component of professional education. Cruickshank (1996) commented "little effort [was] made by academicians to tailor their courses and the course content for persons who ... will teach ... in K-12 classrooms" (p. 48). This need may have been one of the reasons that teacher education programs have incorporated more specialized methods courses.

Identifying trends, such as more specialized methods courses in teacher education, can be difficult simply because of the complex nature of the phenomenon and the different terminology that might be selected. Cruickshank and Cruz (1989) identify some trends through a content analysis of articles in Teacher Education Reports from February 1986 until September 1988. One of the major trends that they identify in teacher education includes a movement toward "a general improvement of teacher preparation programs" (p.54). The improvement of teacher preparation programs requires the evaluation of the program from a variety of perspectives. Donmoyer (1996) states, "Framing a professional knowledge base ... helps us to appreciate the range of knowledge and values that bear on teaching" (p.
The research acts as building blocks to the knowledge base, adding new ideas and expanding upon previous research.

Sikula (1996) believes the teaching profession is at a critical point in the identification of a knowledge base that could help to professionalize and improve the field (Donmoyer, 1996; Sikula, 1996; Mackay, 1994). Mackay (1994) indicates that one way professionalization could be achieved is by conducting research about what a teacher needs to know and, subsequently, what should be included in a preparation program's curriculum. Program evaluation for its own sake, or as part of a study, can also contribute to this knowledge base by providing information about effective curricula, for example. The lack of agreement on the elements that should be included in the knowledge base has the ability to diminish the respect that the profession might receive. Sikula (1996) advocates the necessity of changing the image of teacher education by clearly associating formal education and subsequent social benefits through research. For example, better teacher education would provide better teachers for the schools. In addition, a better link between research and teacher
education is one way in which the public image of teacher education and educational research could be improved.

The search for an agreement on a knowledge base for the field of teacher education forms the foundation for the study, "The Research About Teacher Education (RATE) project (Reynolds, 1989). RATE was initiated as a survey project that would establish a better link of communication between teacher educators and researchers through a national database about teacher education programs and the perceptions of students and faculty" (Schwartz, 1996, p. 15). Research has already provided some information on how to prepare teachers and what should be included in the curriculum. The Professional Standards as presented by NCATE (NCATE, 2002) show that there has been agreement on the categories that should be incorporated into a program's structure as identified by Shulman (1987). The NCATE unit standards, "Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions" (p. 10), state, "[c]andidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other professional school personnel know and demonstrate the content, pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to help all students learn" (p. 10). Within the draft of program standards for foreign language teacher preparation
underway as a joint effort between NCATE and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), there are specific elements within the categories or ways in which a program assesses the skills that identify the different categories. For example, Standard 1: Language, Linguistics, Comparisons focuses on content knowledge. Pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge are addressed in Standard #3: Language Acquisition Theories and Instructional Practices. (www.actfl.org/public/articles/details.cfm?id=152). Standard 3.a. focuses on the understanding of language acquisition and how that can translate into a supportive classroom while 3.b. moves on to the development of appropriate instructional practices based on theories and models of language learning (www.actfl.org/public/articles/details.cfm?id=154). Freeman and Johnson (1998), in an argument for the reconceptualization of language teacher education, claim that the disagreement “about the content, pedagogies, and institutional forms of delivery in teacher education...” is both “political and ... epistemological” (p. 403). However, the different types of research on teacher education available within one database may provide a rich
description of what is presently happening, a step toward a consensus of the components required for improving and evaluating preparation programs.

2.1.2 Standards for Assessment

Current and future teachers can participate in research in different ways for a variety of purposes and prepare them for future research. Some research can be conducted in terms of program evaluation. According to Christensen (1996), the NCATE standards for teacher education program evaluation are also having a positive effect on "institutions seeking NCATE accreditation" (p. 49). In order to identify a professional, research-grounded knowledge base for teacher education, Christensen (1996) states that the current knowledge of teaching and teacher education needs to be reviewed in order to decide what a teacher needs to know. This type of review provides an opportunity for program evaluation. The two questions proposed for this review are: "What must teachers know about teaching?" and "What do we know about teaching and teacher education?" (p. 38).
One way in which evaluation of teacher education programs is accomplished is the use of standards, such as those written by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). After the redesign of NCATE standards in 1987, Moore, Hopkins and Tullis (1993) conducted a study in which teacher educators gave their perceptions of 18 different standards. Overall, the participants "recognized the quality the NCATE standards would bring to a teacher education program" (p. 33). Key elements of the standards included references to research, knowledge base and practical teaching experience. The results showed that the knowledge base, "relationship to the world of practice, students and faculty are of equal importance in a teacher education program" (NCATE, 1994, p. 33). These results and the 2002 version show that NCATE Standards are up-to-date in reference to the topics of the knowledge base and increased involvement in research. This is of interest as the present study considers the effectiveness of student involvement in program evaluation, including the evaluation of the curriculum.

In an effort to show how the knowledge base has been incorporated into a professional education, Christensen (1996) describes a comparison of the NCATE accreditation
standards with 42 "self-study reports of institutions submitting programs for accreditation" (p. 40). The three examples given were from Indiana State University, Louisiana Tech University and the College of William and Mary. The first, Indiana University has a program that focuses on the preservice teacher "becoming a complete professional", but gave little information about the role of research and a knowledge base in the program. The second, Louisiana Tech, bases its program on the "development of knowledge research base for programs" (p. 45) in collaboration with American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). Research and professionalism were specifically identified in Louisiana Technical University's Goal statement: "To prepare excellent educators who are effective communicators ... through the utilization of the research base on teaching and learning and effective communicators of professionalism" (p.46).

The third program at The College of William and Mary focused on a well-rounded education that is grounded in the liberal arts. It identifies "skills in quantitative and inquiry skills, knowledge base in teacher education organized around Shulman (1987)" (Christensen, 1996, p. 33)
Despite the diversity in approaches to program design, it was clear that, overall, the programs took the design of the knowledge base very seriously. State licensure and standardization are considered proof of the professionalization of teaching.

Schwartz (1996) asserts that it isn't enough to know just pedagogy and subject matter anymore. "The teacher of the 1980's and 1990's needs to have knowledge of the social, physical, emotional, and cognitive well-being of the child" (p. 4), so they can be prepared for all classrooms and all settings. Darling-Hammond and Cobb (1996) include the "changes in which schools operate ... [and] the social setting [that] is more demanding" (p. 15) as reasons for this expansion to the teaching knowledge base. "Decision-making skills" (Darling-Hammond & Cobb 1996, Shulman 1987) and the ability to "connect ideas across fields ... to make ideas accessible to others" (Darling-Hammond, 1998, p. 7) are all part of the knowledge base. The changes in the social setting and society influence the way in which teachers accomplish this connection. In order to prepare the teachers for such situations, the Teacher Education curriculum must include a variety information to help teachers adjust to the
classroom situation. For example, childhood or adult psychology as related to different learning styles and classroom management would be of interest depending on the program’s focus.

Others believe that part of the problem of identifying this knowledge base may be due to “too narrowly defining knowledge bases [and] relying on cumulative interests of specialists” (Christensen, 1996, p. 39). NCATE also works in conjunction with professional organizations for program standards for specializations, such as mathematics and foreign languages (NCATE, 2002) creating separate knowledge base lists for each.

Should specialized fields, such as English as a second language, create their own knowledge base or merely adapt when necessary for content and pedagogical content? The diversity within ESL teacher education causes further confusion in terms of what should be included in an ESL knowledge base. Recent publications and accreditation requirements show an effort to address this problem through standards from professional associations, such as Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and ACTFL.
An argument in favor of a separate knowledge base could be differences in content and pedagogical content knowledge. In the present study, preservice teachers, some with actual ESL experience, reflect on their preparation program's curriculum. The curriculum was chosen, it is assumed, based on what the administration believed an ESL teacher should know i.e., a knowledge base. In 2001 TESOL, in conjunction with NCATE, created a draft for standards for the preparation of ESL teachers that will not be officially required for accreditation until 2003.

The standards cover five domains: professionalism, language, culture, instruction, and assessment. The standards aim to provide consistency in teacher education programs across the United States in terms of what good ESL teachers need to know and how their teachers and employers will know they know it. (www.tesol.org/assoc/pl2/standards/index.html)

Most of the ESL teacher education programs involved in the present study also endorse the guidelines provided by TESOL International, the professional organization, prior to the creation of the NCATE Standards. However, due to the fact
that the programs are located in different departments and institutions, among other differences, the curriculum of these same programs varies in content and length.

2.1.3 Further Research for Reform

There has been a growing level of interest in a professional knowledge base and research over the past few decades. For example, The Teacher Educator’s Handbook (Sikula, Ed., 1996), Knowledge Base for the Beginning Teacher (Reynolds, 1989) and Educating a Profession (Howsam, Corrigna, and Denemark, 1976) encourage further research of the teacher education knowledge base. The content of a knowledge base for teacher education and the way in which research can identify the content is still subject of debate. (Sikula, 1996, Zeichner & Liston, 1990, Reynolds, 1989). Some of this debate relates to argument between quantitative and qualitative research. Schwartz (1996) suggests that researchers should provide teacher educators with "a deep description of the field...[and] encourage them to participate in debate, dialogue, and decision-making" (p. 11), which supports the use of qualitative research. As Teacher Educators, "our job is to know what is available and when it ... can be successfully
applied" (p. 11). Research in Teacher Education can then be used to inform and improve the field and instruction. Increased inquiry in the field and increased classroom teacher involvement could lead to a more widely agreed upon research knowledge base.

The knowledge base research could include future teachers, teachers and teacher educators in order to gain different perspectives of teacher education and its knowledge base. There are many stakeholders in Teacher Education and it holds true in the field of ESL as well. By using the viewpoints stated before to study a program's current curriculum or other program elements, a study might be expanded and draw out unexpected data. In the present study, preservice teacher participation is recommended as one part of teacher education program evaluation in order to provide a point of view that might not have occurred to faculty or the administration.

As a field of study, teacher education is trying hard to win its place as a true profession. Research plays a key role in this endeavor. Sikula's (1996) claim of stagnation in the field appears to be a challenge rather than a damnation. He points out that currently, teacher educators continue "to experiment with all kinds of
reforms” (p. xvi). The problem is that many of these reforms “in U.S. teacher education [has a] lack of historical consciousness” (Zeichner & Liston, 1990, p. 3) and have not only been “unrelated, disjointed, and uncoordinated, but also ... contradictory” (Sikula, 1996, p. xvi). This rebuking tone continues, perhaps, as a means to shock the profession into action.

Cruickshank (1996) concludes that the actual information for a knowledge base in teacher education has not been agreed upon as it has been for “the professions of medicine or law” (p. 29). While such professional fields may have components that can be identified rather objectively such as, specific laws or judicial procedures, the complexities of education, teaching, and learning such as, settings and learning styles, make the choices somewhat more difficult. Fortunately, research can include these complex factors, perhaps through a combination of quantitative and qualitative designs.

2.1.4 Modes of Inquiry

While there seems to be a focus on research in the knowledge base for teacher education, the way in which the research has been carried out is not restricted. There are
a wide variety of modes of inquiry currently being pursued in Teacher Education research. The inclusion of different types of research has recently been accepted because of the "new lines of inquiry in teacher education...[and] the extent of interests" (Lee & Yarger, 1996, p. 15). While quantitative research has been the traditional method for studies, using true or quasi-experimental procedures, qualitative research has made some in-roads in the field. Historically, the two paradigms have been set against each other in research settings. The type of research has generally been chosen through an agreement between the type of inquiry and the research questions at both theoretical and procedural levels. However, there seem to be situations in which a combined methodology can be used for research.

Cresswell (1994) proposes three designs in which combined designs can be used. The first, "two phase", keeps the two methodologies completely separate. The second, "dominant, less dominant", as it name states, focuses on one type of methodology, but adds "a small component ... of an alternate paradigm" (p. 177). The third one is a truly "mixed methodology" in which both "the researcher would mix aspects of the qualitative and
quantitative paradigm at all or many methodological steps in the design” (p. 178). Depending on one’s goal these different designs might help add to the knowledge base since teaching and learning take place in such a complicated environment and are affected by so many variables. The use of a completely quantitative paradigm may not always provide the best description of an educational situation (Cresswell, 1994, Patton, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

In the present study, there are quantitative methods i.e., a numerical rating of curriculum components on a questionnaire) that bring a measurable element to the findings, as well as qualitative methods e.g., open-ended questions and interviews that provide description and support the information in the quantitative findings. The two can coexist within a single study without contradictory results. However the size of the sample (n=101) and the focus group (n=18) and lack of random sampling make it impossible to generalize to a larger population.

2.1.5 Teacher Involvement in Research

In addition to research for the development of a knowledge base, there is related research to improve the
teaching force. One way in which this improvement can be accomplished is involving the teachers in the research process (Richards & Nunan, 1990; Stenhouse, 1983). Stenhouse (1983) envisions the teacher as a researcher, especially for instructional or curricular decisions. Teachers can become involved in research in their classrooms i.e., classroom research; however, the way in which teachers become involved depends not only upon the individual, but also the situation.

Teachers can benefit from their involvement by "understanding ... why they behave as they do ... [and] make better choices" (Henson, 1996, p. 61). By actively participating, they can see first-hand how the research can be applied in the classroom (Richards & Nunan, 1990, Henson, 1996). A beneficial effect of the teacher's involvement could be "professional self-development and renewal" (Richards & Nunan, 1990, p. 75) that could promote further learning. Such research could increase teachers' feelings of "self-efficacy" by causing the teachers "to become more reflective, analytical, and critical of their own teaching" (Henson, 1996, p. 62). The research can become part of a cycle with reflection. Teachers and teacher educators can use the current research "to justify
the methods or strategies they use in the classroom” which can be followed by “[d]irect involvement in research ... excellent preparation for becoming a proactive problem solver (p. 62).

In the present study, the subjects reflect on their views of teaching and learning and how they might be involved in a program evaluation. By taking advantage of the opportunity to reflect and participate in research, teachers, current or preservice, expand their understanding of their roles in the classroom and in the field of education.

2.2 Reflection and Reflective Inquiry in Preservice Teacher Education

Within preservice teacher education, reflection has a variety of descriptions. Adler (1991) specifies three major definitions according to a review of literature. Her brief description of Cruikshank’s (1987) model of reflective teaching describes the approach as a laboratory experience and states, “[r]eflection, in the Cruikshank model, is instrumental in enabling pre-service teachers to replicate teaching behaviors which empirical research has
deemed effective" (Adler, 1991, p. 140). The second application of reflection, Schon's "Reflection in Action" (Schon, 1983; 1987) focuses on the "ability to recognize the problematic, to 'name' the things which will be attended to and to 'frame' the context in which we will attend to them" (Adler, 1991, pp. 140-141). A third view of reflection, that which is viewed as critical inquiry, is found in the work of Zeichner (1980) and Zeichner & Liston (1987). The three levels in this perspective include "efficient application of professional knowledge to given ends", "situational and institutional contexts ... [and] a thoughtful examination of how contexts influence teaching and learning" and the "moral and ethical topics ... [involving] questioning that which is otherwise taken for granted" (Adler, 1991, p. 142). All three types of reflection allow the preservice teacher to open up to new ideas and see things in new ways.

Reflection by preservice teachers in any format could provide them with the experience and possibly the skills to continue their foray into research at different stages of their education. Cruickshank et al. (1996) suggest that preservice teachers can gain a variety of skills if they are "reflective and introspective" (p. 78). Two of the
recommendations within Praxis III, "a system assessing the skills of preservice and beginning teachers" (p. 72), are: students should be encouraged to extend their thinking and teachers should reflect on the extent to which goals are met. Sumsion (1994) provides "findings from a longitudinal study into aspects of the professional development of a group of student teachers" (p. 2) of reflective episodes with twelve student teachers. The climate that results from reflection in a teacher education program encourages "the development of student teachers' confidence and empowers them as learners" (p. 15). Reflective practice persuades the student teachers to consider what they have learned in a course or the program as a whole, allowing them to take ownership of their learning process.

In the present study, the preservice teachers were given the opportunity to reflect on and rate the importance of the various parts of their curriculum. The preservice teachers were also asked to identify the most effective element and what was missing from the ESL teacher education program in open-ended questions. The reflective practice here had little in common with the Schon model due to the
lack of actual practice, but could be related to the ideas put forth by Cruickshank and Zeichner, especially at levels two and three.

2.2.1 Reflection and Critical Thinking

The use of reflective and critical thinking can also encourage reform through collaborative classroom research (Arnold, 1993). Day (1991) states that the integrative model approach to second language teacher education provides a variety of types of knowledge and experiences and incorporates reflective practice, "the critical examination of all aspects of the knowledge as the student is engaged in the experiences" (p. 46). Kasten, Wright and Kasten (1996) echo this sentiment by asserting that "[e]ngaging in inquiry and reflection provides opportunities for preservice teachers to understand pedagogy and [students’] thinking" (p. 1).

Critical examination is key to reflection in order to provide insights that may bring about professional growth (Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Reflective teaching is one practice in preservice programs that exemplifies this trend. Reflective teaching allows sufficient opportunity for the preservice teacher to reflect on "teaching
situations and...to help them to draw on related theory to analyze and understand the situations" (Cruickshank et al., 1996, p. 29).

Knight and Becker (1994) use Freire’s theory of critical consciousness as a basis to empower a class of preservice teachers. The goal of the study by was to describe a specific course in which Freire's critical consciousness is used to empower a group of preservice teachers. The objective is to emphasize the difference between just understanding symbols and the logic of the solution and the memorization of a procedure to get the correct answer. In addition, they encourage students to share “their intellectual efforts to achieve understandings and their feelings” (p. 21). In other words, they should be active and aware of their contribution to the course as a result of their participation.

The authors provide excerpts of several class discussions to demonstrate how students worked out the procedures and understanding of the mathematical problems. The authors perceived Freire's relevance to be in the difference between becoming “collectors or cataloguers of the things they store ... [or people] engaging in the process of inquiry” (Knight and Becker, 1994, p. 26). When
students reflected on the problems of teaching math a
describe the students' empowerment in terms of their "work
towards change on the basis of personal meaning" (p. 27).

In the present study, students participate in a
reflective study of their program and, then, consider how
their participation, implied through the inclusion of M.A.
student in a program evaluation, might benefit them and
their program. Whether the students' become critically
aware or not is not examined as part of the present study.
However, research has shown that a critical awareness and
opportunity for reflection can help a preservice teacher
better understand the educational process (Zeichner &
Liston, 1987; Knight and Becker, 1994; Kasten, Wright and
Kasten, 1996). It may also encourage the preservice
teacher to participate in research now or in the future.

2.2.2 Reflective Practice in Research

Sumson (1994) conducted a qualitative research study
of student teachers and their professional growth in
relationship to reflective practice. The result is that the
practicum is no longer set off by itself, but occurs within
a sequence of core units referred to as "Guided Practice"
at this particular university. One aim of the Guided Practice sequence is to develop the student teachers’ reflective practices and to enable student teachers to become more empowered learners" (p. 1).

In the Sumsion’s (1994) study, twelve students in the Bachelor of Education program at MacQuarie University participated in one-on-one interviews, drawings, key words or concept maps, recordings of reflective episodes, and small group interviews. Reflection about courses or teaching skills can make students aware of perceptions based on beliefs. The conclusion was that it was not enough to listen to these empowered voices. Teacher educators must be prepared to reconsider their practices in the light of what student teachers are saying (p. 16). Such research can facilitate evaluations of Teacher Education programs by preparing students to participate. Qualitative research, such as this, can be used to describe and inform, but it can also have the purpose of improving the teacher education program if needed through the data that is collected. Teacher educators may find new perspectives on the curriculum through the students’ feedback.

Reflection can be employed in any of these ways to introduce the student teacher to the idea of critical
inquiry. Zeichner and Liston (1987) describe the student teaching program at the University of Wisconsin, which emphasizes "the preparation of teachers who are both willing and able to reflect on the origins, purposes, and consequences of their actions" (p. 23). However, one possible hindrance "to developing serious attention to reflection and inquiry" (p. 41) is that the experience of the student teachers in the classroom as pupils is far greater than the amount of time they have spent in the classroom as a teacher. The perspective of this past experience could inhibit their growth as critical learners. That is, their experiences as students may prevent them from developing as a teacher. Zeichner & Liston (1990) state that a commitment toward the development of a "critically oriented and impassioned, reflective and socially engaged practitioner" (pp. 14-15) must be of great importance in Teacher Education in order that student teachers can learn to use the intellectual and practical tools that they will need in the actual classroom.

This commitment toward learning and reflection might require changes in the preparation program. For example, required observations, support courses for practice teaching in the form of seminars may need to be added in
preparation for student teaching and, in some cases, other practice teaching experience may need to be added to the curriculum. Reflection can be included as a permanent part of program evaluation for the benefit of the students and the program. The students can consider what they have learned and pass that on to their educators. The teacher educators and program, in general, will learn of the students' perspectives and needs. The increased concern for program evaluation comes from two external demands. The first affects all of higher education: "the demand that institutions of higher education be held accountable for the quality of the education that they provide" (Gaies, 1992, p. 16). The second reflects the development within the field of English as a Second Language, that is, the "evolution of [common] standards" (p. 16). These demands have influenced research and pedagogy in both general Teacher Education and in Second Language Education.
2.3 Perceptions & Beliefs in Teacher Education Research

Rich (1990) defines beliefs about teaching as a "system or implicit theories held by the teacher" (p. 81). These beliefs are then linked to the act of teaching. Beyer (1984) states that a system of beliefs exists as part of a "social life...a constitutive element in the communication patterns, social relationships and human acts which make up day-to-day existence" (p. 37). In teacher education research, teachers' beliefs have been interpreted as "complex ideological systems" (O'Loughlin, 1990, p. 1) and "orientations to teaching" (Brousseau, Book, & Byers, 1988, p. 33).

2.3.1 Research involving Beliefs and Perceptions

Studies about teachers' beliefs have generally focused on beliefs of teaching in an ideological and practical sense. A few have focused on preservice teachers' beliefs about preservice teachers' perceptions of their teacher education curriculum, for example Brousseau, Book, & Byers (1988) and Maxson and Mahlios (1994). These perceptions about curriculum are based upon one's beliefs about teaching. Brousseau, Book, & Byers (1988) assert that "[k]nowledge of such beliefs about teaching during various
stages of preparation and careers can provide insight for teacher education programs and instructional leaders” (p. 33). Throughout these studies is the idea that an understanding of these beliefs and perceptions can affect and help teacher education programs understand the viewpoint of preservice teachers.

Schrier (1995) believes that foreign language education can develop the knowledge base needed for teacher preparation by combining the content area preparation, the way in which it manifests itself in the teaching assignments, “and what [student teachers] believe is needed for their own professional growth” (p. 112).

In the past decade, there has been more qualitative research that concentrates on beliefs and belief systems. For example, an open-ended questionnaire of 20 entry-level students in elementary education program was used in the Maxson & Mahlios (1994) study to identify ideal teachers, students, classrooms, and curricula. One of the open-ended questions asked the prospective teacher to imagine what it would be like to be in the classroom and draw that situation. The drawings were analyzed with a type of context analysis used in a previous study. Maxson and Mahlios (1994) "focus on the knowledge and life experiences
preservice teachers bring to their teacher education experiences ... [and demonstrate how] past experience as a learner influences not only how one thinks and acts during teaching, but also how one interprets the experience of teaching" (p. 1). This and other studies (Rifkin, 2000; Grossman, 1991; Brousseau, Book & Byers, 1988) draw upon the preservice teachers beliefs about teaching, learning experiences and their preparation in order to provide a deeper description of the process of teacher preparation. The present study recommends the inclusion of preservice teachers in an evaluation of a teacher education program for the learning experience for the preservice teachers and resulting data for the program.

Su (1994) recognizes that "the profession of teaching ... [is] inevitably affected and determined by people's beliefs in the purpose of education and goals of schooling" (p. 19). The survey of 100 teacher candidates recorded their beliefs about the purpose of schools. The data showed a gap between ideal and real situations emerged and identified prior socialization experiences as the most powerful influence on teacher candidates and their educational beliefs and values. This is in contrast to some literature that has generally identified the practical
teaching experience as one of the most influential parts of the curriculum (Goodman, 1985; Conant, 1963). Su (1994) qualifies this finding with the statement that the study was done before students had had a practicum (p. 26) demonstrating that a longitudinal study may be appropriate to show changes in perceptions.

Bright & Vacc (1994) conducted a study using a beliefs survey in a mathematics methods course. The preservice teachers also answered open-ended questions about mathematics teaching. One group received cognitively guided instruction (CGI) and the other did not. Some change in beliefs occurred during the professional program, however, the CGI group emphasized the need for the students to solve "mathematics concepts in meaningful ways" (Bright & Vacc, 1994, p. 9). The study also demonstrates that attention should be paid to possible changes in beliefs or perceptions. The present study also used a combined design to focus on the preservice teachers' perceptions of their teacher education programs; however, it does not consider change. Bright & Vacc (1994) demonstrate that a longitudinal study would be of interest.

These three studies also demonstrate a growing body of research that uses a variety of qualitative and
quantitative-qualitative mix procedures. They also focus on how beliefs affect behavior or change over time. The added significance of the influence of prior learning experiences provides another variable to study in teacher education. In the present study, a quantitative-qualitative combined methodology is used to consider student teachers' involvement in teacher education program evaluation although it employed a cross-sectional questionnaire.

In the results of the 1993 National Survey of Science and Mathematics Education, Weiss (1995) described teachers' perceptions of their preparation. The figures showed that elementary teachers who are expected to teach all academic subjects to one group of students do not feel that they are capable of teaching all of these subjects at the same level (Weiss, 1995, p. 9). Weiss (1995) captures this disparity in a table entitled "Self-Contained Grade 1-6 Teachers Feeling Very Well Qualified to Teach Each Subject" (p. 9). In the 1993 column, one sees that

76% of all elementary teachers assigned to teach all four subjects indicated they felt very well qualified
to teaching reading/language arts compared to roughly 60% for both math and social studies, but only 26% for life sciences (p. 9).

Another table indicates that teachers in grades 1-12 assigned to teach mathematics feel "either 'fairly well prepared' or 'very well prepared'" (p. 13) in terms of their teaching responsibilities. The difference between those teachers assigned to teach all subjects and those assigned to teach one subject is evident. The present study asks subjects to state whether they feel their ESL teacher education program is providing them with effective preparation or not. While not part of this study, it may be that perceptions of effective preparation could change depending on one's teaching assignment.

The National Survey of Science and Mathematics Education was designed to show "national estimates of science and math course offerings and enrollment, teacher background preparation" (Weiss, 1995, p. 2), and not only teachers' beliefs. However, the perceptions that the teachers expressed about their preparation provide a link between beliefs and perceptions. According to Weiss (1995), the perceptions of whether or not the teachers are
well-prepared are based on the beliefs that the teachers hold about their teacher education preparation program.

Two basic research questions that guided the Weiss (1995) study are: Did the teachers receive the knowledge needed to teach all of the subjects? And, did they learn enough about these other subjects to feel sufficiently prepared to teach them? The questions seem to focus directly on the perceived efficacy of the teacher education program's attention to content, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge. In the present study, preservice teachers were asked about the effectiveness of their program as a whole and its components. These perceptions and those of M.A. student involvement in program evaluation were the basis of the study.

Brousseau, Book and Byers (1988) describe "teachers' perceptions of the value of various sources needed for teaching" (p. 8), which indicate that candidates and experienced teachers agreed on two counts. First, Education foundation courses were not highly valued; and second, classroom experience was thought to be a crucial source of professional knowledge (p. 8). These last two studies demonstrate that teacher education research focuses on what is needed in teacher education i.e., the knowledge
base. The present study asked the preservice teachers to give their perceptions of their curriculum. Choices include courses that could be placed under the categories of content, pedagogy, pedagogical content or learner and educational context, the last of which could include the practical teaching experience. Their responses did not stray far from the previous studies' data.

As stated in several of the aforementioned studies, preservice teacher perceptions may change after obtaining experience in the classroom. Cronin-Jones & Shaw (1992) claim that the "beliefs ... of preservice & novice teachers might be quite amenable to change as a result of instruction and/or experience" (p. 14). This is not to say that the beliefs and perceptions that preservice teachers or new teachers have are not worthy of inspection. Schrier (1995) states, "the process of professionalization of an occupation is in part determined by both its members shared knowledge and their shared commitment to extend that knowledge" (p. 112).

Results from West's (1986) study reveal a majority of subjects in both elementary and secondary candidates' groups that rated three areas as "very important or crucial sources of professional knowledge" (p.27). The ones with
the strongest ratings were: "courses in the content areas... [and] ... pre-student teaching and student teaching field experiences" (p. 27). Tabachnick et al. (1982) determined that a 15-week student teacher experience "did not result in a homogenization of teacher perspectives" (p. 41). However, the change to "full-time status in a school ... represented a clear break for most students..." (p. 41). The student teachers may have come away with different experiences, but these experiences were only possible in the school setting. These two studies emphasized the strong effect that field work/practicums can have on preservice teachers.

In addition, field experiences can influence a student’s beliefs and/or perceptions back on campus. A preservice teacher’s "beliefs about teaching ... may influence ... ratings of course/instruction at the higher educational level" (Horak & Blecha, 1982, p. 5). The results in Horak and Blecha (1982) showed that instructor-student belief correlation did not guarantee a good attitude to a course. Instead, Horak and Blecha (1982) posit that preservice teachers’ beliefs actually have a stronger effect on their perceptions and "not their similarity to the instructor's beliefs" (p. 6). Experience
in the field, in this case, prompted the student teacher's to look beyond content and to consider other aspects of their education. Through reflection, student teachers reviewed other parts of their curriculum.

As noted, field experience factored strongly in all three studies (West, 1988; Horak & Blecha, 1982; Tabachnik et al., 1982). Horak & Blecha (1982) focus on course evaluation, while West (1986) and Tabachnik et al. (1982) demonstrated changes in perceptions after field experience, but they all demonstrate how various aspects of the learning process in concert with preservice teachers' beliefs can provide useful information for teacher education program evaluation. In the present study, subjects commented on some type of practical teaching experience rather frequently. The subjects' perspectives of the effectiveness of practical training along with a balance of theory-based courses are available in the data from questionnaires and interviews.

2.3.2 Beliefs, Perceptions and Program Evaluation

An internal evaluation or self-study often includes performance-based outcomes with the use of standardized tests, portfolios or examination of program through set
criteria (Gaies, 1992). Performance-based/outcome information is used in internal evaluations "for validating existing academic programs and for indicating needed or desirable curricular change" (Gaies, 1992, p. 16). However, internal evaluation might also include student input. This is most often accomplished through the use of a questionnaire or interview of graduates. Included in the questionnaire are "graduates' opinions of various aspects of their preparation programs and certainly yield valuable insights" (Nelli & Nutter, 1984, p. 5). These questionnaires can provide for reflective activity on the part of the preservice teacher and self-study on the part of the program. The involvement of the preservice teacher in program evaluation can promote reflection, confidence and autonomous learning. Sumsion (1994) states that "empowerment involves student teachers becoming more confident and autonomous learners, with more responsibility for, and control over, their learning" (p. 1). This type of empowerment promotes personal and professional growth (Sumsion, 1994; Kagan, 1992; Day, 1991).

Drummond & Drummond (1995), Chauvat & Turner (1995), DelGesso & Smith (1993) and Evans & Bethel (1984) are four examples of studies that include the perceptions of
preservice teachers in the evaluation of the respective teacher education programs, as does the present study. Evans & Bethel (1984) conducted a study in which perceptions of teacher effectiveness skills were used to evaluate "various components of an elementary teacher education program" (p. 13). Teacher Education Skills Surveys (T.E.S.S.) were given to preservice teachers, supervising teachers, university supervisors, and college faculty because all were considered to be integral parts of the program and all had something important to contribute to the data. One of the findings was that there is a high degree of agreement on views that emphasize teaching skills in the program. The researchers concluded that the congruity among the views of the 462 participants "no doubt is due to a very close association...as well as an inservice program that develops and emphasizes these ... skills (p. 13). The present study focused only on the student teachers' perceptions as they are not often the focus of research.

Teaching skills for teaching special needs and unmotivated students were included in a second study by Drummond & Drummond (1995), which was "part of the continuous evaluation of the teacher training program at
the University of North Florida..." (p. 1). A group of 180 interns were asked to fill out questionnaires at the end of their internships. Confidence in performing teaching skills, strengths, weaknesses, and university services were all included in the questionnaire. Questions about experiences were presented as open-ended questions and ratings were set up on a Likert scale for the interns. Although this group of interns felt a high level of confidence in their overall teaching ability, their confidence in their ability to teach unmotivated or special needs students was lower (Drummond & Drummond, 1995).

The third study, Chauvot and Turner (1995), is a longitudinal study that focuses on beliefs that preservice teachers had of technology and how the beliefs influenced the teacher's use of technology. Over a period of four quarters, 15 secondary mathematics education students were followed through two mathematics education courses, student teaching, and a post-student teaching seminar. An initial survey, nine interviews, a formal observation, exams, and weekly journals provided the data for this study. The researchers found certain belief structures that helped to determine how and when teachers might use technology in their classrooms. The awareness of the beliefs provided the
researchers with "insight into possible changes in [their] preservice secondary mathematics education program" (Chauvot & Turner, 1995, p. 17).

All three studies, Evans and Bethel (1984), Drummond and Drummond (1995), and Chauvot and Turner (1995) describe the preservice teachers' adaptation to the classroom context and subsequent influence student perceptions or beliefs. Chauvot and Turner (1995) actually imply possible changes to the teacher education program due to an awareness of the beliefs. It is interesting that the identification of discrete skills in both the first two studies prompted strong perceptions of related teaching skills. The present study also prompted comments and perceptions of teaching skills in relation to the Likert scale statements and questions about the best or missing part of a program.

As in Evans and Bethel (1984), Drummond and Drummond (1995), and Chauvot and Turner (1995), perceptions of a preparation program can focus on stakeholders from on-campus; however, off-campus participants can also be included in the evaluation. DelGesso & Smith (1993) conducted a study in which perceptions of student teachers, cooperating teachers and student teacher supervisors were
studied "to obtain information on...the appropriateness, and the value of the undergraduate teacher education program" (p. 5). This particular study was carried out during the student teaching process and included the cooperating teachers. DelGesso & Smith (1993) acknowledge the need for studies with alumni, but find it necessary to know where these alumni come from philosophically. In other words, what sort of beliefs and perceptions did the graduates hold during their student teaching experiences? In an effort to gather more objective data, the researchers, "approach followed Scriven's (1972) goal free evaluation ideal" (p. 25) in which one does not have preconceived ideas about outcome, but accepts all information as worthy of study. "[C]lassroom management, communication skills, clerical skills, [and) teaching skills" (DelGesso & Smith, 1993, pp. 23-24) are the areas of concern that appeared in the survey administered to student teachers. These concerns echo many of those from the previously mentioned studies; however, the inclusion of the cooperating teachers' perception provides yet another point of view of teacher education.

Much research in teacher education focuses on the expert's perspective. However, some current research about
teacher education deals with the student teachers' perceptions and involvement. Rodriguez (1993) states that "researchers on teachers' beliefs agree ... that teacher education programs must be responsive to the student prior teachers' beliefs in order to increase the impact of their professional preparation and broaden the knowledge base for teachers" (p.213). Rodriguez' (1993) ethnographic study focuses on the students' perception of the dichotomy of theory and practice. Six science education students at the beginning of their course work participated in a year-long study. There were three in-depth interviews before practicums, after short practicums, and extended practicums. While the students modified their positions to fit into the limitations of the school context, they basically kept their own philosophy of teaching learning intact. Rodriguez' (1993) study supports the present study's inclusion of the M.A. students in program evaluation. While the focus of the present study is on the inclusion of M.A. students in program evaluation and Rodriguez (1993) focuses on the perception of the dichotomy of theory and practice, the use of perception as it relates to the teacher education program is similar in both.
A survey of student teachers of English in the Department of Secondary Education and Foundations and the Department of English at Tennessee Technical University (Myers, 1983) claimed to gain new perspectives on the teacher preparation program and give the student teachers of English the opportunity to speak their minds. The instrument asked the students to "evaluate the course offerings from the two departments, their English methods course, and the degree to which the two departments worked together to provide a worthwhile program of content and professional education courses" (p. 110). The conclusion of the survey was that content departments and Education departments need to cooperate fully in order to provide effective programs.

Only the last two studies (Rodriguez, 1993; Meyers, 1983) focused exclusively on the feedback given by preservice teachers about curriculum. Evans & Bethel (1984), DelGesso & Smith (1993); Drummond & Drummond (1995), and Chauvot & Turner (1995) included the preservice teachers along with teacher educators and other faculty or cooperating teachers, but they all referred to beliefs and or perceptions of skills or experiences. All include some sort of qualitative data collection in order to "provide a
flexible framework for the collection of rich descriptive data to represent the multiplicity of perspectives held by the participants" (Sumsion, 1994, p. 3) and provide a foundation of studying student teachers' perceptions through survey or interview on which to base the present study.

Unyakiat (1991) conducted a study that focuses on English teacher preparation of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Thailand. The purpose of the study was to investigate "the effectiveness of their teacher preparation programs" (p. 8) in terms of communicative language teaching. This survey of Thai secondary EFL teachers' perceptions of their knowledge and skills in the English language and of their college preparation was collected in the hopes of revealing possible weaknesses and strengths of the programs for possible reform. Although Unyakiat (1991) focused on EFL in-service teachers, teachers were asked to evaluate a teacher education program for effectiveness as did the present study. In the present study, preservice teachers are asked about the perceived effectiveness of various curricular...
components (linguistics courses, methods courses, practicums, etc.) and ways in which they could participate in an internal evaluation.

Of course, one of the most important points of evaluation is to know the use of the data. Brousseau, Book, and Beyers (1988) posit that the "impact of these beliefs on the process and culture of teaching is yet another consideration that makes understanding the educational viewpoint of teachers and prospective teachers important" (p. 33). The results of their cross-sectional study about classroom decision-making suggest that the experience of responsibility from teaching in a classroom "has a measurable impact on the individual beliefs" (Brousseau et al., 1988, p. 38). Teachers also believe that one's educational beliefs may directly or indirectly influence one's decisions in the classroom (Rich, 1990). Teachers' perceptions of a curriculum are based on their current orientations or beliefs. Research on teacher beliefs and perceptions can be expanded to include more preservice teacher education research in order to evaluate and improve the preparation programs.
2.4 English as a Second Language Teacher Education

There has been increased interest and debate in teacher education in terms of research, program design and a knowledge base and the specialized fields of Foreign Language and ESL teacher education have followed suit. While there has been research of ESL classroom behavior and methodology, it has not been until fairly recently that much research has been conducted to support second language teacher education (Gaies, 1992; Richards, 1990). The reforms in Teacher Education and subsequent research have affected the preparation of English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. Freeman and Johnson (1998) found that "a search of the TESOL Quarterly cumulative indices from 1980 to 1997 reveals that only 9% of the featured articles are listed under the topic 'teacher preparation'" (p 397-398). This lack of research in ESL teacher education emphasizes the need for increased research and a need to encourage preservice teachers and classroom teachers to participate in research.

Nunan (1990), like Henson (1996), discusses the need to involve student teachers in classroom research because the awareness of the interaction of theory and practice
will benefit the student teacher and teacher as the involvement continues into in-service practice. Classroom research is possibly the best way to get first-time researchers involved. These benefits include "professional development, understanding of instructional methods, and an awareness of the relationship between classroom behavior and pupil growth" (Henson, 1996, pp. 75-76). One theme that repeats itself in Richards & Nunan's (1990) *Second Language Teacher Education* is the call to advance from "training" to a "professional" perspective. This stems from the attempt to professionalize the field of teacher education. Part of the problem is that various authors in this compilation describe professionalization in different ways. Pennington describes a practicum framework and Lange quotes both the Carnegie and Holmes reports which argue for graduate level teacher education as a means to achieve professionalism. This disagreement in definition relates to the disagreement of what should be included in the knowledge base, but also has to do with the context of teacher education. While some teacher education programs have completely changed to Master's in Education (M.Ed.) or Master's of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) programs, there are still some at the
undergraduate level. It may be that the level of instruction and the effectiveness vary due to the difference in the type of program.

2.4.1 Diversity of ESL Teacher Education

The question of context extends to English as a second language teacher education. Most of the teacher education programs for ESL exist at the graduate level. Of the programs identified in the 1999-2001 TESOL Directory, 203 were found at the Master's level and another 32 at the doctoral level. Not only do they exist in different departments, but they also have a wide variety of curricular components. Almost 35% (71) of the programs at the Master's level were either attached directly to a School of Education or the degree was described as Master at Teaching. In addition, most of the other Master's degrees (in both Arts and Sciences) were found in or attached to English or Linguistics Departments. Still other programs are in departments or divisions of TESOL, ESL, or other sub-departments with similar acronyms. Foreign language, Comparative Literature, or International Studies, and similarly named departments account for a smaller number of the programs (TESOL Directory, 1995).
While some programs focus on the preparation of K-12 public school teachers, others consider English as a foreign language contexts or adult education. The diversity of the preparation programs makes it all the more difficult to prepare teachers for the many contexts in which the future teachers may find themselves. Students who go into a program without knowledge of the program’s focus or before choosing the context in which they want to work, may find that their needs do not necessarily match the curriculum of the program.

According to the TESOL Directory in 1997, 107 of these M.A. programs endorse the TESOL guidelines. (The 1999 version of the directory does not provide this information.) These guidelines for the preparation of teachers of English to Speakers of other languages focus on the teachers who will teach in the United States or Canada in a variety of contexts. The guidelines provide the following statement as their goal:

(A) defines the role of the ESL teacher in American schools, (B) describes his personal qualities and professional competencies, and (C) states the objectives and characterizes important features of a
teacher education program designed to develop ESL teachers of high professional ability. (p. 284)

Section C identifies the ESL teacher as a professional, an important point, since TESOL is a relatively young profession. Despite the fact that the teaching of English has been going on for ages, it wasn't until training programs were developed in this century (in the 1940's) and a professional organization, TESOL, Inc. was created in 1966 that the field of ESL began to be accepted as a field of study. Even today, ESL exists as a validation or endorsement on diplomas, rather than complete certification (Kreidler, 1987). Master's degrees in ESL enable graduates to teach in intensive English programs (usually at universities), but not in public schools, unless it is also a licensure program providing certification for elementary or secondary education.

Recent research provides an insight into what preparation programs do and do not provide the preservice ESL teacher. Johnson (1991) identifies ESL preparation as one of those sections in teacher education that has high standards of preparation in theoretical studies. He contrasts ESL teacher preparation with that of foreign
language teacher preparation. Johnson (1991) believes that several other language-centered areas have more stringent certification standards and curricular than foreign language teachers do. "Teachers of ... ESL, for example, have long had standards that reflect a more intensive study of the many different facets of communicative competence" (p. 9). While this statement is quite an endorsement for the field of ESL, those in the ESL field need to remember that ESL teacher education programs are the standards are not always enforced, especially not for accreditation, and there is still work to be done in ESL teacher education. The present study considers the effectiveness of ESL teacher education programs from the viewpoint of 101 M.A. level students. It suggests that the M.A. students (preservice teachers) may provide an interesting perspective in one part of an internal study.

2.4.2 ESL Teacher Education Curriculum

Due to the diversity in ESL Teacher Education, there is no standard curriculum across the board for ESL teacher preparation programs (TESOL Directory, 1995). While Colleges or Schools of Education often submit to NCATE
standards for accreditation and foreign language teacher education programs often follow ACTFL standards, external review for ESL teacher preparation does not officially exist as of yet. Some programs may emphasize theoretical linguistics, English philology, or pedagogy.

The TESOL guidelines do not assume to provide a curriculum due to the "great variation in education institutions which prepare ... such teachers" (TESOL, 1995, p. 284). Instead, general guidelines are provided to identify qualities, attitudes, skills, experience and knowledge. These are competencies that an ESL teacher needs, in addition to the general education that ESL teachers should receive. The guidelines identify classroom management, evaluation, methodology, proficiency in English, experience in learning another language, language acquisition, language pedagogy, an understanding of other cultures, linguistics, and professional education as some of the chief features of a teacher education program for teaching ESL.

These features identified in the TESOL Guidelines represent the areas in which second language teaching has grown and may draw upon for a knowledge base. The expanding ESL profession and growing need for
professionalization has created a need for more research in the area of ESL Teacher Education. Richards & Gipe (1993) posit "few who are engaged in developing this knowledge base ... claim any ... relation between their work and the preparation of language teachers" (p. 3). The missing link appears to be an agreed upon theory of effective language teaching. In order "to prepare effective language teachers, it is necessary to have ... a statement of ... principles that account for effective teaching" (p. 4).

The lack of an agreement upon methodology theory is represented also in the number of models and teaching methods that have come in and out of favor in second language teaching in the past thirty years. We have seen everything from the audio-lingual approach to communicative approaches, such as Total Physical Response (TPR). McGregor (1981) states, "there is ... disillusionment with the series of approaches and methodologies ... [and] the never failing claim ...that the latest approach is 'the' answer" (p. 72). Some teachers use a mixture of teaching methods depending upon the situation. It is currently popular to doubt the existence of a single way to teach or that all students be taught in the same way. However, preservice teachers are rarely given an historical overview
of methodology. Whichever method appears to be in favor in
the current professional literature is the one usually
showcased in an ESL methods course, leaving the student
responsible for researching other methods. One possibility
would be to include an elective course in methodology.
that the methods course should be based upon knowledge of
what an ESL teacher must know and do in order to be
effective” (p. 29). While a “general history of second
language pedagogy” (p. 32) course is a common element
within the methods course according the information from 77
questionnaires, methods course instructors must also avoid

Recent surveys of methods courses and practicums in
TESOL Master’s programs represent the variety of
philosophies in the programs. Grosse (1991) found the
methods course to be “the primary vehicle for pedagogical
instruction in the ... TESOL teacher preparation programs”
(p. 29). This can highly influence a teacher's future
teaching style. According to Zhang (1990), "ESOL teacher
education programs ... have laid greater emphasis on
Linguistics and Methodology" (p. 15) within the curriculum.
What is of concern is whether or not the methods being

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taught are truly effective. While teacher educators should not prescribe methods (Grosse, 1991), suggestions and examples of teaching ESL can help prepare a preservice teacher for the classroom. A majority of programs in a variety of departments include courses such as ESL methodology. Grosse (1991) includes “development of metacognitive awareness” and “the empowerment of the teacher in the decision making process” (p. 42) as key issues in TESOL methods in preparing preservice teachers to be able to solve their own methodological problems.

After studying learning theory and methodology, the next likely step is to put them to the test in an actual classroom experience in order to see the connection of theory and practice in action. This can be done in a practicum, or practice teaching off-campus or if not available, various on-campus experiences can be accomplished with one's peers. Two of the goals of the practicums are "to provide practical experience in ... teaching ... [and] to apply instruction from theory classes" (Richards & Crookes, 1988, p. 11). The preservice teacher sometimes has a chance to test the methodology in the practice teaching, but about half of Zhang's (1990) "survey population [does] not include teaching practicum courses in
their curricula" (p. 14). Some preservice teachers have never had opportunity to be exposed to the ESL classroom. One of the weaknesses in an ESL teacher education program can be practice teaching due to poor organization or a complete lack of a required practice teaching component in the program. The opportunity often depends on the preservice teachers' prior experience and whether the degree is for licensure or not.

Of additional concern is the type of practice. Just as there are many types of ESL teacher education programs e.g., undergraduate, graduate, M.Ed. or M.A.T, there are also many contexts for ESL classrooms, for example, public schools, private institutions, adult education and intensive English language programs at colleges and universities. Therefore, the type of practice teaching is also of concern. Richards & Crookes (1988) also stated that the practicum "is the major opportunity for the student teacher to acquire the practical skills and knowledge ... to function as an effective language teacher" (p. 9). The practicum allows the preservice teacher to see how the classroom environment can influence one's teaching decisions.
Despite the recognition of its benefits and existence in the TESOL guidelines, practice teaching is not always available (TESOL Directory, 1995; Zhang, 1990; Richards & Crookes, 1988). This should not prevent student teachers from getting some type of field experience. Other on-campus activities, such as observation, microteaching and Reflective Teaching, i.e., a lesson given in the classroom and then reviewed with a colleague and/or instructor, could also provide a meaningful experience. In a study of the objectives of the practicum course by Richards & Crookes (1988), a full 19 out of 78 (24%) of the programs did not have practicum courses. While the response rate was only 65%, it shows a trend. It could be that for those who study in programs that provide or require such experience before graduation, the opposite is hard to imagine. Of the 208 programs listed as graduate programs providing an ESL degree in the 1997 TESOL Directory, 107 require practice teaching (51%). This number conflicts with the numbers found in the Richards and Crooke's (1988) survey. Part of the difference could be rationalized by the fact that some of the programs that require practice teaching will waive the requirement if the teacher has previous teaching experience (TESOL Directory, 1999). The fact that several
years had passed and the fact there was a 35 percent non-
response rate in the Richards & Crooke's (1988) survey may
account for the rest of the discrepancy. In addition, not
all programs that are said to endorse the guidelines have
practicums. Since section C of the Guidelines for the
preparation of ESL teachers recommends a practicum, one
might question some of these endorsements. The conditions
placed on the endorsements are not printed in the
directory.

Additionally, the effectiveness of a practicum or
other practical teaching experience cannot be guaranteed
merely because it is suggested by the TESOL Guidelines.
For example, the amount of supervision and classroom
responsibility varies in different practicums. These two
factors could affect the type of experience that a student
will have. Regardless of the type of teaching practice
that teachers receive, "Professional TESOL preparation
programs need to make explicit the contextual factors which
influence instructional practices" (Johnson, 1990, p.7).

Pre-service ESL teachers need to be prepared to handle
different classroom situations that might affect the way
they teach. K.E. Johnson (1990) suggests including the
development of "strategies for dealing with specific
aspects of classroom life" (p. 7). Those who do not have the opportunity for a practicum miss out on a possibly valuable experience. Some of those ESL teachers have already had teaching experience and some may have had ESL experience. However, practical teaching experience could be the only way that a preservice ESL teacher could practice what he/she has recently learned before going into (or returning to) the classroom.

Preservice teachers often assume that the program will address theory and practice. The practice of combining theory and practice can aid in a teacher's growth personally and professionally. This growth is included in the idea of empowerment that suggests that preservice teachers become "more confident and autonomous learners, with...control over their learning" (Sumsion, 1994, p. 1). This is not to say that power is taken away from others, but that preservice teachers take more responsibility for their learning. Through empowerment, preservice teachers are given a voice. Sumsion (1994) defines this voice as "an ability to express ideas and convictions coherently ... in short ... power" (p. 1). If teacher educators want to provide a theory-into-practice integration, the nature of teaching
and learning within the curriculum may have to be reconceptualized (Walker & Tedick, 1995; Carrasquillo and Song, 1994).

Future trends for ESL teacher preparation depend a great deal on current research. At this point in time, ESL teacher preparation tends to follow general teacher preparation trends. This is not necessarily a negative finding. ESL teachers, ESL teacher educators and pre-service ESL teachers in classroom-based research need to continue research in order to contribute to the improvement of the types of programs offered.

2.4.3 Evaluation of ESL Teacher Education

Research could help ESL teacher education through the creation of program evaluation. Evaluation of ESL teacher preparation programs involves "the systematic collection of information about the effectiveness of the various components of [the program]" (Gaies, 1992, p. 14). If ESL preparation programs are to improve, they must prove their effectiveness. Many stakeholders have a vested interest in teacher education. The development of professional standards is just one way in which external review is conceived. As stated before, the large number of graduate
programs that do endorse the TESOL Guidelines demonstrates that programs want assume responsibility and be considered professional programs.

As noted earlier, two of the reasons for increased interest in ESL teacher education program evaluation are accountability and "the evolution of professional standards" (Gaies, 1992, p. 16). The former follows a trend in teacher education in general to prove that students who are exiting programs will be effective teachers. This type of review is generally done at the end of a program and is generally based on outcomes. However, a similar type of evaluation could be done internally during the course of the program and focus on the process.

Gaies (1992) identifies internal review as "the use of data on student learning (outcomes) as a means for validating existing academic programs" (pp. 15-16). Portfolio review, one method that can be used for internal evaluation, can be used to show a "developmental view of teacher preparation ... and to gauge the development of a professional awareness among students" (pp. 22-23). The use of portfolios in evaluation requires a lot of advance preparation time. In the present study, I needed to be able to have more flexibility in data collection.
Questionnaires and short interviews were better suited for the data collection at ten different ESL teacher education programs.

White (1998) asserts that "quality assurance ... tends to be concerned with outcomes, yet it is process quality and effectiveness that lead to sustainable quality outcomes" (p. 138). White (1998) defines process as "the way in which people work to achieve results" (p. 138). This information suggests that we cannot expect to find a panacea in just one type of evaluation. However, we can try different types of evaluation in order to get the most information and that which would be most beneficial to program and student.

Another type of evaluation that could be built into a preparation program is self-assessment. McGregor (1981) believes that by learning "self-analytical, self-assessment skills" (p. 76) teachers could become life-long learners. By developing these types of skills, evaluation would take place throughout the program and continue long after a student graduates. This autonomous evaluation would appear to be both internal and external as it could be used as a self-study or as part of an accreditation review. Sumsion (1994) agrees that this type of empowerment provides
professional and personal growth. By being involved, "student teachers ... become more confident and autonomous learners, with more responsibility for, and control over, their learning" (p. 1). It would also appear that student and program could gain from the evaluation of the preparation program.

A self-evaluation could be conducted internally using the external standards proposed by a professional organization, in this case, TESOL. Standards have been prepared in conjunction with NCATE. Although the NCATE web page includes English as a Second Language under its list of Program Standards, there is no active link. The TESOL web page (www.tesol.org/standards) states that standards have been drafted for certain areas e.g., P-12 teacher education), but have not been officially adopted and will not be required for accreditation until 2003. External evaluation through the adherence and review of professional standards are possibly the most recognized for teacher education program evaluation. Programs that opt for accreditation will soon have this option. However, programs might also use portfolio review or self-assessment for internal study. The purpose of the evaluation will guide those decisions.
In this chapter, I have discussed recent developments and research in Teacher Education the role of reflection and reflective inquiry, perceptions and beliefs and ESL Teacher Education as related to program evaluation. Knowledge of the historical basis of reforms is important to make informed decisions (Zeichner & Liston, 1990). The creation and agreement of a knowledge base (Grossman, 1989; Shulman, 1987, Carnegie Report, 1986; Holmes Group, 1986) is the basis for the components required for improving teacher education programs and evaluation of the programs. The reflection and reflective inquiry discussion suggested ways students could review what they had learned and critically examine their experience (Day, 1991; Kasten et al., 1990). It also suggests how reflection could involve preservice teachers, teacher educators, and in-service teachers in research (Sumson, 1994; Arnold, 1993; Zeichner & Liston, 1987, 1990). The section on beliefs and perceptions discussed how teaching (Su, 1994) and teacher education (Brousseau et al., 1988) can be influenced by teachers’ beliefs and perceptions. ESL teacher education referred back to ideas of a knowledge base (Henson, 1996) and just what preparation programs do and provide preservice ESL teachers (TESOL, 1995; Johnson, 1991). The

I related each section of the review of literature to the present study in which M.A. students (n=101) in ESL teacher education programs were asked to rate their respective programs on a Likert scale and answer some open-ended questions on a questionnaire. In addition, a focus group of students (n=18) from those who participated in the questionnaire, volunteered for interviews. These students were asked to consider M.A. students' inclusion in program evaluation and its possible benefits in more depth. I believe that continued research in teacher education program evaluation can help teacher educators in any field identify specific needs of student teachers such as, theory-based courses or classroom management skills. The research may also help identify what to include or modify in a preparation program and determine what is effective with their particular student population.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This chapter describes the combined quantitative and qualitative methods used in this study. It also describes the subject selection from M.A. students (also referred to as preservice teachers) in ESL teaching preparation programs at ten American universities. The way in which the data were collected with the different instruments, both questionnaires and focus group interviews, are also described.

3.1 Research Design

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the collection of data for this combined approach study. Cresswell (1994) states that the combining of methods can be used in a "developmental dominant, less dominant" manner.
where the qualitative method is used "to help inform" (p. 175) the quantitative. The interviews, one qualitative method, can also be seen as this informative method, as well as an "expansion ... to add scope and breadth" (Cresswell, 1994, p. 175) to the description of the environment and the perceptions.

3.1.1 Research Design

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used by the researcher to collect data. The quantitative allows for a "numeric description" (Cresswell, 1994, p. 17) of the responses. The cross-sectional questionnaire allowed the researcher to collect a numerical rating of curriculum through the perceptions of the subjects. It allowed for general (although not necessarily generalizable, due to sample size) views of curriculum from different programs by M.A. students. The open-ended questions also provided the preservice teachers the opportunity to reflect and evaluate their experiences in their respective programs.

The quantitative method employed was survey research. It allows a researcher to discover characteristics and perceptions of a sample that may then be generalized to a population, or to describe the current sample, as is the
case in the present study. This information can then be used as a basis for further research. The questionnaire provided numerical data through a Likert scale rating. The subjects rated the importance of different components within the curriculum of their program. The subjects' perceptions of the respective programs' curricula were analyzed by the type of department in which the programs reside. Intervening factors that were not controlled for include previous teaching and ESL teaching experience, nationality as it relates to teaching ESL or EFL, the number of years of teaching experience and previous education and highest degree attained.

The qualitative method included open-ended questions on the questionnaire and follow-up interviews with a sub-section, or focus group, of the subjects. Both provided a means to expand and check upon the information given in the quantitative section of the questionnaire. While the qualitative data cannot provide numeric statistics, it provides description of the subjects' perspectives of the teacher preparation programs' curricula and the inclusion of the M.A. students' feedback in program evaluation. The qualitative method allowed the M.A. students' perceptions of curriculum and internal evaluation to be expressed in a
narrative without limiting, nor suggesting answers through multiple-choice type questions. The interview also presented an opportunity to discuss an internal evaluation of the subjects' program.

Qualitative research has most likely become popular because of its ability to include the multidimensional factors involved in an educational setting. Studies undertaken about teacher education programs in recent years have used a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods. The combined designs have been used for several reasons. Cresswell (1994) provides several reasons for combined designs based on literature. Two of them include development where the "first method ... inform[s] the second ... [so] fresh perspectives emerge ...[and] expansion ... [in order to] add to the breadth and scope to the study" (p. 175). These purposes can be used to support a variety of designs that include "mixed methodology" throughout the study. In the present study, the researcher used a combination of the "dominant, less dominant" and "two-phase" (p. 189) where the questionnaire had a dominant quantitative side, but also had less dominant open-ended questions. The interviews were conducted as a second phase
of the study to both develop the idea of M.A. student inclusion in program evaluation and expand on the ideas put forth in the open-ended questions.

3.2 Subject Selection

The target population for the study was M.A. students in ESL teacher preparation programs. The M.A. students were in programs that are organized in a variety of ways at different universities. In order to collect a wider range of information, access for data collection was obtained from a variety of programs.

3.2.1 Questionnaire Sample

The target population (n=101) for the study came from the four main types of programs, which include those in English Departments, Linguistics or ESL Departments and those in a variety of departments in Colleges of Education. In many cases, the degree is earned from one of these departments with a concentration in ESL, TESOL or ESOL. All are located in four-year universities. Some programs have practicums or practice teaching and some do not. Some of the practicums are more like seminars with observations and
little actual teaching time. A Master’s thesis is required for some and not for others. All of these types of programs are represented in this study. Information about course offerings and program requirements were collected from each of the preparation programs and the TESOL Directory. This information clarified the differences in length of program, program requirements and course offerings.

The researcher did not attempt to draw any generalizations from this sample, but looked for common themes in the variety of opinions expressed. Some of the different types of programs were located within the same geographic area as the researcher (Mid-West), which eased the data collection process. However, other programs located in the northeastern, southeastern and southwestern regions of the United States were included for variety.

The preservice teachers who participated in this study were at various stages in their programs. Some had just graduated or were close to graduation in their M.A. programs, others were at the beginning of their programs. However, all have had the opportunity to experience at least part of the curriculum for their programs and could reflect on that experience. Participants were required to have already been accepted into the M.A. degree program at
the respective universities and not just taking a few courses for ESL certification. No other requirement was placed on the participants in the hope of getting a good cross-section of the population. While this study does not intend to provide generalizations, a variety of types of M.A. students gave the best chance for providing the most wide-ranging description possible.

3.2.2 Focus Group Interview Participants

On the permission slip of the questionnaire, subjects were given the opportunity to volunteer for a follow-up interview as part of a focus group and were asked to provide either a phone number or e-mail address. Those who volunteered were contacted by phone and e-mail for participation. While some subjects did not respond or could not be found, in the end, eighteen (18) preservice teachers participated in the interviews. Two other interviews were eliminated because the students were not actually M.A. candidates. The two students were only taking a few classes in order to get ESL certificates and therefore, their interest in the entire curriculum was questionable since they had not and would not experience the entire program.
3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Questionnaire Instrument

The questionnaire (Appendix B) was an adapted version of the Unyakiat (1991) survey of EFL Thai teachers and the Reynolds (1992) Teacher Educators self-esteem survey. The former aided with some of the questions as it also asked for perceptions of the subjects' teacher education. The latter provided ideas for the format of the questionnaire. The questionnaire cover page stated that all responses would be held confidential and would only be used for the purpose of contacting the subject for the present study. The questionnaire was divided into three parts. The program was identified according to the survey numbers. The respondent was identified through numbers added to the program number. For example, 01 10 221 identifies the participant as having the tenth survey from program number one. This participant is female, an international student and has little to no previous teaching experience.

The demographic questions asked students to identify their nationality and gender. It also asked whether this was their initial ESL preparation. If not, where else had they studied and at what age they had begun their ESL.
preparation. They were also asked to identify what degrees they already held, expected date of graduation from the M.A. program and whether they held a current job in the field.

The second section identified curricular components. The statements were created through the following process. Most of the course categories in this section were identified through a review of required classes in various programs according to Zhang (1990), the TESOL Directory 1989, TESOL Directory 1995, the survey in Unyakiat (1991), and the TESOL Guidelines. Some others were identified as classes common in different types of programs, but not necessarily in all ESL teacher preparation programs.

In Part two, the subjects were asked to identify the strength and/or presence of certain components in their programs' curriculum. The instructions directed the subjects to respond to fifteen statements according to a 5-point Likert scale. The participants responded to statements by identifying each with: One (1), Strongly Agree; Two (2), Agree; Three (3), NA (Neutral Answer or not applicable); Four (4), Disagree or Five (5), Strongly Disagree. Number three (3) on the scale allowed for an answer if the student had not had this type of class yet or

99
if it does not exist in his or her program. This type of Likert scale is often used for student evaluation of instruction and for that reason, most likely familiar to the participants.

The first statement reads, "I believe that my program's curriculum has the components needed to prepare me to be an ESL teacher". The general statement provides an introductory view of the subjects overall opinion of the program. The next two statements (Questions two and three) refer to a strong theoretical component and a strong practicum or student teaching component respectively. The statements provide a slightly more focused view of the programs. Statements four through fourteen refer to more specific components that might or might not be included in an ESL teacher education program. The statements refer the following components as important parts of the program's curriculum: Education Foundation, Second Language Acquisition, Theoretical Linguistics, Phonology, Phonetics, Applied Linguistics, Listening/Speaking Methodology, English Grammar Methodology, Reading/Writing methodology, English Literature, and Accent Reduction. The final
statement repeats a reference to the practicum/student teaching component as an important part of the program’s curriculum as a check on question three.

The third section contained open-ended questions where the participants could expand on several ideas. These questions were purposefully left open to interpretation to allow for a multitude of answers and therefore, a deeper description of the program. The first question asked the participants to identify what they thought their program did to best prepare them to be an ESL teacher. The second question asked them to identify anything that might be missing from the curriculum that might better prepare them. The next questions direct them toward program evaluation and their participation. Question three (3), along with follow-up questions a and b, asked the subjects to identify how they currently voice their opinions of the program, how student voices might be incorporated into an internal evaluation in an official way and how feedback might be given to the program in an unofficial way. The final question asked for a list of any benefits for the program or the M.A. student that might result from the inclusion of the M.A. student participation in the evaluation. This was
an opportunity for the participants to reflect on their particular program and prepare for an interview if she/he had signed the volunteer sheet.

The study identified perceptions of preservice ESL teachers (n=101) in different preparation programs about their respective Master's (M.A.) programs. Questionnaires were used to obtain demographic information about the participant and Likert-style questions for the evaluation of the program. Open-ended questions were added to address the inclusion of M.A. students in a program evaluation. The subjects were asked to use their evaluative experience to consider the ways in which M.A. students could be included in evaluations or reviews of the ESL teacher preparation programs and to consider the possible benefits for the M.A. program and the M.A. student.

Advantages of using a questionnaire include obtaining data from a large number of people in a relatively short period of time from different locations. A questionnaire can also provide anonymity that may encourage a larger number of and more truthful responses. Disadvantages included the threat of external validity because sampling errors may interfere with generalization of findings to population. Interpretation of questions in an anonymous
situation may not provide accurate data. Without any confirmation, the questionnaire may only provide superficial answers to research questions. The use of a questionnaire in this study was advantageous due to the fact that responses were obtained from different types of programs in four different regions of the United States. While the number of subjects is low, the variety of programs may have provided a broad range of opinions. Adversely, the ease of access and willingness to participate limited the number of subjects. Some programs were chosen due to locale in order that the researcher could distribute questionnaires and conduct some interviews in person. However, in order to increase the numbers and to have programs that represented the various types of ESL teacher education programs, the request for participation had to expand beyond the local region. The expansion required some interviews to be done over the phone. Also, the researcher was not available to distribute questionnaires to be sure that each respondent understood the directions for each section of the questionnaire due to anonymity.
3.3.2 Interview Instrument

The interview, which was designed by the researcher, was used "in search of opinions, perceptions, and attitudes ... to learn about what you cannot see" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 65). It employed some open-ended questions at the beginning of the interview that allowed for a variety of confirmation questions from the Likert-scale and the open-ended question sections of the questionnaire, as well as for the creation of questions as related to ideas that were brought up by the respondents. The second part of the interview was also semi-structured in that it included some scripted questions (Figure 1).

1. Who should be involved in creating such an internal evaluation?
2. What criteria should be included in the evaluation? Or What focus should the evaluation have?
3. What might the benefits be for both the M.A. student and the ESL teacher preparation program?

Figure 1. Scripted questions for the interviews.
The scripted questions are based on the final open-ended questions of the questionnaire that ask for ways in which M.A. student feedback might be elicited and the perceived benefits of this feedback. The questions "point to an understanding of the ... phenomenon" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 64). Question one defines whether the subject sees the participation of the M.A. students in all facets of the program evaluation as effective. Question two was built upon the questions one and two in the open-ended section of the questionnaire that asked about the best part of the program and what needed to be improved. Question three is based on the final question of the same section that asked about the possible benefits of program evaluation.

The researcher also asked all of the interview participants if there was anything else that they would like to add in terms of M.A. student participation or evaluation of an ESL teacher preparation program in general. This allowed for the subjects to add anything they had thought of after answering any, but especially the scripted, questions. This final question was deemed important, especially for the telephone interviews, during
which one cannot "read" non-verbal conversation cues, such as those when a person attempts to add or interrupt a conversation.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

This section describes the procedures used for data collection and measurement errors for the questionnaires and interviews. The document analysis, used for collecting information about core courses, is also described.

3.4.1 Mailing/Distribution Procedures for Questionnaire

An access letter (Appendix A) was sent to program directors or department chairs at eleven different programs around the United States. Once the researcher was granted permission to distribute or mail the questionnaires (Appendix B), the willingness on the part of the M.A. students to participate identified the respondents. The researcher’s goal was reached by obtaining over one hundred (100) questionnaires.
The questionnaires were distributed by the researcher and/or presiding professor of Master's-level classes at the eleven different programs, ten of which participated. The eleventh program was dropped due to lack of access and assistance from the presiding professor. The distance between the researcher and the university where the program is located was too far for the researcher to take care of the distribution personally. The researcher always requested that time be allowed to present a brief description of the research and request for participation. When it was geographically impossible for the researcher to do this, a script was provided for the cooperating instructor to read. The researcher acknowledges that the lack of personal control over the reading of instructions for the questionnaire could affect the answers.

The M.A. students were given the questionnaire at one class and asked to return it at the next class meeting in order to return questionnaires together or to return it by mail in a self-addressed stamped envelope that was provided. Any subject who also wished to participate in an interview was instructed to write his or her name, and phone number or e-mail address at the bottom of the permission form attached to each questionnaire so the
researcher could contact him or her directly. If no questionnaires from a specific program were returned within two weeks, the participating professor was contacted and asked to remind students to return the questionnaires as soon as possible. Once the questionnaires were collected, they were coded numerically according to teaching experience, nationality, gender, along with an ordinal survey number. As the researcher was not looking for generalizability, non-response error, a result of missing returns, was not as strong of a concern. However, every effort was made to achieve a respectable return rate for each program and for the sample as a whole. The overall return rate was 45%. The individual program return rates are presented in the following section of data analysis.

3.4.2 Measurement Errors in Questionnaire

Validity and reliability are of concern when speaking of error in instrument design. Validity refers to the ability of the instrument to measure what it is said to measure (Creswell, 1994, p. 121) Content validity is based on the measurement of intended content. To measure the content validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was presented in draft form to two experts who had knowledge of
the study. The questionnaire was also given to some in-service ESL teachers and doctorate program students in Foreign and Second Language Education for their feedback. After reviewing their feedback, the instrument was revised. This determined face validity, i.e., the instrument looks appropriate for an intended audience.

For reliability, Cronbach's Alpha was used to test an internal consistency of the domain of the Likert scale portion of the instrument since items in that section were all based on teacher's perceptions of various curricular components. The test was done for the whole sample. The instrument is determined to be reliable if the Cronbach's alpha is more than .5 (Cronbach, 1970). SPSS for Word was used to show the reliability coefficients for the 15 items on the Likert scale section of the questionnaire (Table 1). The results showed alpha to be .8452 and the standardized item alpha to be .8437 (n=101).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Max/Min</th>
<th>Variance</th>
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<tbody>
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Table 1. Reliability Analysis (Alpha)
Within the correlational matrix, Table 2, the reliability between questions 3 and 15, both of which asked about the strength of student teaching or practicum within the program, was also strong at .6755. The first question, "I believe that my program’s curriculum has the components needed to prepare me to be an ESL teacher", showed strong reliability in correlation with question 11 (English Grammar/Syntax Methodology) at .577, question 3 (strong practicum/student teaching) at .555 and question 15 (the practicum/student teaching component is an important part of the program’s curriculum) at .525 (Table 2). The same score (.525) was found between questions 2 and 5 (strong theoretical program and second language acquisition courses) (Table 2).
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<th></th>
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<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Q5</th>
<th>Q6</th>
<th>Q7</th>
<th>Q8</th>
<th>Q9</th>
<th>Q10</th>
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<th>Q13</th>
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Table 2: Correlational Matrix
3.4.3 Data Collection Procedure for Interviews

Respondents to the questionnaires stated whether or not they would like to volunteer for an interview on the permission sheet attached to the questionnaire. These same respondents were contacted by phone or e-mail in order of questionnaire distribution at the programs for interviews, but not all responded and some decided not to participate. Subjects who volunteered to also participate in a follow-up interview were offered a monetary incentive. While not a large sum, this incentive was initiated in order to guarantee a better response rate. The volunteers' names were placed in the lottery and one name was chosen at random from each school to win a monetary prize.

Interviews with eighteen (18) of the questionnaire respondents followed. Interviews were conducted in a semi-formal way that included some confirmation questions based on their questionnaire responses, some scripted questions, but also questions that came up during the interview. The information gathered in the interviews was transcribed and reviewed. At least one volunteer from each program, except for program 9, was interviewed. This was a very small program (only three of nine participated in the questionnaire).
These interviews were conducted both in person and over speakerphone (for long distances), but were always recorded on tape for better record keeping. The level of input varied from participant to participant, but many had strong opinions about different aspects of their preparation programs. The information sometimes had nothing to do with M.A. student involvement in program evaluation. This information may not have provided a lot of additional data for the study, but at the very least provided an outlet and a reflective opportunity for the student.

The advantage of using an interview is that confirmation of questionnaire answers could be obtained, as well as providing much more information. Interviews and other qualitative methods can bring out the "intricate details of phenomena that are difficult to convey with quantitative methods" (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 19). Interviews were identified by the questionnaire number for data presentation. This format sought individual perceptions of the programs and the idea of M.A. student participation in program evaluation. While not generalizable, the information goes into more depth describing the topic.
3.4.4 Measurement Errors in Interviews

Since the interviews followed a qualitative design, ideas of validity and reliability differ from a quantitative method. Credibility of the data gathered depended on its ability to confirm the understanding of recurrent themes. Dependability can be established by overlapping of methods. The combining of quantitative and qualitative measures can also be used for credibility (Cresswell, 1994). The researcher used an informal audit trail (Cresswell, 1994) with the information gathered from a sample of the interviews. The data gathered from the different sections of the questionnaire and from the interviews provided a type of convergence. Information related to the research questions was highlighted and recurrent themes were written in the margins. A colleague of the researcher examined the interview transcripts without highlight and then identified the findings as confirmable, i.e., logically derived from the data. Cresswell (1994) also states that external validity can be addressed through limited generalizability as viewed from the "categories or themes [that] emerge from the data" (p. 159). These recurrent themes in the interviews can also be used in reference credibility. While the uniqueness of
individuals' perceptions from the ten different programs "mitigates against replicating [the study] exactly in another context" (p. 159), the themes appear across program type for external validity.

3.4.5 Document Analysis

A document analysis of course offerings, required and elective, and a comparison of the programs' content and the TESOL Guidelines for the Certification and Preparation of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages in the United States (TESOL Guidelines) was used as a means to compare the programs. The focus on required courses and practicum or student teaching emphasizes the diversity of the programs, while looking for commonalities that may exist among the different program designs.
3.5 Data Analysis

The data from the questionnaires and interviews were analyzed separately and together in order to find recurrent themes and comments from the questionnaire and interview transcripts.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used for data analysis using SPSS Version for Windows. The responses were compared with interview data for further discussion.

3.5.1.1 Part One

Part one of the questionnaire asked for demographic information about the students (Table 2). It included questions about previous educational experience and whether or not this was the student’s first time to study teaching English as a second language. The statistics are completely nominal, but add to the rich description of the various programs and the subjects.
## PART ONE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE (EIGHT QUESTIONS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SCALE OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Ratio</td>
<td>Mean, Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>frequency, percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Degree</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>Frequency, percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Experience</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>Frequency, percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial ESL preparation</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>Frequency, percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Job</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
<td>Frequency, percentage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Descriptive statistics and scales of measurement for demographic data in questionnaire.

### 3.5.1.2 Part Two

Descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, mean and variability (standard deviation and range) were used for data analysis using SPSS for Windows for the Likert-scale section (Table 3). The fifteen statements asked for the M.A. students' perceptions of various aspects of their respective programs' curricula. Perceptions of curriculum are reported by program and for the entire sample.
Table 4: Descriptive statistics used for data analysis for Part Two of the Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part Two of the Questionnaire (15 Questions)</th>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of Teacher Education Program Curriculum</td>
<td>Mean, standard deviation, frequency, range.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5.1.3 Part 3

In part three, the written answers to open-ended questions were used to find recurrent themes in relationship to curriculum, program evaluation, student participation and benefits for program and student. The data were compared to find support for questionnaire responses. Data are presented in-text and in short and long quotes.

3.5.2 Interview

The data gathered during the interview process clarified or provided backing for Parts Two and Three of the questionnaire data. After reviewing the transcription of the interviews, the researcher continued the quest for recurrent themes and reflected on what the subjects had written providing an initial direction for the interview. There was also possible expansion of description or explanation of answers provided in the questionnaire.
During the interviews, the researcher reflected on the meaning of what the participants were saying and asked confirmation questions when participants finished answering the scripted questions. Data are presented in-text or block quotes.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents findings from statistical analyses of the data collected from questionnaires, interviews and document analysis. Descriptive statistics were used for Parts One and Two of the questionnaire. Frequency statistics were used to describe the demographic data in Part One. With a Likert-scale format, Part Two is described by means and standard deviations. Qualitative analysis was used for Part Three of the questionnaire and for the interviews. Recurrent themes and important topics as related to research questions were discussed based on written information from the questionnaires, transcriptions of interviews and various documents from the programs themselves and from TESOL.
4.1 Description of Programs

In the following descriptions, the programs are described by type of degree, regional location, basic degree requirements including practice teaching requirements and whether there is an Intensive English program (IEP) on campus. The information was drawn mostly from leaflets and pamphlets provided by the programs and the TESOL Directory (1999). Some specific information about the IEP and possible practicum or student teaching for the Master's degree (M.A.) students was drawn from the short-answers on the questionnaires and the interviews. An overall view (Table 5) summarizes the findings, but specific requirements are given in-text.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program #</th>
<th>1 (n=14)</th>
<th>2 (n=9)</th>
<th>3 (n=10)</th>
<th>4 (n=7)</th>
<th>5 (n=11)</th>
<th>6 (n=4)</th>
<th>7 (n=12)</th>
<th>8 (n=19)</th>
<th>9 (n=3)</th>
<th>10 (n=13)</th>
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<td>33 semester</td>
<td>36 semester</td>
<td>33-36 semester</td>
<td>33-39 semester</td>
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<td>Recommended</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
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<td>Optional</td>
<td>Or Thesis</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Or Thesis</td>
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<td>5; electives in other departments</td>
<td>7; various electives</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>6 plus 12 credit-hours in Linguistics</td>
<td>5 shared required classes</td>
<td>6 shared required classes</td>
<td>6 (25 hours in TESOL)</td>
<td>8 (21 units in TESOL)</td>
<td>7 (plus 6 credits in Education)</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (if no prior experience)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Availability of IEP for Practice Teaching</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Some graduate students</td>
<td>Some graduate students</td>
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<td>East</td>
<td>South</td>
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<td>East</td>
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</table>

Table 5: Program Description Summary.
Program number one (#1; n=14) offers an M.A. in Linguistics with a concentration in Applied Linguistics and TESOL at a university in the Midwest. It requires 75-quarter hours, competence in a foreign language (English for non-native speakers), practice teaching, and a thesis or an extensive research project. However, a comprehensive exam is not required. There are thirteen required courses including common Linguistics courses such as, Introduction to Linguistics, Phonology and Syntax. Other required courses include Theories of Language Learning and TESOL Methodology, Introduction to Graduate Studies and Research in Linguistics. There is an Intensive English Program (IEP) on campus and some graduate students are able to do their practice teaching there.

The second program (#2; n=9) is at a larger university in the Midwest and offers an M.A. in TESOL within the College of Education. It requires 50-quarter hours. Competence in a foreign language is recommended for native speakers of English (English for non-native speakers is sufficient). In this program, a comprehensive examination or thesis is optional. There are only five required courses in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), Methods of teaching English, Syllabus Design, Materials of Instruction
and Second Language Testing. Electives are available in the following departments: English, Linguistics (mainly theoretical), Anthropology and within the College of Education in Literacy and elementary school Language Arts. While the licensure program, the M.A.T., does have student teaching, there is no requirement for practical teaching experience for the M.A. degree. There is an IEP on this campus, however, no connection is made at the M.A. level. Students studying in the M.A.T. program can also take some of the ESL classes, but are formally in elementary or secondary education programs and take these classes for ESL endorsements on their Ohio teaching certification.

Program number three (#3; n=10) offers an M.A. in TESOL from the Department of Linguistics from a university in the Midwest. Its requirements include 32-38 semester hours, competence in a foreign language (English for nonnative speakers), practice teaching, and a comprehensive exam or thesis. The seven required courses in this program are: General Linguistics, Phonetics, TESOL Theory and Methods, Pedagogical Grammar, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), Oral Practicum and Written Practicum. Electives are available in testing, English for Specific Purposes (ESP, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and in
Materials. This program specifically states that it is linked to the IEP on campus, making practice teaching assignments easier.

Program number four (#4; n=7) offers an M.A. with a TESL concentration from the English Department at a small university in the Midwest. This program requires 33 semester hours, an internship and supervised practicum. The courses offered in this small program are: Teaching of Writing, Modern English Linguistics, Language Variation, Theories in TESL, Resources and Research in TESL, Applied Syntax, Applied Phonology and Methods in TESL. The university has an IEP and students usually get experience there and in Freshman Composition courses. Comprehensive exams and participation in testing and placement are all required. It is also recommended that the student have competence in another language.

The fifth program (#5; n=11) is in the Department of Teaching and Leadership at a university in the Midwest. It offers a Master’s in Education (M.Ed.), which requires 36 semester credits and recommends competence in a foreign language for native English speakers (English for non-native speakers). M.A. students are required to take 12-credit hours of linguistics course work along with Methods
of TESOL, SLA, Second Language Testing, ESL/Bilingual Education Practicum, Foundations of Curriculum and Instruction, and Introduction to Educational Research. Practice teaching is required for those students with no prior teaching experience and all students must pass comprehensive exams. There is no IEP on this campus.

Program six (#6; n=4) is located in a small university in the Midwest offering an M.Ed. in ESL in tandem with the Departments of English and Curriculum and Instruction or an M.A. in English with a concentration in ESL. The former has more basic Education required courses and is generally for those who want ESL K-12 certification; the latter focuses more on linguistics for those who wish to teach at the college level or overseas. The two programs share classes such as, Issues in Second Language Instruction, Applied Linguistics Research and Theory I and II and Seminar in English Instruction. The M.A. program requires 6-semester hours from English, Linguistics, Curriculum and Instruction or Instructional Technology. Between the two 33-36 semester hours, competency in a foreign language (English for non-native speakers), practice teaching and a thesis are required. There is an IEP on this campus also.
Program seven (#7; n=12) is located in the Northeast and offers an M.A. or a Master's of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) in TESOL through the university's Department of Language and Foreign Studies and the School of Education. This program requires 33-39 semester hours, practice teaching and a comprehensive exam. Competence in another language is recommended. The M.A. program also requires a portfolio based on work and research completed during the program. The M.A.T. program is designed for those with previous experience in education and provides certification in K-12. The two programs share courses such as, Principles of Linguistics, Theory and Practice of English Language Teaching I and II, SLA, Cultural Issues in the ESL/EFL classroom, ESL/EFL Reading and Writing as required courses. Language Teaching and Testing is required for the M.A.T. and is listed as an elective for the M.A. There is an IEP on this campus.

The eighth program (#8; n=19) offers a Master's in Science (M.S.) in TESL from the Department of Applied Linguistics and ESL at a university in the Southeast. It requires 36 semester hours, of which 25 are required to be in TESL. The six required courses are Approaches to Teaching ESL, English Grammar/Pedagogical Grammar,
Intercultural Communication, General Linguistics, SLA and Sound System of English. A practicum, a portfolio of one's teaching experience, and documentation of professional development are also required. It also requires a foreign language for those who have not already studied one (English suffices for non-native speakers of English). There is an IEP on this campus.

Program number nine (#9; n=3) has an M.A. in TESL which is offered through the department of Linguistics and Language Development at a university in the Southwest. It requires 30 units, 21 of which must be in TESOL. It also requires competence in a foreign language for native speakers of English. English Structures for Teaching I and II, SLA, Intercultural Communication and SLA, Methods and Materials for TESOL, Curriculum and Assessment in TESOL and a Practicum in TESOL are all required courses in the program. The M.A. students must also do practice teaching and complete a thesis or comprehensive exam. An IEP is located on this university's campus.

The tenth program (#10; n=13) offers an M.A. in TESL from the Department of Speech and Communication at an Eastern university. Students are required to take 36 credits, have competence in another language (English meets
this requirement for non-native speakers of English), and do practice teaching, a Master's paper and a comprehensive exam. The seven required courses are SLA Theory, TESL, Introduction to Applied Linguistics, Linguistic Structures for ESL, American English Phonetics, Cross-cultural Communication or Communication in Second Language Classrooms an Internship/Supervised College Teaching. The students must also complete 6 credits chosen from a prescribed list of courses in the College of Education. There is also an IEP on this campus.

Program eleven (#11) was contacted several times and an instructor initially offered to hand out and return the surveys. However, the surveys were never returned and further contact revealed that the surveys were never handed out to potential subjects. This is an M.A. program in an Applied Linguistics Department at a southern university is rather large; however, the distance made personal involvement next to impossible. There is no further reference to this program.
4.1.1 Program Required Courses

The following table, Table 6, illustrates the different types of required courses in the different preparation programs. The names of the courses are not always the same, but similar enough to put together. For example, Introduction to Linguistics, Principles of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics are all marked under Introduction to Applied Linguistics. Programs number 6 and 7 have Master's degrees with an ESL concentration and M.A.'s in Education (M.Ed.) or M.A.T programs. When there was more than one track possible in a program, "M" was used to refer to a requirement in M.A. track, "E" for the M.A.T./M.Ed. track, and "B" when the course was required in both tracks. For the other programs that only have one degree, an "X" is used to represent a required course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Course/Program</th>
<th>#1</th>
<th>#2</th>
<th>#3</th>
<th>#4</th>
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<th>#8</th>
<th>#9</th>
<th>#10</th>
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<td>Intro. Applied Ling.</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>Second Language</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>

Table 6. Required Courses by Program
The most common required courses, as seen in this tally are: Second Language Acquisition and some sort of introductory Linguistics course (Table 6). The least common required courses were in Semantics, Adolescent Development and Foundations of Education for Exceptional Children, which were tallied under credits in Linguistics or Education. Semantics is required in Program 1 and the other two courses are required in programs 6 and 7 respectively.

Programs with similar departments often had like requirements. For example, all of the programs within or with ties to Colleges of Education except for program #10 (Communication & Education) have a Second Language Testing although that program also has an elective course available in Language Assessment. Programs 2, 5 and 6 also have some sort of Curriculum or Syllabus Design course not required in the other types of programs. Applied Linguistics M.A. programs all have a variety of Linguistics-related courses, such as Syntax, Phonology or Linguistic/ Language Analysis. Program #9 does not require specific courses but instead, offers a variety of courses from which students may choose. English Department M.A. programs, 4 and 6, are an interesting mix of the courses offered in the other
programs. These two programs were among the four that offer an introductory course in Research. Practicums were not included in the table because of the vast difference in the realization of this requirement. While the term always refers to some type of field experience, in some programs, practicums are supervised and sometimes include a seminar class. In other cases, the practicum is more like practice teaching and the student has very little supervision.

4.2 Demographic Information of Participants

This section describes the demographic characteristics of the sample of 101 M.A. students in English as a second language teacher preparation programs. While 103 questionnaires were returned, two were deemed unusable due to the students' status in the program. As stated before, these students were not officially in the respective M.A. programs and only taking a few courses for a certificate. However, this still left a respectable return rate of 45% (n=101/225). As the questionnaires were offered in
required courses and open-sampling was employed, it is not likely that the non-returned would have substantially altered the overall results.

4.2.1 Questionnaire Participants

The first section of the questionnaire asked for basic demographic information of the participants in order to view any great diversity or homogeneity. Most respondents were females (n=80) and from the United States (n=80) and are in their initial preparation in ESL. The average age of the subjects when they began their initial ESL teacher preparation is about 28 years. Most have some teaching experience, but the type and amount vary. All have finished a bachelor’s degree, 15 (15%) have already earned a previous Master’s degree. While the majority (54%) of the subjects do not have a current job, those who do are most likely counting their practicum or student teaching according to comments in later interviews.

The following table, Table 7, provides an overview of the demographic information of the participants.
Table 7: Demographic characteristics of entire sample.

Program number one (#1), as you can see in Table 8 below, runs fairly close to the average (Table 7). Of the 14 respondents from this program, 13 are from the United States and only one is an international student. All have a four-year degree and one also has an M.A. in a different field. In this program, those who state that they have a current job are referring to a graduate teaching assistantship.
Survey Number | Country | Gender | Initial Prep. | Age Began | Exper. Teach. | High Degree | Job Now |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
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<td>US</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
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<td>24</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 US</td>
<td>Int'l</td>
<td>2 M</td>
<td>6=Y</td>
<td>M=26</td>
<td>10 Y</td>
<td>14 B</td>
<td>10 Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 F</td>
<td></td>
<td>8=N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 N</td>
<td>1 MA</td>
<td>4 N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Demographics for Program #1

Some subjects preferred not to answer some demographic information. This is represented by an asterix (*) in the table (Table 9). Respondent nine (9) from Program 2 is an example of this situation. This respondent, as will be seen in the data analysis section, was very negative about Program #2 and may have been worried about identification. The respondent did not volunteer for an interview, but completed the questionnaire and added a page long letter about her displeasure with the program. The focus was on the lack of practical training and on courses listed, but never offered. Interestingly, future omissions of age almost always came from International students.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Number</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Initial Prep.</th>
<th>Age Began</th>
<th>Exper. Teach.</th>
<th>High Degree</th>
<th>Job Now</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>BA</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>British</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>BA</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Int.*</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>BA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>US</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
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<td>7 F</td>
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<td>M = 25.25</td>
<td>6=Y</td>
<td>8=BA</td>
<td>1=Y</td>
</tr>
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<td>2 M</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3=N</td>
<td>1=MA</td>
<td>8=N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*International Student. Country and age not identified at request of participant.

Table 9: Demographics from Program #2

In Tables 10 (Program 3), 12 (Program 6), 13 (Program 7) and 14 (program 8), five international and two US respondents did not fill in their highest degree attained. One can understand that the international students may have been confused about the equivalent degree in "American" terms. The only other information not given was about current jobs from two international students. Again, this might have been confusion about what to consider, "a job", just as some American respondents wrote "yes" when speaking of the practicum or student teaching. It was in these cases that the clarification and additional questions during an interview helped.
Table 10: Demographics for Program 3

Program 4 subjects were unusual in that most (six out of seven) had no experience teaching and only one (not the experienced teacher) was currently working (Table 11).

Table 11: Demographics Program #4
The respondents of Program 5 had a higher mean age at which they began their initial preparation, even with two missing responses. The three oldest participants state that this is their initial ESL preparation, possibly signifying a career change or re-entering the workforce. Respondents 04 and 14 specifically write that they have been teaching in between their B.A. and the beginning of this program (Table 12).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Number</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Initial Prep.</th>
<th>Age Began</th>
<th>Exper. Teach.</th>
<th>High Degree</th>
<th>Job Now</th>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>MS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>US</td>
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<td>BA</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td>MA</td>
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<td>US</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>39</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>3=MA</td>
<td>7=N</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Information not given by participant

Table 12: Demographics Program #5

Program Six (6) was unusual in its especially small size and the larger number of international student responses (Table 13) as compared to the average of 20%
(Table 7). The non-response to the question about the subject’s highest degree earned is similar to program 3 (see Tables 10 and 13).

<table>
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<th>Gender</th>
<th>Initial Prep.</th>
<th>Age Began</th>
<th>Exper. Teach.</th>
<th>High Degree</th>
<th>Job Now</th>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>British</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>N=4</td>
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<td>4 F</td>
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<td>M=</td>
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<td>1=N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Information not given by participant

Table 13: Demographics from Program #6

Program 7 also had a higher age of initial preparation. Four of the five respondents over 30 years of age state that this is their initial ESL preparation (See Table 14). Two of these same respondents wrote on the questionnaire that they have previous degrees in Education. One had a degree in Engineering and the other two did not identify their degrees. The program’s percentage of international-American and male-female ratios, however, is fairly equal to the entire sample (See Tables 7 and 14).
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Country</th>
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<td>9</td>
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N=12 9=US 9=F 9=Y M= 7=Y 7=BA/S 4=Y 3=Int. 3=M 3=N 33.6 5=N 4=MA/S 7=N

*Information not given by participant

Table 14: Demographics from Program #7

As seen in Table 15, Program 8, with the highest number of responses, also had a high number subjects say that they have a current job. Of these 12 subjects, all but two are ESL-related. All of the ten remaining identified their job as part-time or as a graduate teaching assistant. Program 8 appears fairly average (Table 7) in terms of nationality, gender and teaching experience.
Program 9, another small program, with only three responses, is represented by only female, American respondents (Table 16). According to added information on the questionnaire, they all have jobs at the university.

Table 15: Demographics from Program #8

Table 16: Demographics from Program #9

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Program 10, a program with required practice teaching, has very few respondents with current jobs (Table 17). The two subjects who did respond "yes", explained that they were working as teaching assistants. The one subject in Program 10 who has a graduate degree has both an M.A. in history and an M.Ed. in Special Education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Number</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Initial Prep.</th>
<th>Age Began</th>
<th>Exper. Teach.</th>
<th>High Degree</th>
<th>Job Now</th>
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Table 17: Demographics from Program #10
4.3 Research Question 1:

"Do preservice ESL teachers see student input as an effective part of teacher education program evaluation?"

This question was addressed in the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and during the interviews. Respondents usually volunteered information about student feedback in program evaluation on the questionnaire when asked about ways in which M.A. student voices might be incorporated into an internal evaluation. Other comments were made during the interviews at two points: first, when the participants were asked about the hypothetical committee that would create an internal program evaluation; and, sometimes, at the end when they were given the opportunity to add any comments about student feedback and program evaluation. The questionnaire responses were all written by the subjects themselves. The interview responses were recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. The responses for both were grouped according to theme; and those responses that contained more description or provided reasoning were chosen to be representative.
4.3.1 Questionnaire responses

The questionnaire responses to the idea of M.A. student feedback varied in length as well as expectation. The idea of effectiveness sometimes related to doubts of being taken seriously or confidentiality. In connection to the need of anonymity, comments divulged the students' hesitancy to be completely honest or open because they worried about possible consequences in the future. The various comments did not follow program type or size.

4.3.1.2 Common Concerns about Written Feedback

Students were sometimes concerned with the evaluations being taken seriously. Respondent 0735 wrote, as did others, that written evaluations (and not just scan-tron teaching evaluations) should be read thoroughly and taken seriously by the administration. (The underlined emphasis is the respondent's.) Similarly, in describing various ways that her program currently includes students' voices, respondent 0122 wrote, "We do course/instructor evaluations, but I don't know that anyone cares". The feeling of futility was repeated in responses from other programs. Respondent 0402 felt that
It [internal evaluation] is problematic. It’s difficult to offer constructive criticism when, due to the smallness of the program, you can’t remain anonymous. You need your professor’s help and recommendations in the future. Course/Teacher evaluations are a joke. Unofficial [feedback to the program] would be ok, too (if it works). (0402)

The comment from respondent 0402 also touched on the lack of confidentiality for the students. Anonymity was a definite plus for some respondents. Students knew that they would have to go to these professors in the future and did not want to alienate themselves. Respondent 0107 wrote, “Some second year students expressed their unwillingness to be honest because they wanted good recommendations“. Respondents 1005, 1004 0903, 0111, 0115, and 0104 all expressed the need for anonymity, honesty, future recommendations, or safety. Respondent 0903 wrote about safety in this comment, “Everything must be kept confidential and they [the students] must feel respected and safe“. The need for safety, although not completely explained could refer to not only recommendations, but also to grading.
The responses that included comments about serious consideration, anonymity or confidentiality showed a definite skepticism of the value of student feedback. Some of these respondents, while not completely unwilling to imagine the possibility that evaluations might have a positive effect, suggested that their feedback as M.A. students would not be very effective in the evaluation process. The lack of action from course/instructor evaluations influenced some of these respondents.

There were other respondents who were pessimistic about standardized evaluations, but not so with a less unofficial evaluation. For example, respondent 0205 felt that the questions that are asked in typical evaluations “are carefully selected and limit our response or criticism”. Her comment was then tempered with the addition that “some lecturers offer their own ‘open’ evaluation sheets—those are more useful”. Respondent 0407 also felt that more personal contact is better. She stated, “my program is small and confronting the three professors in it is an effective way of being heard”. These comments show some skepticism, as well as some varied opinions among the respondents. However, they leave room for some positive effects of student feedback in program evaluation.
4.3.1.3 Optimistic and Pessimist Responses

There were respondents who were more optimistic about an internal program evaluation. Some referred to current practices in their own programs, while others spoke hypothetically. Respondent 0503 stated,

Our professors are always open to feedback from the students. There is always an official evaluation from each class. However, most instructors encourage students to contact them via e-mail to voice our (sic) concerns...I feel the e-mail provides the instructor with an appropriate official evaluation...This also allows the students to get the answers they asked for. Students at my university take the evaluations seriously because we know our instructors take them into account for the next semester.

(0503)

It is obvious that this student has had a more positive experience with these written and oral types of feedback. Respondents 0317 and 1018 referred to current student representation on departmental committees and alumni surveys respectively as effective ways to include M.A. students in an internal evaluation. They both felt that the students’ opinions were thoughtfully considered since the respective departments purposefully sought them out.
Other hypothetical comments included a statement from respondent 1009. He said, "I think it may be useful, although it depends more on the motivation of the faculty/administration on the value placed on the evaluation than on the format of evaluation". Respondent 0728 stated that the department already provides course evaluations, but he wishes "a student committee were created to help make hiring/tenure decisions". He also "knew of other graduate programs that allow such unofficial feedback at student/faculty dinners held each semester for the purpose of discussing the direction of the program and students’ concerns". Such references show an awareness of the idea of student inclusion in evaluation prior to the questionnaire.

The optimistic comments, although fewer and perhaps not as strong, show that students are interested in participating in the process and feel that the process could be effective. As Respondent 0413 said, it "would be beneficial...I like to offer. Most of them [professors] seem to value the information and make changes". The responses, whether from personal experience or hypothetical, also point out that the feedback needs to be taken seriously.
4.3.2 Interview responses to M.A. student feedback

The interview responses, while more detailed, were just as diverse as the responses on the questionnaires. There were those who were very skeptical and those who saw promise or current benefits. Some themes from the questionnaires repeated themselves in the interviews. Anonymity and serious consideration were two of these themes.

4.3.2.1 Common Concerns about Oral Feedback

Respondents from Program 1 stated that “Exit Interviews” and a curriculum committee are already in place, however, they did not have much faith in either of these methods due to the fact that many M.A. students “refuse to give the department any honest negative feedback because they still need recommendations and reference letters to secure jobs in the field” (0112). Respondent 0302 felt that the whole question of evaluation is a sensitive area because students feel restrained and do not always write down what they think.

I have real mixed feelings about student evaluations and anonymous evaluations in general. I guess that studies have shown
that it's fairly accurate, the information that is derived. But I think there's a real restraint on the students even if they're anonymous... And I also think that there's a, with the anonymity, the teacher can be placed in a difficult position of maybe making the course easier so they'll get a high evaluation...from the student's perspectives, if they were sure that it was anonymous, they might be forthcoming, but from the faculty perspective an anonymous person can write down anything for any reason if they have a grudge...I think it's a touchy area. Personally, I'm not crazy about it. (0302)

One respondent from Program 5, while positive about getting her own opinion heard, tempered the comment with suggestions about the effectiveness of M.A. student feedback.

I think it would have to be taken seriously and I think it would have to be put forth to the grad students in that manner because too many times it's just fill in the bubbles and you don't feel like anyone is going to get back to you about how you felt about it...some feedback and a genuine effort to say...we're actually going to listen to what you say. Please do this because we do want to do something with it. (0520)
Another interviewee from program 3 did not like the idea of an internal evaluation and thought that a professional should do an external one.

I think that type of evaluation should be done by someone who does that kind of stuff. Not directly related to the program. I don’t think an internal thing like that would be as effective. (0317)

Respondent 0606 had similar concerns about internal evaluations, but expanded more to question the basis of the possible problems. She was also deeply concerned about "getting both teachers and students to think a little more critically about the system...about education, the whole process of education" and it shows in her response to evaluations.

Listening to you talk right now you said, there are evaluations to see if goals are being met, and I’m wondering who is setting the goals in the first place. Not just who is evaluating...it’s great to have a student representative and to have them included and we hear their voices, but when it comes right down to it, the student’s voice doesn’t mean anything...it just doesn’t change the reality that students are in subordinate positions to professors and politics always win out. (0606)
4.3.2.2 Specific Suggestions for Oral Feedback

On the other hand, some had more positive comments. Respondent 0317 was more optimistic about M.A. student feedback through more informal avenues. In response to a problem with a particular course, the researcher asked, "How did you get that information to the administration?" A Program 3 subject responded,

Well, through the evaluations...I don't know if it has ever formally been given to the administration, but teachers hear students talk... And that's one thing that I respect about the administration here. They hear, listen to the students and take our suggestions. (0317)

She continued with other suggestions:

There are several ways at X that we have, that we can talk about the program. Maybe a more informal way, as students, we do feel comfortable going to the director of the Linguistics department and talking to him directly. Also, if we don't want to burn any bridges that way, we can also go through the Linguistics Student Association. And we have student reps that belong on different committees. (0112)
Her response suggests that some informal, oral feedback may be more effective, or at the very least, get the M.A. student feedback to the administration. Respondent 0520, who had some reservations about the current implementation of course evaluations, prefers a one-on-one approach to getting one’s opinion heard and suggests “you certainly have to do something where you interview the students or find out their opinions” (0520).

Respondent 1014 felt that a discussion group would be very effective in relaying opinions for a program evaluation.

I think people could help each other. And sometimes you don’t think of something, but when someone else voices it, you have an opinion...I think there’s a lot to be said for teachers and students being face to face having real conversations where students feel that they are part of this process and not just a round table...Ultimately there are people in this program that could go on to be in that position that could be beneficial in the process [evaluation]. (1014)

An international student from program 3 stated that students could take action rather than criticize.
The students are always complaining. They always have an idea and often have experience. I think they can really add something. ... I don't know if they call it a union or what. They have an organization within the department. And I guess they could come up with some ideas. (0305)

The respondent sees an organization already in place that could act as a liaison or even create a forum to assist in squelching some of the complaints.

An interview participant from program 2 felt that the current course evaluations might already provide good information. However, a more effectual way of including students might be alumni surveys or questionnaires.

A student evaluation may help them see if they are meeting students' needs. I would assume they would get information from course evaluations ... Perhaps, after graduation, they would send out a survey to re-evaluate the program. I got one from my program at X. (0201)

The interview responses were both skeptical and accepting of the student feedback. The latter included more comments of individual contact with professors, group meetings, or alumni surveys. However, the theme of anonymity is still present through the comments of not wanting to burn bridges (respondent 0112) and
confidentiality via student representatives. Overall, the respondents seem to think that the feedback could be effectual as long as the information is taken into serious account by the faculty and program administration.

4.4 Research Question 1A

"In what ways can this input be incorporated into an internal evaluation?"

Information for this question was initially incorporated in the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to identify specific ways in which M.A. students' voices might be incorporated into an internal evaluation and also the possibility of unofficial (i.e. informal) feedback. The responses given below describe suggestions for written and oral or other types of student feedback. In the interviews, subjects were asked to clarify the questionnaire answers. The subjects were also told about a hypothetical committee that would create and implement an internal program evaluation. They considered how including student feedback might benefit students and the program through this evaluation.
4.4.1 Questionnaire Responses

Respondents often suggested written feedback in the forms of questionnaires, surveys and other types of written evaluations in their responses to the open-ended questions. This type of feedback is already familiar to the respondents in the form of course evaluations that usually allow for open-ended comments, as well as multiple-choice answers. Some of the subjects also suggested oral or conversational-style feedback in both formal and informal ways.

4.4.1.2 Written Feedback Suggestions

Respondents 0303, 0210 and 0720 suggested written evaluations done throughout the program by current students, as well as alumni as one way to have the student voices heard. Respondent 0303 suggested that the program might “survey the students a year later to see how well the preparation is serving them”. A longitudinal study was suggested by several who suggested written evaluations throughout the program and not just at the end of a course.
Respondent 0123 recommended the suggestions from the questionnaire "be considered by the curriculum committee". Respondent 0834 lauded his program by citing its action. "In considering changes for our department's curriculum, there was a survey on listserv to which graduate students responded" (0834). These very specific examples were echoed by other comments that suggested that any written evaluation or suggestions be taken seriously.

In order to get the student voices heard, several students from Program 7 proposed written evaluations of the program in contrast to the "scan-tron" type used for course evaluations. Respondents 0722 and 0733 suggested a needs assessment "as a part of any curriculum review" (0722).

There seems to be precedence and approval of some evaluation that integrates the use of computer technology. For example, respondent 0828 suggested a questionnaire on the program website. Respondent 0503 wrote, "most instructors encourage students to contact them via e-mail to voice our concerns"; and 0101 suggested a "simple evaluation or even suggestion boxes where ideas could be submitted anonymously, or even electronically".

In addition to a more formal survey or questionnaire, there were those who suggested other types of written
Feedback e.g. informal notes in a suggestion box or journals. Respondent 1010 suggests that M.A. student voices might be incorporated into an internal evaluation by giving opportunities of writing (or evaluating) courses in essay form. With these essays, professors think of their teaching and things to be improved. (1010)

Respondent 0514 adds that M.A. students could "keep a journal about the classes (voluntary to those willing to do it)" as another written form of feedback.

The variety of written feedback suggested by the subjects includes both formal and informal avenues of communication with the program administration. Participants still very concerned with anonymity believed that this is best achieved through written, whether pen and paper-based or electronically submitted.

4.4.1.3 Oral Feedback Suggestions

Some responses on the questionnaires referred to oral feedback. Some wrote about a conversational approach to student feedback. Several respondents felt that a direct, but informal exchange would be effective in an internal evaluation.
M.A. students should always have an opportunity to voice their opinions, suggestions or complaints. Rather than an official evaluation I would prefer an informal gathering where students and faculty can sit down together and voice their opinions about the program and its future direction. (1013)

Both group and individual exchanges in some type of interview format were referred to in these kinds of responses.

There were others who believed a more organized gathering would be effective. Student representation on a departmental committee rather than individual feedback was one suggestion. Respondent 0838 wrote that student representation on department committees can "foster development of the program and professional service". Respondent 0901 also preferred a more formal version and stated,

I think that the department should take the responsibility and arrange a meeting of some sort to poll the students in the program, as well as elicit feedback from former students about the quality of the program in order to improve it. (0901)

Respondents 0729, 0202, 0517 and 0835 all refer to some kind of meeting between students, faculty and/or program
administration on a regular basis to discuss the program as a whole.

Whether written or oral, formal or informal, the questionnaire responses seemed to see the department as the organizer and the students as the volunteers. The more common suggestions for student feedback included, questionnaires and student representation, while less common, but nonetheless interesting comments included journals and informal gatherings.

4.4.2 Focus Group Interview responses

Interview volunteers suggested both written and oral feedback including students' voices in a program evaluation. This information came through when they were clarifying some of their questionnaire responses, but some expanded upon their ideas as well.

4.4.2.1 Written Feedback Suggestions

Respondents from 6, 7 and 8 all said that comments could be given on course evaluations or separate program evaluation forms could be created. Respondents 0606 and 0703 stated that the program information must be seen by the program evaluation and then "take some action". In
addition, respondents in programs 1 and 2 suggested that the surveys be given to students in the middle and end of their program. Respondent 0111 said,

I think feedback at different times would help. At the end of the second year, people are focused on looking for jobs not looking back. At the end of the first year, you are still in a position to benefit. (0111)

On the other hand, Respondent 0204 added an alumni option, as he had experienced in an undergraduate teaching education program. He believed that “[a] student evaluation may help them see if they are meeting students’ needs...Perhaps after graduation. They would send out a survey to re-evaluate the program”.

Other written suggestions included using e-mail or letters. Some of these responses referred to anonymity because of “the issue ... of the students being honest if they have to continue working with the professor” (Respondent 1011). Others recommended that the program could elicit feedback from the students “in many different formats: anonymously or not...written or verbal” (1011). Respondent 0403 also liked the idea of using both oral or
written feedback, but also suggested using a third party, "someone from the outside... ask some questions and get some feedback". (0403)

4.4.2.2 Oral Feedback Suggestions

Oral feedback was also suggested in a variety of ways. Some respondents talked about "Exit Interviews" and student representation on department committees. Others spoke about individual and group meetings among the students and faculty. Interview volunteers from Programs 1 and 3 commented on the "Exit Interviews" and a curriculum committee with student representation. Respondent 0317 seemed quite proud to offer the following.

And that's one thing that I respect about the administration here. They hear, listen to the students and take our suggestions... There are several ways at X that we have, that we can talk about the program. Maybe a more informal way, as students we do feel comfortable going to the director of the linguistics department and talking to him directly... Also if we don't want to burn any bridges that way, we can also go through the Linguistics Student Association. And we have student reps (sic) that belong on different committees, for example the executive council. And if it were really necessary, the rep of that committee could bring up that issue. (0317)
Respondent 0123 suggested "face-to-face interviews", as did respondents 1014 and 0520. Respondent 1011 also supported an exit interview "so students wouldn't hold back, but it should also be done throughout the program".

Whether the respondents felt that conversations between professors and students should be on a formal or more informal basis, they felt oral feedback would help the students' voices be heard. Interview participant 0606 believes the best reason to have an oral feedback option is because I think people can explain their thoughts more thoroughly in a verbal situation. Then if the interviewer or whoever is listening doesn't understand anything they can ask for clarification. They can get a more thorough understanding rather than a written one where it could be interpreted in a number of different ways. (0606)

Confidentiality was seen as a drawback to the oral feedback, but if done, respondent 1014 suggested a discussion group could be effective.

I think people could help each other. And sometimes you don't think of something, but when someone else voices it, you have an opinion, either similarly or conversely. I think there's a lot
to be said for teachers and students being face-to-face, having real conversations where students feel that they are part of this process. Let’s sit around a table and really kick this stuff around and hear … from a student’s point of view.

Respondent 0520 agreed, but preferred a one-on-one conversation with her professors. She said that her usual action is to just speak with the professor if there was something on her mind. If students are not willing to do this, she felt they “are almost powerless … I think the whole institution thing strikes a lot of fear into some people … it’s either help yourself or stop” complaining.

There did not seem to be common ground among the interview volunteers on the oral feedback. It was as diverse as the focus group of interview volunteers. Formal discussion groups and individual meetings with professors or other faculty were all suggested.

4.4.3 Internal evaluation committee and M.A. feedback

The interviews also provided the focus group with a hypothetical situation of creating an internal evaluation committee. After describing the possibility of an internal program evaluation committee, the researcher asked each participant about the types of people that might be on the
committee and ways in which student feedback could be elicited by the committee.

Some respondents had difficulty with the make-up of the committee and the researcher was conscious of the influence she might have on the responses. The scripted question was: "Who should be involved in such an internal evaluation?". There was sometimes a follow-up question that encouraged volunteers to expand upon their answers. After the first suggestion, usually types of professors, the researcher would ask if anyone else should be on the committee. This may be the reason for most of the committees having either current or former student representation. However, there were those who suggested M.A. students first, making the inclusion of current M.A. students one of the most common responses to the committee member question.

An interviewee from Program 2 definitely wanted student representation on the committee due to the fact that "professors and students, international and American, because needs will be different. They [the students] need a voice" (0201). Respondent 0302 suggested student representation, just as her program has on current personnel and curriculum committees in order to "get a look
at the other side of the question...the student perspective".
Various participants identified different types of students: American and international, current and alumni, undergraduate and graduate and those who already have experience. One respondent (0606) suggested the possibility of a student representative on the evaluation committee. As she began speaking, she started to reflect on the use of the evaluations to see if goals are being met. Therefore, in her opinion, this committee should have both faculty and student representation.

Interview participants from across the programs recommended both faculty and students. In particular, some participants wanted to narrow down which faculty members would be on the committee. Interview participant 0825 felt that members of the committee would be

people who are committed to having a good mix of theory and practice ... I feel that those are the classes that really helped me the most, the classes that integrated the two. And that kind of goes along with teachers' needs too. Somebody who is willing to take those two and integrate them practically. (0825)

Respondents 0601 and 0520 both added that the professors
should be those "who have experience teaching ESL". The program faculty chosen for the committee were usually those who taught courses that the students felt were particularly helpful.

Other interviewees added faculty from outside the program to the committee, despite being told that it would be an internal evaluation. This addition may have been to add some sort of objectivity. Respondents 0403, 1014 0829 and 0317 all recommended people who were not directly part of the program such as professors from other departments, in-service ESL teachers or Deans from the college. Subject 0403 stated:

I think it would be important that it come from all different disciplines. Of course, I would want someone from TESL and maybe I’d want a regular English...a writing professor, ...even a professor that teaches in foreign languages, Communications... Technology. It’s better to offer a broader range of viewpoints. I really value that. (0403)

Respondent 0802 felt that there should also be someone not in the program on the committee.
I think it would need to be a mixture of students in the program, professors in the program, but also individuals in the field. I don't know where they would come from if they would be former graduates of the program or maybe not even connected with the program, but members of the field, working in the field. (0802)

In terms of the committee members, Respondent 0520 would like to see "teachers, professors ... that I've seen in the past who actually put an emphasis on teaching, as far as educating people, not just preaching at them". This same person would like to have some alumni on the committee because, according to her, they would have a good idea of what had been useful or effective.

Overall, subjects seemed to think that it was important to have a mix of students and professors on the hypothetical program evaluation committee. Others wanted to include alumni, perhaps to get a more longitudinal view of the program. In addition, some respondents suggested off-campus teachers, who may have been added for their practical insight, and professors from other departments for their objectivity.

When asked about ways the committee could elicit feedback or include M.A. students' voices, the respondents' answers echoed the questionnaire open-ended question.
responses. They recommended questionnaires and surveys, but they also suggested student representation on the hypothetical program evaluation committee, even though many of the programs did not have anything like this currently in place. Another suggestion for oral feedback, although not as common when speaking about the committee, was to have less formal conversations with professors or the director of the program and address program concerns on a one-on-one basis.

4.5 Research Question 1b

"In what ways will the students and teacher education program benefit from the student input?"

The benefits of including M.A. students in an internal program evaluation were identified in the open-ended questions of the questionnaires and in the interviews. The questionnaire answers were usually more general in nature. The interview question was designed to clarify the questionnaire responses about the benefits and provide the respondents with the opportunity to add any other ideas. The responses not only identified benefits for both program
and students, but also varied from statements about
improving the program in general to specific student needs.

4.5.1 Questionnaire Responses

In response to the question that asked the subjects to identify benefits of including student feedback in a program evaluation, they sometimes wrote about adding classes or changing the program, but also added more abstract benefits as well. The three main themes that emerged for program benefits were: better communication between students and faculty, program reputation and student retention and listening to student voices. All were related to ways in which the program could improve and better meet the students' needs.

4.5.1.1 Better Communication

One benefit suggested on several questionnaires was better communication between faculty and students. A respondent from Program 2 wrote,

I feel that we know our needs best; and we are the ones who are experiencing the program. Therefore, we would know better what the program needs. We have the "insiders" view about the strengths and weaknesses. Plus, it is our time and money! Our
department should be more responsive to our (students') voices.
(0202)

Other M.A. students wrote that the students often have “teaching experience and know what they need” (0305). One respondent attacked the publish or perish environment in which professors sometimes find themselves in a rather negative comment:

It could force professors/administrators to get off their high horses and listen to how their decision-making affects teachers, the field, the profession. It could make them more accountable to someone/something besides tenure review boards. (0606)

The comments about better communication between faculty and students are directly related the idea of improving the program, whether by course evaluation or focus of the entire curriculum. The comments do this by connecting students’ needs and program curriculum.

Questionnaire responses also referred to better communication as it might lead to program improvement by keeping the faculty and administration informed. Respondent 0838 wrote that better communication between the graduate students and faculty
can also bring new insights into the department that teachers may not have noticed. Students with ideas may not always be interested in or found at professional conferences where teachers get their ideas... I think that more interaction through a third party program such as the professional development type of activities could bridge the gap between department values and student ideals. (0838)

Most of the questionnaire answers that refer to better communication comment on the need for improvement and then, the possible results of this increased communication.

4.5.1.2 Program reputation and student retention

Various respondents wrote that a benefit of M.A. student feedback into an internal program evaluation includes how students and others view the program. The feedback could keep the professors in touch with students' needs and their obligation to address the needs. Respondent 0211 wrote that by fulfilling students' expectations and providing "them with the education they hope for and need ... the program would be challenged to stay current and competitive" (0211).
A respondent from program 7 wrote about a benefit in terms of a goal. "It should improve the program so students feel good about graduating and feel confident when recommending the program to future students." (0703) Once again, the responsibility is placed on the administration, but shows how student needs and program improvement are intertwined.

4.5.1.3 Students’ Voices

Comments about benefits could be very concrete as related to the curriculum. Respondent 0107 wrote that the program could improve and students would benefit by “better tailoring the program to the students’ needs”. Students may see benefits in that “the administration was trying to better meet their needs. The students’ needs were usually connected to aspects of the program that students want to change or courses that they wanted to add to the core curriculum. “Courses could be adjusted based on a compromise between professors’ ideas and students’ needs” (0728). Several commented that it would be impossible to please every individual since needs could be very subjective. A respondent in Program 1 felt that the feedback could lead to program changes to fit the students’
needs. This would also "reduce student frustration" (0101). As stated previously, M.A. students in Program 1 felt that their program administrators and faculty already seemed fairly open to student input.

Several respondents felt that the quality of the program and thus, their education would improve if the program were "open to constructive criticism and praise" (0402). The program might benefit from receiving "inside information from students with high expectations" (0808). Receiving input from students' perspectives

will give program profs (sic) a truer picture of flaws and strengths in the students' opinions...and they can better address those aspects of the program and improve—or resolve students' concerns (0404)

Others were also aware of constraints. Respondent 0115 hoped "that it would make the program more responsive to the needs of the students. However, there are realistic constraints." Several questionnaire respondents were pessimistic in terms of the students' voices being heard. One student actually feels that the students' "voices are the last consideration" (1004) in decision making for the program.
Voicing one’s views and seeing things change “could be very motivational” (1003). Respondent 0901 had a similar response.

First, I believe that the input from the students of the program will be considered and valued and used to improve the program. I think that this will benefit students by providing them with what they feel is needed in order for them to become more knowledgeable in the field of TESOL, as well as giving them the confidence they need to beginning any teaching assignment/position. (0901)

The feeling of respect that students might get from voicing their opinion is sometimes connected to a feeling of empowerment that was also referred to by various subjects in questionnaires and interviews. One respondent wrote that student involvement in program evaluation could encourage students “to think more about the process” (1011) and feel valued by the program.

4.5.2 Interview Responses

The interviews helped to add information to these questions, especially about the different benefits for students and the programs. By allowing the respondents
time to imagine the evaluation committee and to reflect on what it might do, the respondents sometimes added benefits that they had not included in the questionnaire. As with the questionnaire responses, one of the most common remarks about benefits of student feedback included meeting or serving students' needs. The way in which various respondents felt that this could be realized differed, but it all came back to identifying what students as individuals and as a group might need in order to become successful ESL teachers. The other themes also appeared in the interviews, but ideas of reflection and empowerment were also strong themes in the interviews.

4.5.2.1 Better Communication

As in the questionnaires, respondents felt that better communication between faculty and students would provide a better environment. The idea of better communication was identified as both a benefit and a causal factor for other benefits in the following interview.

I would think that if a program is really in tune to (sic) its students' needs and they can really demonstrate interest in them and in fulfilling them, it would be of long-term benefit to the
program because it would attract students... It would improve the quality of the program. I don’t think it could help but make it better, make it more cutting edge, dealing with real problems that teachers have, with problems that students have with becoming teachers... I would think it could have more hands-on in that process. (1011)

Another interview participant from program 2 believes that communication is very important. He believes

[i]t could foster a better relationship between the students and the faculty members, which I think a lot of times we lack... I try to visit them often... then I feel better in class and perhaps the professor is more comfortable addressing something that could be problematic. (0204)

Interview Respondent 0123 stated that the communication must not be one-way. If the students have input, the professors, “need to give feedback. Just to know that they are taking into consideration the comments” (0123). He also saw another connection among the different types of benefits of student inclusion in program evaluation. He felt that student participation in evaluation “would be a great selling point for getting students to come to the program” (0123).
4.5.2.2 Program reputation and student retention

Some subjects related program improvement and meeting students’ needs to the reputation of the program and student enrollment/retention. Interview participant 0520 suggests a more practical benefit of attracting students to the program.

I think they’d get more students coming to them if they listened to their students. I think students have a pretty good network...they would be able to get more people just by word of mouth. (0520)

In the related matter of retention, Interview participant 0302 stated,

If the students don’t like it, a lot of students will leave the program. Many people in our program are from different cultures and a lot of the professors have never been to different countries. And sometimes they don’t know what is expected in a foreign country. So I think [listening to the M.A. students] is important. (0302)
Various other responses refer to improving “P.R.” or a program’s reputation. Once again the comments lead back to students’ needs and curriculum focus.

4.5.2.3 Students’ Voices

The cyclic benefits between the program and students involve the fact that the program would “get a different perspective and they will hear requests from a variety of people with differing needs” (Interview 0601). Interview Respondent 0403 said:

I think they would have the opportunity to have classes that are more of their interest and their choosing because our classes are basically scheduled, all four semesters. So we really have no flexibility at all and even if we could have a couple of different possibilities ... They say you have to take this class this semester. (0403)

Responses about the benefit of M.A. student participation in program evaluation echo across the programs with comments of improving the program and meeting students’ needs.

The idea of giving students a voice in the program speaks to the students’ confidence and a feeling of being
valued by the program. An international student in program 8 said felt that students might "feel more comfortable in a program that listens to their voices ... they feel that they are respected as students ... they have their own voice. You feel better if your voice is heard." (0829) Interviewee 0520 supports this idea in her interview when she stated

Well, I think personal satisfaction is the one [benefit] that most people are looking for. Just telling your opinion often times makes you feel better whether you change the system or not ... Sometimes it actually falls on ears that are hearing and things get changed. (0520)

Some subjects were negative in their responses to student benefits because they did not feel that their voices were being heard.

Well, I think [the benefit of giving their opinions] would give [the students] a sense of worth. Rather than just their filling chairs and paying tuition, it would show that the program values them as students and values them enough to actually respond to their input and invest resources, like time and money into getting their needs met, rather than just a peon and a number. When you show people that you’re interested in their needs, they’re going to respond and they’re going to develop and be more interested. (0606)
Others had seen the benefits and seen the positive side of M.A. student feedback. Interview participant 0802 stated:

I started several years ago ... took a year off to teach overseas, and now I’m back...to finish up. I would have thought they don’t listen...But now my opinion has changed ... I see more of what goes on or how our program has changed...and in my case, it [listening to students] does happen. I see results...positive results, I see positive change because of it. (0802)

Interviewee 0820 continues by stating that there are

a fair number of students who are already in the field and are teaching ESL, we are actually actively involved and feel, and myself included, feel like [we] have a very valid voice that should be heard...and that just goes into the entire circle of making the entire program better. (0802)

Other ideas relate to more abstract ideas such as, giving a students’ a voice within the program, empowering students through awareness and encouraging reflection. A respondent from Program 3 felt that "If the students see that they are
going to be taken into account, students will be willing to participate" (0305).

4.5.2.4 Empowerment

While not always referred to as "empowerment", several students referred to a sense of power or confidence that comes along with the understanding that their voices are heard.

I think it helps gaining ownership of the program ... I think it would help us to know that our voices were heard if nothing else.

(0703)

An interviewee from Program 6 saw dual benefits for students and program. She spoke as she was contemplating the question, identifying program benefits as "more students ... [and] find out what students' needs are". She predicted that as the program meets the needs of the students, they will "like the program better, study better" (0606). She identified her needs as methodology courses and more time given in those courses for detailed examples. She felt that courses sometimes covered topics too superficially.
Interviewee 1003 also saw the benefits of student involvement. The "voicing fresh views and seeing things change could be very motivational for them", instead of complaining. She explained how by getting involved and providing feedback, the students could get more out of it.

To feel like this is our program, we have some ownership in it, we have a stake in it. And therefore, we are going to put more into it and get more out of it...and then it snowballs. (1003)

4.5.2.5 Reflection

An interview participant from Program 8 felt that the students could benefit from the reflection and perhaps put their needs into perspective.

A benefit of student input to program evaluation would be a more realistic view of what constitutes teacher preparation ... The student might become better aware of the needs that they do have ... Maybe with pointed questions, students might be able to isolate the problems that they need to work on...I know when I first started I just didn't know enough to ask the right questions. (0825)

Participant 0606 was very interested in critical literacy and pedagogy. And felt that M.A. student inclusion in program evaluation would provide
long-term benefits ... It would, instead of some theoretical ideas and leaving students off to make the connections on their own ... it could have more hands-on in that process ... [students] are going to respond and they’re going to develop and be more interested. (0606)

Several said that they had never considered program evaluation, not to mention M.A. student feedback as an integral part of the process. Another student stated that she wasn’t sure evaluation would help any current students except in terms of reflection. This, however, was an afterthought because, as she had previously commented in the interview, “we (M.A. students) do that (discuss the program) all the time” (0317). This student felt that the evaluation, as with course evaluations, would benefit future students.

One interview participant from program 8 had a teaching position overseas for a year and had had time to contemplate the program. She believed she sees the benefits of student feedback due to this time.

If you had asked me that question when I first started, I might have laughed because I would have thought they don’t listen ... But now my opinion has changed and that could just be because I’m
older and wiser. Or I see more of what goes on in the program ... But I think that now I would say it’s valid, it should happen and in my case, it does happen ... I see positive change because of it.

The interviews echoed the comments on benefits identified in the questionnaires, but added ideas of empowerment and reflection. Even the respondent (0302) who felt that “there’s a real restrain on students even if they’re anonymous ... [and] the teacher can be placed in a difficult position”, stated that program and students would benefit by gaining the other’s perspective.

4.6 Research Question 2:

“Do preservice ESL teachers in Master’s programs perceive some parts of their preparation curriculum to be more effective in preparing them to be ESL teachers than other parts?”

This question was addressed first in the questionnaire in the Likert-scale questions through agreement or disagreement with statements about curriculum. In addition, the M.A. students (n=101) were asked which course
or type of course would best prepare them to be ESL/EFL teachers in the open-ended questions. The Likert-scale used was, 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = not applicable; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree. The subjects were told to circle the numeral that they think best matches their response to the individual statements. They were also instructed to answer each question according to their experiences and knowledge of their current program. While some clarification questions were asked of those who participated in an interview, the information below is taken from the questionnaires.

4.6.1 Research Question 2A

"Which curricular components are perceived to be more effective in preparing an ESL teacher? Less effective? Of no importance?"

Overall, question 1, which expresses confidence in the program's curriculum, and the theoretical classes referred to in questions two and five seemed to fare the best overall (Table 18). Question two suggests a general strong theoretical component overall and question five refers to a second language acquisition theory course. The average
score for these three over the ten programs is 2, equal to
"agree" on the Likert scale. As seen in the following
table (Table 18), the statement that fared the best of the
three was the general statement, "My program includes a
strong theoretical component" (1.9 mean).

The practical courses in methodology questions ten
(Listening/Speaking), eleven (English Grammar) and twelve
(Reading/Writing) scored a rather neutral 2.55. The scores
for these questions in Program Six (a program in an English
department) were especially negative with a mean of 3.4
(Table 33). If these scores from program #6 are removed,
the average for these practical courses is 2.23, still on
the stronger side of the components (Table 18). All three
questions that refer to methodology courses (Listening/
Speaking, Grammar, and Reading/Writing) had similar scores.
Interviewee 0606 added that there was no listening/speaking
methodology class and that, while there are grammar and
reading/writing methodology classes, "I don't think that
[they] are very good" (0606). Three subjects in the other
English department program (Program 4) wrote that they
would like more instruction in reading theory or reading
methodology.
### Likert Scale Questions

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Table 18: Overall data from Likert Scale Questions
During the interviews it became apparent that some likert-scale responses should have been rated "neutral" (3) instead of "disagree". The reasons given for a "disagree" or "strongly disagree" response and/or perception of a lack of presence ("N/A") for English Literature classes (#13) related to the fact that it is not a separate class, not included in the core curriculum or is not addressed at all. Some interview participants elaborated on this fact by stating that the use of literature in the classroom was addressed in methodology classes, but literature classes (literature as content) were not offered in their programs. The Accent Reduction class often received a similar response because it was not addressed in a separate class. Other respondents said that the topic of accent reduction was addressed in an indirect way through classes such as, Sound System, Phonology or even Listening/Speaking Methodology classes.

The participants’ perceptions about the practicum or teaching component (questions 3 & 15) came out quite neutral at 2.55 and 2.24 respectively (Table 18). There was a wide range of responses from a 1.1 average ("Strongly agree") for program #4, which requires practice teaching, to a 3.4 average (N/A-Disagree) for program #2, with no
student teaching or practicum requirement in the M.A. program. The responses followed individual experiences as well as the requirement (or lack of) for some type of practice teaching in the programs.

The curricular components identified as the components that most needed improvement on the questionnaires commonly included: identifying or meeting student needs, need for improvement of a practicum or student teaching or the combination of theory and practice. Other respondents also identified the practical applications of theory.

4.6.2 Research Question 2B

"Do the components chosen as more effective vary from program to program? If so, how do the choices vary?"

This question is addressed by comparing the individual program respondents Likert-scale answers or by blocking programs by department. The tables and descriptions that follow are sorted by program type i.e., Linguistics or ESL department, but shown by individual program. A combined description will refer to program type at the end of each subsection.
4.6.2.1 Linguistics/Applied Linguistics Departments

Programs 1, 3, 8 and 9 are housed in either Linguistics or Applied Linguistics Departments. As can be seen in the following tables (Tables 19 through 26), the subjects within each program varied in whether this was their initial preparation although about 70% of each program had previous teaching experience. The average age at which this group began its ESL preparation was 25.6 years. Approximately 78% of this group is American, 22% international students; and the programs average 89% female and about 70% have a current job, mostly teaching assistantships.

The returned questionnaires from Program 1, a program housed within a Linguistics Department, totaled fourteen out of twenty, a return rate of approximately 59%. This group was predominantly female, US students. This is the initial preparation for just under half of the participants. More than half had some teaching experience.

The M.A. students in Program 1 thought most highly of the Theoretical Linguistics and Phonology components (questions 6 & 7), (Table 19) with the general theoretical component (question #2) Second Language Theory (#5), and
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Table 19: Likert Scale Responses Program 1
Listening & Speaking Methodology (#10) at a close second with the mean of each firmly within the range of "Agree".

The statements about Accent Reduction, English Literature and Education Foundations (#14, 13 and 4) were seen as weaker components with means well into the "Disagree" range (Table 20).

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Table 20: Program 1 Likert scale mean and standard deviation

In the open-ended questions, the respondents from program 1 felt strongly that the sound foundation in theory, practical application and the balance between the two were the things that best prepared them to be ESL teachers. One subject wrote, "The
integration of theory, applied linguistics and teaching methodologies" (0110) best prepared her to be a teacher. Another person wrote that the "theoretical-base along with the teaching methodology courses and teaching experiences available make the program strong" (0120). Four participants specifically identified the methodology courses and the professor as reasons why this program was effectively preparing them to be ESL teachers. One subject wrote, "One professor ... is remarkable, truly a teacher's teacher" (0101). Another subject adds, "There are two 'methods' courses taught by Professor X that have taught me a great deal about actually being in the classroom" (0104). Four of the subjects cited their opportunity to teach in the on-campus intensive English language program. Coincidentally, it was the lack of teaching experience for others that seemed to be missing for some of the students at this program. One of the students who had the opportunity to teach on-campus added that only six of the 25 students had this chance. And unfortunately, some students complete the program "without receiving the opportunity to have hands-on teaching experience (0117). Several subjects from Program 1 stated that elective classes in such things as, materials development, syllabus
design, and CALL should be added to the program. One student stated that she “would like [her] program to be more interdisciplinary and flexible to meet individual needs” (0111).

Program 3 had a 50% return rate (ten of twenty), quite surprising considering the small size of this program. The participants were mostly females in their first teacher preparation experience. However, only three had no teaching experience whatsoever. Most of the jobs that they currently had were as graduate student assistants and would continue in the following semester. This group mostly agreed with the first statement demonstrating a general confidence in the program’s curriculum, and with question six (6), which states that Theoretical Linguistics is an important part of the program’s curriculum (Table 21).
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Table 21: Likert Scale Responses Program 3
The Education Foundation and English Literature components (#4 and #13) had mean scores that the respondents strongly disagreed with the statements, showing very little confidence in these components. As these types of courses are not included in the program, the response is not a surprise (Table 22).

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Table 22: Program #3 Likert Scale mean and standard deviation

Program 3 respondents had quite varied answers for the open-ended questions. Several subjects remarked that the part of the program that best prepared them to be an ESL teacher is the practical experience that they received through practicums and as teaching assistant (T.A.)
assignments at the IEP. Others referred to the "application of theory" and "practical and theoretical aspects of the program as being the best components in this ESL teacher preparation program.

Four of the respondents believed that a Listening/Speaking or Phonology component was missing from the program. Another expanded on these ideas and stated that "stronger Listening/Speaking instruction [was needed]" (0302). One respondent believed that "more of the theoretical courses [should be given] before the practicums" (0307). These same four respondents said that the program needed stronger practicums and more teaching experience for those students who are not T.A.'s.

Program 8 had a response of nineteen out of forty, however, only eighteen (45%) could be used due to one respondent's academic status. Although not the best response rate, it did constitute the largest group. All but three respondents were American students. This is the initial preparation for three and five have never had teaching experience before.

The statements about the Phonology and Phonetics courses (#7 & 8) were seen as strong components of the curriculum, although the responses for the statements about
Second Language Acquisition Theory and English Grammar Methodology (#5 and 11) were not far behind with mostly "agree" and "strongly agree" responses and a mean of 1.9 for both statements (Table 23).
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Table 23: Likert Scale Responses Program 8
The English Literature and Accent Reduction statements (#13 and 14) were seen as weak components despite their "n/a" means of 3.22 and 3.00 (Table 24) respectively. The Education Foundations statement (#4) was also low due to lack of courses although not surprising since this program is in a Linguistics Department.

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Table 24: Program #8 Likert Scale mean and standard deviation

The respondents from program #8 were fairly consistent with their responses to the open-ended questions. Most of them cited the combination of theory and practice or the
practicum as being one of the best components of the program. One subject wrote,

Classes that combine theory with practical approaches are especially helpful in helping me understand why certain classroom activities are good or bad. (0825)

The "Intercultural Communication" class with its focus on diversity or "multiculturalism" (0810) came in a close second. This type of class was only a required course in programs 7 through 10.

The subjects' opinions about what was missing were quite diverse. Several comments identified the need for a stronger grammar foundation or methodology class and a need for an improved curriculum for the practicum course, especially for those who are not teaching. Those who do not have the opportunity to teach, must "give 5-6 presentations instead of getting classroom experience" (0834) in the practicum course. This leaves little time for "classroom strategies" (0818) or other instruction that might better prepare the future teachers.

Program #9 is a very small program to begin with. A response rate of three out of nine (33%) included only female, American students. Only one had previous
preparation and teaching experience. One had some teaching experience, but no preparation, the third had neither.

The responses from Program 9 showed general confidence, but nothing extreme. The statements about the Applied Linguistics, Listening/Speaking and Grammar Methodology courses (#9, 10 and 11) all show a mean of 1.7, showing agreement with fact that these are strong components in the program’s curriculum (Table 25). Only respondent, #1, had the same score for Questions #3 and #15, both about the practicum, giving a “Strongly Disagree” (Table 26). Another respondent gave “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” scores and the third gave “n/a” and “Strongly Agree”. The difference in opinion among the respondents and across the statements causes some confusion until the short-answer questions provide some insight into the negative view of the current implementation of the practicum.
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Table 25: Likert Scale Responses Program #9 Survey
The statements about the strong practicum and the theoretical Linguistics (#3, 15 & 6) were the only ones that received “Disagree” statements. Statements 3 and 6 each had a mean of 3.0 (Table 26).

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Table 26: Program #9 Likert Scale mean and standard deviation

All three subjects from program #9 refer to a practical application, such as lesson planning, as key components of the program, but had reservations as how the practicum was actually implemented in this program. Two of the three students identified the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course as being one of the best parts of the program.
One subject (0901) stated methodology courses as being missing from the program.

I heard that there was a class called classroom techniques or something like this...most everyone in the program would like to get more practical knowledge...As for this elusive class on techniques, I don't know if and when it will be offered again. (0901)

The lack of electives and Teacher Education courses were also identified as weaknesses of the program.

There were more differences than similarities in the responses among the four programs in Linguistics Departments. However, the responses for the statements about the Second Language Acquisition courses (question 5) and Theoretical Linguistics courses (question 6) were among the more favorable responses for all of the programs. While all of the programs have practice teaching, there was always some reference to improving this component. The respondents in this group also tend to appreciate a balance of theory and practice.
4.6.2.2 Programs in the College of Education

Programs 2 and 5 are found in Schools of Teaching and Learning and Teaching and Leadership, respectively. At these two programs, about 75% are Americans and 71% female. They average at about 70% for prior teaching experience, but only 51% for current jobs. Between the two programs, approximately 75% of these subjects are in their initial ESL preparation at an average age of 31 years.

The return rate for Program 2 was just under half (45%) with nine questionnaires of twenty that were handed out. This group felt that their program had a very strong theoretical component (# 2) and that the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory course was one of the most important parts of the curriculum (Table 27).
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Table 27: Likert Scale Responses Program 2
On the other hand, English Literature, Accent Reduction and the practicum were all seen as weak points in the curriculum (Table 28). This comes as no surprise as this is the program in a College of Education that does not require a practicum. There was quite a mix of responses on question one (general confidence in the program) and a few disillusioned students participated in the interviews.

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Table 28: Program #2 Likert Scale responses

The open-ended questions seemed to confirm the Likert findings for program 2; however, comments gave additional information about the incorporation of theory throughout the M.A. coursework. Most of the students also wrote about
the methodology courses. "I think the SLA theory courses are an important foundation for TESOL teachers. The syllabus design course and methodology courses are invaluable preparation" (0210). Several spoke to the strong theoretical background via methodology courses. One subject stated that

The theoretical courses provide a strong basis for understanding the overall field of second language acquisition and, therefore, give us an understanding of learners' needs, learning styles, etc. (0211)

However, one student commented that the theoretical knowledge did not help her to "know how to teach" (0209). She didn't feel that anything was preparing her to be an ESL teacher.

Really nothing. Most of the courses are based on theory...but the problem is that the same concepts are being repeated over and over in other courses. I think more priority should be given to practical point of view. (0209)

She felt betrayed because she would have the M.A. degree with very little chance of a job. This is strongly connected to the perceived weakest point in this program.
The same students strongly proclaimed the weakness of the program in the lack of field experience or student teaching component. While M.Ed. students do have student teaching in a K-12 situation, the M.A. program does not provide any official practicum. One student wrote in the survey that “we desperately need a practicum” (0205), while another responded to missing components by writing, “most definitely field experience” (0204). Even those who have other teaching experience see the need to either expand their experience or their classmates’ need for some type experience.

There was a return of about 33% (eleven of thirty) for program 5. This program had three international students represented and was about one-third male. This was the first formal preparation for most, but only three had had no teaching experience. The respondents felt that the strongest areas were in the general theoretical and the SLA statements (questions 2 and 5) with means of 1.7 and 1.9 respectively. However, there was some inconsistency in that each had one rating of 5.0, “Strongly Disagree” and statement five also had a rating of 4.0 “Disagree” (Table 29).
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Table 29: Likert Scale Responses Program 5
Again, the weakest areas, as seen by the respondents, were the English Literature and Accent Reduction courses (questions 13 and 14) (Table 30). The responses for the statement about the Listening/Speaking methodology courses also showed a lack of confidence with a mean of 2.91 (Table 30).

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Table 30: Program #5 Likert Scale mean and standard deviation

The respondents from program 5 felt that the Second Language Acquisition courses and the practical components of the curriculum were the best part of the program. Subject 0507 identified second language acquisition because
of the "theory and practice" elements. Another subject said Program 5

[s]tresses teaching, linguistics, and phonetics. I feel this is the best preparation for an ESL instructor because these are the most important concepts for helping others learn a second language. (0503)

Some of the subjects felt that more practical courses, some classroom experience and a required practicum were needed. Others stated that more practical applications e.g., classroom management, teaching strategies, and creating study materials were needed. Subject 0527 felt the practicums were useful, but stated, "I felt prepared beforehand. This is a formality".

Responses were very similar among the subjects from these two programs (Programs 2 and 5). Both programs received positive responses to the general theoretical aspect and the second language acquisition component of the respective programs. Program 2 does not have any practicum or practice teaching component for the M.A. track and Program 5 only requires it if the student has no prior teaching experience. The students obviously feel this is a
missing element and responded negatively to the two
practicum questions (3 and 15) in similar ways.

4.6.2.3 Programs in English Departments

Programs 4 and 6 are listed as English Departments
with TESL or TESOL concentrations. These two programs
average 52% for international and 86% female students.
This is the initial preparation for 81% of these subjects
who have an average age of 25.5 years. Although 75% of the
subjects in program 6 have teaching experience, only 14% of
Program 4’s have had 2 or more years in the classroom.
Because of this disparity, an average is not given. A
similar result is true for the current job question. Only
one subject out of seven in Program 4 has a job, while 2
out of the four subjects in program 6 have jobs.

Program 4 had a relatively low return at about 30%
(seven of twenty), but it is also a small program. Two
international students were represented in this mostly
female group. Only one participant had previous
preparation or some type of teaching experience, different
students in each case.

The subjects from program 4 responded with mostly
"strongly agree" to both questions about the strong
practicum (Questions 3 and 15) and both have required practice teaching. This program also received similar responses to the general confidence statement (question 1) and the strong theoretical component (question 2). The second language acquisition component was close behind with 1.9, still in the “agree” range (Table 31).
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Table 31: Likert Scale Responses Program 4
The areas of English Literature and Accent Reduction courses (Questions 13 and 14) were seen as weak components with means of 3.71 and 3.43 respectively (Table 32). However, a couple of students in this group wrote “not applicable” or “not offered” next to these questions. Two subjects also gave “disagree” ratings to the statement about the Education Foundations courses (#4) creating a mean of 3. (Table 32).

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<th>Highest Answer</th>
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Table 32: Program #4 Likert Scale mean and standard deviation

There were some contradictory answers to the open-ended questions among the subjects from Program 4. For example, while many of the answers identifying the best
parts of the program focused on a “solid theoretical background” (0404) and the “practicum and internship” (0402), comments about what was missing identified certain aspects of theory or methodology that were absent from the program. The majority of these identified reading theory and methodology. Subject 0401 stated that

A more in-depth look at reading theory and ways to teach reading [are needed]. Also, a discussion of how to design a syllabus and a course in order to highlight what you want to teach. (0401)

Other subjects cited Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) applications, syllabus design and testing as components that might be added to the program to better prepare the M.A. students.

Program 6 is very small and so a return of four from 10 questionnaires (40%) was not surprising. It is interesting that three of the four respondents are international students and all are female. One respondent had had previous teacher preparation and another had had no previous teaching experience.

This group was not very favorable toward the program and had varied responses as a group. As seen in the
following table (Table 33), the statement about Applied Linguistics courses (# 9) received three "1" (strongly agree) and one "5" (strongly disagree) votes making it the strongest component. The Second Language Acquisition Theory courses (# 5) were rated the next strongest with a mean of 2.3 (Table 33).
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Table 33: Likert Scale Responses Program 6
The Accent Reduction (#14) received three "strongly disagrees" and one "agree", making it the weakest component at 4.25 (Table 34). The responses for Reading/Writing methodology (#12) and Phonology (#7) courses were also weak with means of 3.75 each, well into the "disagree" response (see Table 34).

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Table 34: Program #6 Likert Scale mean and standard deviation

The answers for the open-ended questions for program 6 supported the information from the Likert scale responses. The respondents all believed the SLA theory course and at least one of the methodology courses as the best parts of the program. English Structure, a methodology course for
teaching grammar, was the most common of the methodology
classes noted in the responses. One subject wrote

Courses in Issues in Second Language Teaching and classes that
cover various second language teaching theories...[And] the class
about teaching English structure is also very helpful in
preparing me to be an ESL teacher. (0605)

The subjects from Program 6 felt that the program
needed more of a practicum. Specifically, the program
should “increase the amount of clock hours required for
student teaching at the instruction seminar” (0605).
Another subject, an international student, made the
following suggestion,

I think there should be some courses offered on American culture
since an English teacher should possess, not only the knowledge
of language and the mechanics to teach it, but should also have
broad knowledge of the culture. (0606)

While both programs 4 and 6 exist in English
Departments, it is clear that they have very different
situations. The subjects responded favorably to Second
Language Acquisition and the theoretical component in both
programs, but Program 4 received a much more positive
response to their practicum component. Program 4 respondents mostly wanted improved methodology courses, especially in reading and related to reading theory. On the other hand Program 6 wanted more time devoted to practice teaching.

4.6.2.4 Other Programs

Programs 7 and 10 are housed in less common departments for the preparation of ESL teachers. Program 7 exists in a Speech Communications Department with a TESOL concentration. Program 10 is an M.A. in TESOL program within a Department of Language and Foreign Studies. The average age of the subjects from these two programs at the beginning of their ESL preparation is 30.5 years. 72% of these students are currently at that initial preparation. 84% are American and 72% are female. 68% already have teaching experience, but only about 24% currently have a job.

Program 7 had a response of thirteen out of thirty; however, one was unusable leaving a rate of 40% (12/30). The subjects’ responses from this program were rather pessimistic overall (See Table 35) with no mean under 1.8. The statements with which the respondents agreed most
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Table 35: Likert Scale Responses Program 7
strongly were the general statement about the program's curriculum (question 1) and English Grammar Methodology (question 11) both with means of 1.8 (Table 35). These same statements also received a five (strongly disagree) and a four (disagree) response respectively. The other scores for these questions were all "strongly agree" (1's) and "agree" (2's).

The two components rated as weaker parts of the curriculum were English Literature (13) and Accent Reduction (14) with means of 3.25 and 3.0 respectively (Table 36). Most answers were "3" (not applicable) due to the fact that these types of courses do not exist in this program. Statement 4 (Education Foundations) was also found as mostly "not applicable" for Program 7 with a mean of 2.75 (Table 36).
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Table 36: Program #7 Likert Scale Mean and Standard Deviation

While the Likert scores may have shown weak agreement with the statements, the subjects from Program 7 were free with their praise of the combination of theory and practice in the open-ended questions. One student felt that the "good theoretical knowledge of the English language and some practical approaches to language teaching" (0731) were the best parts of the program. One subject supported the program’s curriculum by writing,
The practical application of theory—teaching demonstrations, methods courses, class observations (practicum)—things we can apply immediately to our teaching and think about for future use. (0735)

On the other hand, each student in Program 7 had a different idea of what was missing from the program. Comments included: teaching ESL to children, level assessment in skill areas, required internship courses, a solid practicum, psychological aspects of learning, Reading/Writing and Listening/Speaking methodology and Second Language Acquisition courses. Students commented that these courses or topics needed improvement or were completely missing from the program. One student spoke in generalities by stating that it was hard to identify on specific element that was missing because the content and effectiveness of courses depends so much on the people who teach them—more so than just the course title or make-up of the curriculum. (0730)

However, in support of the program, another subject wrote:

I believe that the core courses are very well-developed and rotating/new courses provide most of the coursework that is
missing from the core. I believe that it is a well-balanced program. (0733)

The final group, Program 10, was mostly American with only one international student represented. The response was about 61% with thirteen out of twenty-one possible respondents. The respondents were 69% female, and the same percentage consider this to be their initial preparation in ESL. Only two of the thirteen (23%) have never had teaching experience.

The responses for the Applied Linguistics course (#9) and the practice teaching/practicum (#15) statements were rated as the strongest areas of the curriculum with means of 1.5 and 1.7 respectively (Table 37).
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<td>3.5</td>
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Table 37: Likert Scale Responses Program 10
The weakest areas, according to the subjects, once again, came for the statements about English Literature (#13) and Accent Reduction (#14) with means of 3.46 and 3.54 respectively. However, the responses for the statement about Educational Foundations courses (#4) were not far behind with a mean of 3.1 (Table 38).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Lowest Answer</th>
<th>Highest Answer</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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Table 38: Program #10 Likert Scale Mean and Standard Deviation

Program 10 respondents felt that the combination of theory and practice, especially the Teaching Assistantship or practicum experiences were the strongest components of the program. One subject from program 10 wrote
Strong practicum component for teaching assistants grounds all theoretical knowledge in REALITY. Very useful as well as the outstanding support from the instructor of that part of the program. (1006)

Another student stated that a key aspect of the program for her had been "encouragement of professors to question everything" (1012).

It is no surprise then that this same student questioned one of the strongest components and suggested that the practical courses of methodology be presented by skill. Another student (1018) supported this idea by writing that "there are limited, general methodology courses". Subjects 1002, 1007, 1013, 1014 and 1015 all specifically referred to a lack of teaching experience for those who did not receive an assistantship as a weakness of the program. Subject 1007 believes that "[e]veryone needs the experience". Subject 1015 states that he is

Fortunate to be a teaching assistant, so I have the opportunity to transfer aspects of theory learned in the classroom (my grad classes) to the ESL classroom. For those who are not TA's, the program would be very theoretical, indeed, with little in the way of practical application. (1015)
Several of the respondents pointed out a lack of information on curriculum or materials development. Others identified methodology, certification and critical literacy/pedagogy within the curriculum.

Subjects in both programs 7 and 10 made comments about missing methodology components as can be seen on the required courses table (Table 6) and the neutral to negative Likert-scale scores for questions 10 and 14 (Listening/Speaking methodology and Accent Reduction) in both programs. Subjects in both of these programs had positive comments about the practicums, but added that improvement was needed in practicum/student teaching components to benefit all students. While the best scores for each program were not far off from the other, the scores for question 2, the statement about a strong theoretical component, 1.9 and 1.8 respectively, were closest on the positive side. Although elements of practical courses were cited as missing, a balance of theory and practice was identified as a strong element by subjects in both programs. The response to the practicum was stronger from subjects in Program 7 as Program 10 does not provide practice for all of the M.A. students.
Overall, most programs received more favorable responses to courses or components related to Second Language Acquisition and/or Applied Linguistics. It seems that for most subjects, especially those who had no exposure to ESL before, the theoretical and combination of theory and practice provided a strong foundation for their program. In contrast, for those programs that do not have Student teaching or practice teaching of any sort as a degree requirement, the comments and complaints were reflected in the score and showed up in the open-ended questions. In addition, there were complaints about the practice teaching at some other programs due to the inequality or limited time for the student teaching and/or practicums. Most often, it was the international students who did not get as much opportunity for real ESL teaching experience. Another complaint heard in interviews with both American and international students, but which would affect a majority of the international M.A. students, was the lack of attention to English as a foreign language.
4.6.3 Perceptions of Curriculum Effectiveness

The Likert scale section also provided the M.A. students with a reflective exercise and an opportunity to evaluate their current program through the listed statements about curricular components. Subjects would be able to draw upon this experience when answering open-ended questions or during an interview. In the open-ended questions, the M.A. students were also asked to identify the part of the program's curriculum that best prepared them to be an ESL teacher and what they thought was missing from the program.

No item brought out more emotional responses than the practicum. At most M.A. TESOL programs

the practice teaching component is the major opportunity for the student teacher to acquire the practical skills and knowledge needed to function as an effective language teacher. (Richards & Crookes, 1988, p. 9)

Those with more experience also expressed their dissatisfaction with their practicum, whether there was a lack of one, a limited one, or an unorganized one (Respondents 0209, 0303 and 0818, respectively). Some of these more experienced teachers felt that the programs
should better meet the different needs and be more flexible in the curriculum. Some wanted a testing course (0517) and others wanted a more practical, classroom related subject (0303). Some students who had an opportunity for practice teaching, such as 0606, were able to receive Teaching Assistantships, but saw there was a need for equity in terms of practice teaching opportunities. In general, inexperienced students wanted a practicum, more accessibility or a better-organized practicum (0201, 0101, and 0703). Subject 0209, an international student in a program with no practice teaching, was particularly upset that students complete the program and "almost nobody knows how to teach" (0209). Many of the less experienced international students felt that the practicum or the lack of some sort of practice/student teaching was key to their success or failure.

Many subjects wrote about the need for theory and practice within the curriculum. Richards & Crookes (1988) note that there is little research in the ESL field about the teaching practicum (p. 10). In respondent 0606's interview, she spoke about the need for a balance of the practical and theoretical in relationship to the lack of a practicum in her program. The need for practical
application (teaching methodology) was of great import for some of the students to feel confident once they are out in the field. One interviewee appreciated the theoretical base that he was getting, but felt the need to focus on "the practical side and how to teach these things" (0729). He cited a grammar class that was mainly theoretical with little practicality as an example. Other common requests were for some sort of course planning, syllabus design or more methodology courses, all very practical elements. These suggestions came from across several different programs (e.g., 0825, 0728, 0406 and 0312).

The need for a balance of theory and practice relates to the different forms of knowledge needed for a teacher’s education (Shulman, 1987, Grossman, 1991, McIntyre, 1986, Freeman & Johnson, 1998). Many of the subjects appreciated the balance of theory and practice that they received in applied linguistics courses or second language acquisition courses. Subject 0110 wrote that "the integration of theory, applied linguistics and teaching methodologies" best prepared him to be an ESL teacher. Subject 1007 echoes this sentiment by writing

There is a lot of discussion on how to put the theory into practice in the ESL classroom. Most of the
courses show both theory and practice and many offer ideas on how to integrate the two aspects. (1007)

Subject 0802 also believes that his "program has a good mix of theory and application". Two things that are needed to produce quality ESL teachers, in his opinion.

No program overwhelmingly achieved the most favorable responses on the Likert scale questions. Program four, in an English department, did receive very good responses (1.4 average) to the general statement in question 1 ("I believe that my program's curriculum has the components needed to prepare me to be an ESL teacher") and the two practice teaching questions (Question 3 and 15) with a 1.1 average for the latter two questions. Program 2, located in a School of Education department, got the best scores for a strong theoretical component (1.4) and second language acquisition theory courses (1.4), but the worst for the practice teaching questions. Not surprisingly, program 2 does not have a practice teaching component. Program 9, in a Linguistics department, received the best scores on the methodology course questions. Statement 10 (Listening/Speaking) and Statement 11 (English Grammar) each had a mean of 1.7 and Statement 12 (Reading/Writing) had a mean of 2. The TESOL Guidelines provide general ideas for the
4.7 Secondary Research Question:

"In what ways do the programs follow the TESOL Guidelines or not?"

Of the ten universities that responded, all but an M.ED, program (#5), officially endorse the TESOL guidelines for the preparation of ESL teachers according to the TESOL Directory (1997). None of the programs exhibit all of the features suggested in the TESOL Guidelines. This fact is not surprising given the variety of programs that are represented.

The features that are suggested by the TESOL Guidelines and might be considered as part of an ESL Teacher Education Program's curriculum include evaluation, methodology, language acquisition, language pedagogy, an
understanding of other cultures, linguistics, classroom management, and professional education. Language acquisition, Pedagogy and Methodology are the three areas that are most common within the required courses.

One can see from the required courses Table (Table 6) that an "evaluation" course (or related courses in testing or assessment) is only offered in four of the programs (2, 5, 6 and 9), and not always as a separate course, but combined with curriculum (as in Program 9). An understanding of cultures is present as a core class only in programs 7 through 10. One subject in program 10 identified this course as one of the best things about her program. She stated, "Anything that helps me recognize/deal with cultural differences that may cause 'problems' in/outside the class" (1011).

All but Program 2, the program in foreign and second language education, and Program 5 (a joint program in Linguistics and Teaching and Leadership departments) require practice teaching. Practice teaching is available in a separate track (M.Ed.) for the former (program 2); and although it is optional in the latter (program 5), it is only required of those students who have no teaching
experience and is optional for all others in this M.A. program in a College of Education.

Professional education is one of those elusive terms that can be defined in several ways, but represents the desire of many stakeholders in the field to professionalize ESL teacher education. The way in which it may be realized has been researched and debated for years. Most recently, the recommendations can be traced from Shulman's (1987) categories of pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge through the guidelines that TESOL is currently organizing along with NCATE for Pre-K through 12 ESL teachers. All of the programs want to provide the M.A. students with professional education and preparation, but have created different programs with different foci. This study does not assume to state which way is better, but to provide a description of several programs and recommendations for M.A. student inclusion in program evaluation.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of findings, discussions of the results and recommendations from the study. The limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are briefly described at the end of the chapter.

5.1 Summary

The present study focused on two main research questions. The first was the perceived effectiveness of M.A. student (preservice teacher) feedback in ESL teacher education program evaluation. Included in this first point were requests for type of feedback and possible benefits. The second dealt with the perceived effectiveness of the curricular components in the M.A. students’ respective
programs. A secondary research question compared the different programs’ content and requirements to that of the TESOL Guidelines for ESL teacher preparation.

The findings from the questionnaires and the interviews showed that M.A. students had varying opinions of the effectiveness of an internal evaluation, in general, depending on their own personal experiences with other types of evaluation and depending on where their program is located i.e., Applied Linguistics Department, College of Education. After evaluating their own programs through the Likert scale questions, subjects were able to discuss ways in which to include M.A. students in internal evaluations. The findings also represented the M.A. students’ perceptions of the possible benefits for both program and students. The M.A. students’ perceptions of their own ESL teacher education program are also represented. The differences and similarities among the programs became apparent in both the description and the findings. The descriptions of the programs show if and to what extent programs follow or endorse the TESOL guidelines for ESL teacher preparation.
5.1.1 Perceptions of Effectiveness of Evaluation

Teacher Education Programs have depended upon standards produced by professional organizations, such as NCATE, ACTFL and TESOL to conduct program evaluations, whether for accreditation or for self-study purposes. Teacher Educators recognize "the quality that...standards would bring...and that their programs are in need of reform" (Moore et al, 1993, p. 33). Evaluation can occur on different levels for different purposes.

Student feedback, while only one component of program evaluation, can have unique benefits for both program and students. McCaleb et al. (1987) show through an innovative teacher education program how future teachers' critical feedback was respected and sought after in informal and formal evaluation (p.62). Students may learn to develop "self-analytical, self assessment skills to bring about autonomous lasting growth and development" (McGregor, 1981, p. 76). In addition, alumni become the program's representatives once outside of the university. As one student maintained, his experience in the program would determine whether or not he would "recommend the program to others". However, programs' administrations should not see it as an "Us vs. Them" situation. Instead, they should look...
at it as an opportunity to get a different perspective of the program and work with the students. This experience could provide students with critical analysis and assessment skills (McGregor, 1981; Adler, 1991).

Subjects did not always perceive internal evaluation or M.A. student participation as an effective way to evaluate an ESL teacher education program. Some subjects saw evaluation as a way of keeping ESL faculty in touch with the practical aspects of teaching. Others were less critical and believe increased communication could provide an evaluation with different perspectives, especially in reference to student needs.

5.1.2 How to incorporate M.A. student input/feedback

In order to effectively incorporate M.A. student feedback in internal review, guidelines may address "the specific concerns of teachers and learners to improve aspects of the programme" (Mackay, 1994, p. 142). Subjects may not have always been optimistic about the feedback, but they still discussed ways and conditions in which the feedback might be effective.
In the present study, one of the most common ways subjects identified to incorporate M.A. student feedback in an internal program evaluation was the use of written surveys or questionnaires. Students were familiar with this format from course evaluations and often likened the two types of evaluations. Other subjects felt that the current course evaluations were not taken seriously and stipulated that this would have to be directly addressed when requesting the program evaluation feedback. Another common comment about the written feedback was anonymity. Many of the subjects wanted the opportunity to participate in some sort of program evaluation; however, they felt that students are not always forthright in their feedback. The most common reason given for this was the need for recommendations to secure a job in the future. Questionnaire respondents and interviewees questioned the ability to be completely honest when students know they may need to ask the professors for reference letters. As noted in chapter 4, Respondent 0402 wrote that it is "difficult to offer constructive criticism ... [because] you can't remain anonymous". The same concern was brought up for exit interviews.
Other respondents were very optimistic about the use of oral feedback in the form of interviews or group discussions as a way in which M.A. students could voice their opinions about the program. Some subjects preferred one-on-one exchanges with professors and felt comfortable with this type of feedback. However, group settings for verbal feedback were also popular among the respondents because of the opportunity to share ideas with one another. Other respondents acknowledged that some students may be able to explain their thoughts more thoroughly in a verbal situation. There were also those who thought a combination of verbal and written feedback could be effective. Some noted that a group discussion after a written evaluation would provide a springboard for the discussion. On the other hand, others felt that the written feedback could be more focused according to specific issues that were brought up during the discussion.

The suggestion of an internal program evaluation committee during the focus group interviews was usually met with optimism. Most participants suggested students be involved, as well as faculty. As previously noted, there were three interview participants who seemed to question the committee from the start. Interviewee 0317 believed
that a program evaluation should always be done by an objective third party. Interviewee 0302 tempered her mostly positive comments of the evaluation committee by saying that “it really needs to be taken seriously” (0302) by the administration. Interviewee 0403 considered outside faculty just as important program faculty or students as members of the committee because of the wider range of opinions that would be available.

5.1.3 Benefits for the Program and Students

ACTFL Guidelines state that by involving preservice teachers, they are started on a path of professional development that may help them to understand the program and “help[s] them become effective advocates for their profession” (ACTFL Guidelines, p.75). Responses on questionnaires and during focus group interviews identified program improvement and meeting students’ needs as two major program benefits of M.A. student feedback.

One of the benefits of involving M.A. students in program evaluation is a type of empowerment. Various subjects cited “gaining ownership of the program” (0703), a “sense of worth” (0606), and “personal satisfaction” (0520) as benefits of being involved. One respondent wrote that
student involvement in program evaluation could encourage students "to think more about the process" (1011) and feel valued by the program. By developing reflective activity, students understand various aspects of their education (Kasten et al, 1996; Day, 1991, Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Reflection can occur in the form of program evaluation. Students who feel valued through reflective practice may be encouraged to continue the practice as professionals (Sumson, 1994, Zeichner and Liston, 1987).

Subjects identified increased communication as a benefit for both program and student. As noted previously, it led to identification of student needs or students becoming "aware of the needs that they do have" (0820) and that by fulfilling students expectations and providing them with "the education they hope for and need ... the program may be challenged to stay current and competitive" (0211). Evans & Bethel (1984) state that a congruency of views about teaching skills among preservice teachers and faculty "is due to a very close association ... as well as [a program] that develops and emphasizes these ... skills" (p. 13). Some respondents recommended that programs be "more responsive to our (students') voices" (0202) and "open to constructive criticism and praise" (0402). Listening to
the students could assist a program reputation and student retention.

Validation of the current program (Nelli & Nutter, 1984) and insight into students' perceptions are both beneficial consequences of self-study or internal evaluation (Gaies, 1992; McCaleb et al, 1981). At the same time, program evaluation may prove beneficial to individual students. Various respondents referred to program improvement by better meeting the students' needs or obtaining information from highly motivated students. The opinion that the programs were not aware of what is needed was common. Many felt that the added students' point of views could help the program, most notably by getting "a different perspective ... and [hearing] requests from a variety of people with different needs." (0302). Practical comments continued in reference to increased attendance and student retention by several respondents (e.g. 0301, 0730, 0527, 0601).

Sumson (1994) states that "in order for student teachers to become empowered, their voices must be heard" (p. 16). The responses on the questionnaires and in the focus group interviews often intertwined the benefits of student feedback for program and students. Students would
feel their needs were being met and gain confidence. Program benefits might include “more students...[and finding] out what students’ needs are” (0606), as noted previously, respondent 0606 also predicted that as the program meets the needs of the students, they will “like the program better, study better”. Other respondents referred to the identification of possible motivational and confidence builders in questionnaires and interviews. Just as teacher educators can see the value of guidelines for program evaluation (Moore et al., 1993), student participation can be valued for its contribution to the program (Sumsion, 1994, Gaies, 1992, Nelli & Nutter, 1984, McGregor, 1981).

5.2 Discussion and Implications

The present study investigated M.A. students’ perceptions of their own program’s curriculum content and M.A. student inclusion in internal evaluations. The primary focus was to discover ways to incorporate M.A. students’ feedback that would be perceived as effective and beneficial. The reflective practice was deliberately included so students could use the experience when
answering the open-ended questions or perhaps during an interview if they had not previously considered evaluating their program. The study also noted the possible negative aspects of various aspects of M.A. student feedback. Finally, the study suggests that the field of ESL teacher education must consider the use of varying types of feedback in different contexts due to the different ways ESL teacher education programs are organized.

The study does not assert that M.A. student feedback is the most important part of program evaluation, but it can provide student and program with useful information (White 1998; Sumson 1994; Moore et al, 1993; Gaies, 1992; Kagan, 1992; Day, 1991; Brousseau et al, 1988; Zeichner & Liston, 1987; Nelli & Nutter, 1984). The NCATE Standards state that the “relationship to the world of practice, students and faculty are of equal importance in a teacher education program” (NCATE, 1994, p. 33). This comment and the 2002 version show that NCATE Standards are up-to-date in reference to the topics of the a knowledge base and increased involvement in research.
5.2.1 Evaluation Effectiveness

The TESOL Guidelines (1998) also stipulate that the administrative and instructional staff share in the responsibility for [curricular] decision-making with systematic input or feedback from the students served by the program. (p. 227). Internal evaluations of an ESL teacher preparation program can help identify the needs of students within the bigger focus of the department. Different programs have different organization due to the different locations e.g., Departments of Linguistics and Colleges of Education. The programs located in Departments of Linguistics often focus on teaching adults while those in Colleges of Education often focus on teaching in a K-12 setting in public schools. These different types of programs have different goals. The evaluative experience may help the students understand the goals and help the programs' administration and faculty judge if the goals are being met. The evaluations can also provide the students with focused reflection of what they have learned in theory or put into practice. Zeichner and Liston (1987) believe that by teaching students to be reflective, teacher educators are
enabling student teachers to develop the pedagogical habits and skills necessary for self-direct growth and toward preparing them, individually and collectively, to participate as full partners in the making of educational policies. (p. 23)

Program evaluations may also assist in the development of new aspects of the program. Through the identification of current student needs, the program’s curriculum can stay current and, in turn, help direct the program’s development. Those preservice teachers who feel involved will take “an active role in shaping the program and their own professional development” (McCaleb, 1987, p.62).

5.2.2 Recommendations for M.A. student feedback

1) Timing. An important element to consider when requesting feedback is timing. Just when is the appropriate time to conduct the program evaluation? Some subjects suggested involving students in the midst of their program as well as at the end and later as alumni. Many of the participants in the survey and/or interview process proposed both current students and alumni as participants in program evaluation. Reasons given for including the current students pointed out that they are sometimes working while they study and therefore, become aware of
effectiveness and necessity of certain program components. Other students also stated that if current students are involved in the program evaluation, whether in their first semester or their last, all students could have a valuable contribution. Some subjects stated that alumni are out in the field and may know what current employers are looking for in an ESL professional and have experienced the entire program. Thus, according to the subjects, data could be collected from students at various points during their program and after as alumni. The information could then be available when needed for evaluations or longitudinal study.

2) Required/Voluntary Participation. Another point to take into consideration is the use of voluntary or required participation. If the feedback is to be frank and valuable, one wonders about the feedback that is forced from a student. Several of the interview participants, as well as questionnaire respondents suggested that some M.A. students would hesitate to be truthful because of the need for recommendation letters in the near future. Many respondents also stated that course evaluations are already in place but, they doubt the value and wonder if they are truly considered. All of these constraints seem to point
toward the need of multiple ways for the M.A. students to participate. Voluntary and involuntary, anonymous and identified, formal and informal; all have their positive and negative aspects.

3) Type of Questions. The specific type of questioning has similar constraints. One wants the manner in which the feedback is requested to be practical and yet, provide beneficial data for the program. Concise questions are just as valuable as concise answers, as long as the outcome is data that can be used. In some cases, preparation programs might prefer more formal feedback. This type of feedback was usually described in one of two ways by subjects.

1. Written surveys or questionnaires were two of the most common suggestions given by subjects. Many M.A. students commented that both forms could be electronic (e.g. e-mail or web page). These could be given at different times than the course evaluations in order to emphasize that they have different functions. The surveys or questionnaires could also be sent to alumni, who, for the most part, seem to be an untapped resource. Both open-ended and focused questions have their place in these types of feedback. Focused questions could be used to address
specific points in an evaluation. Open-ended questions would allow students the opportunity to expand on the identified topics and add their own concerns. The written, pencil & paper form could provide the anonymity that some of the students still seek. There were no divisions among the types of programs or students identifying who preferred one type of questioning or another.

2. Student representation on departmental committees was repeatedly suggested by subjects from different types of programs. In program three, student representation on departmental committees was a current practice, but the M.A. students interviewed sometimes doubted the impact of the student presence on the committee. There was supposed to be student representation on a curriculum committee in program one, but the committee had not met recently. In such cases, there is a need to be seen as professionals and to be taken seriously by the faculty. If the students and their feedback are taken seriously, they will take the responsibility seriously. It is also a great learning experience for these preservice teachers to learn and participate in professional duties other than teaching. Students could then voice their opinions through this type of representation and still feel somewhat anonymous.
On the other hand, there is also a time and a place for more informal feedback. Open forums, one-on-one meetings and suggestion boxes were examples of this type of feedback. Open forums or one-on-one meetings were suggested by students across program type. If students feel comfortable or if they see the department professors as approachable, open forums or meetings could be a successful means of providing feedback. This type of informal data collection can also be used for needs analysis at the very beginning of the evaluation process to assist in the framework of the evaluation. A secondary benefit for the program with this type of informal data collection is that it could provide the program with a quick temperature of the student population. A few respondents recommended it as a formal type of feedback as well if organized by the department or possibly run by an objective party.

A Suggestion box was a less common idea, but it was suggested by several of those subjects who wanted anonymity. This type of feedback might allow some students to be more honest. A web-based version of a suggestion box was also suggested. However, most who suggested this idea also said that they were not sure if it would be taken as seriously if the suggestions were completely anonymous.
Thus, a combination of feedback would probably be effective for both the M.A. students and the programs.

5.3 Conclusion

While the findings in this study cannot be generalized and there is much more research to be done in the field of ESL teacher preparation evaluation, it is strongly recommended that M.A. students be involved with the preparation program evaluation. If we, as ESL teacher educators and ESL teachers, are to say that we are lifelong learners and want our preservice ESL teachers to have the perception that they are professionals, we have to go beyond the classroom and involve them in the program. This encourages the study and identification of a knowledge base and the professionalization of the field (Shulman, 1987, Hollingsworth, 1987, Grossman 1989; 1991, MacKay, 1994; Cruickshank, 1996). We need to continually evaluate our programs and the needs of our student population to be sure the program is effectively preparing teachers. Needs analyses can help identify the needs and can help us begin the evaluation process. We need to hear what the M.A.
students have to say about the program as a whole and its components to see if the program is meeting its goals and see how the goals are perceived by the students.

Having students reflect on what they have learned in the program at various intervals can help them analyze the practicality of the theory, as well as see the theory behind the practices (Zeichner & Liston, 1990; Adler, 1991; Sumsion, 1994; Cruickshank et al., 1996). The education of these future professionals, as ESL educators and teachers continue to fight to be seen, needs to be continually evaluated and studied in order to provide them with a valuable foundation on which to build their future. A complaint heard from students at different programs was that professors did not listen or even care what the students thought about the program. Several referred to the “ivory tower” and the professors being out of touch with what is currently going on in the field. Others pointed out that the faculty may be caught in the “publish or perish” trap at the university. Many subjects spoke about the possibility of student feedback in a program evaluation as hypothetical, while others questioned the
consideration it would be given even if it were included in an evaluation. This pessimism can only be fought with action.

Identifying benefits is one way one might encourage the inclusion of M.A. student feedback in program evaluation. M.A. students could benefit from the reflection of their educational experience and learn analytical skills. Minor changes might address students' perceived needs e.g., adding a specific class in theory (SLA) or practice (lesson planning). Programs might benefit from the feedback by learning certain aspects of the curriculum is not perceived as effective. Additional investigation could be done to find out why the students have these perceptions and if any changes are warranted. Until further research is carried out in this area, these recommendations may encourage ESL teacher preparation programs to understand the perceptions of the M.A. students and include the students in program evaluation through feedback.
5.4 Limitations

The study used both questionnaires and interviews in order to provide extra description about the inclusion of M.A. student feedback in program evaluation. However, face-to-face directions for the questionnaires were not always possible due to distance. It is possible that one of the limitations of this study is that the researcher was not always available to read and/or explain instructions for the questionnaires. This may have caused some misunderstanding of the directions in the Likert-scale section of the questionnaire.

The study may also have been limited by its use of convenience sampling in order to examine the preparation of preservice ESL teachers at ten different universities. The subjects in the study were not chosen randomly, but rather identified through accessibility and a need to represent various types of ESL teacher education programs. The individual interviews were also done on a completely voluntary basis. These factors limited the sample size from the questionnaires (n=101) and the focus group (n=18), which also makes it impossible to generalize to a population.
The distance between the researcher and the physical location of several programs also limited the interview portion of the study since they were not always conducted in person. Interviewees were also not contacted afterward to confirm themes, although confirmation questions were used frequently throughout interviews and an informal audit trail was performed. Information related to the research questions was highlighted and recurrent themes were written in the margins on transcripts and the questionnaires' open-ended questions. A colleague of the researcher examined the interview transcripts without highlight and then with findings to identify them as confirmable, i.e., logically derived from the data.

In addition, the data collected do not provide causal results that might indicate program improvement, but rather help to formulate recommendations for the continued use of student feedback in ESL teacher preparation program evaluations.
5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies and Pedagogical Implications

The present study attempted to investigate the possibilities of including M.A. students of TESL programs in internal evaluations. There are further questions that could be asked in reference to effectiveness and influence on ESL teacher education.

First, as stated in the literature review, more research is needed on ESL teacher preparation, in general. In relationship to this need, the type of evaluation that would be most effective needs to be identified. By first establishing a goal, the evaluation and the type of M.A. student feedback can be determined.

Second, the present study shows M.A. students' perceptions of their program and hypothetical evaluation situations at a given time. A longitudinal study of a specific program (or programs) could lead to more detailed results that would allow the researcher to consider long-term effects and effectiveness.

Third, the practice of evaluating the teacher education program may provide the preservice teacher with reflective activity. Evans & Bethel (1984) imply that benefits exist.
in preservice teacher involvement in program evaluation as they believed that the preservice teachers could contribute to the data of the Teacher Education Skills Survey. Zeichner and Liston (1987), Cruickshank et al. (1994) and Knight and Becker (1994) all suggest encouraging critical examination and reflection on the part of the preservice teacher "that may bring about professional growth" (Zeichner and Liston, 1987).

Fourth, it is also important to foster research skills in these preservice teachers from the beginning. Whether in evaluation or action research, their continued critical inquiry will help their professional development and the field. In order to facilitate this, preservice teachers need to be provided with the skills to participate.

Finally, internal program evaluations and/or self-studies promote the idea of research and critical inquiry from the beginning of one's education through one's professional career. By empowering student teachers and letting their voices be heard, some stakeholders e.g., program administrators may feel insecure. Some of those in decision-making positions may not be willing to accept feedback from students in any other form than course evaluation. The inclusion of M.A. student feedback in
program evaluation must be shown as valuable and, while it is just one part, it can contribute to the overall effectiveness of an evaluation.
REFERENCES


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Appendix A: Letters to Program Chairs

Name
Address

Dear Dr. X:

I am currently a Ph.D. candidate at the Ohio State University. As we all know ESL teacher preparation varies widely from program to program. While TESOL has provided some suggestions and guidelines, nothing concrete has been set up in terms of what is best in an ESL teacher preparation program.

In my dissertation, I will study what curricular components MA students from different programs find to be most effective in their preparation program. This will be an introduction to the second part of the questionnaire in which I will ask the participants to consider an internal program evaluation. The questions to be answered include: who should be on the evaluation committee, what should be analyzed and what possible benefits could come from the inclusion of MA students in the process. I would like to visit a required course/mail some questionnaires that could be distributed during a required course. I have enclosed a sample questionnaire for your perusal. As you can see from the front page, students will sign a permission form and will be asked if they would like to participate in a follow-up interview.

Please let me know if this is something in which you and your students would like to participate. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at home (see address above) or at Ohio State (bowman.150@osu.edu or (614) 688-8641.

Sincerely,

Michele S. Bowman
Doctoral Candidate
Ohio State University
Appendix A continued.

Date
.Michele Bowman
1810 Lafayette Place, B6
Columbus, OH 43212

Name
University
Address

Dear Dr. X:

I want to thank you for your offer to visit your class and to deliver these questionnaires to your students. Enclosed please find X copies of the questionnaires with permission form attached. The self-addressed envelopes should accompany the questionnaires as they are handed out. In the event that any of the students wish to participate in a follow interview, I will contact them through the information given on that front page. The interview will be done in person and will be arranged on an individual basis. (The interview will be by phone due to schedules and distance.)

I will plan on being at X on (date) at (time) in order to distribute the questionnaires. If this date and time are no longer available, please contact me as soon as possible.

OR

The permission form explains the use of the information clearly; however, I have included an explanation of the research that you may read to the students.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at home (see address above) or at Ohio State (bowman.150@osu.edu or (614) 688-8641.

Sincerely,

Michele S. Bowman
Doctoral Candidate
Ohio State University
Appendix B: Questionnaire

ESL M.A. Student Questionnaire
Perceptions of Teacher Preparation Program

As an M.A. student in ESL, you are in the midst of your training and/or education in the field. This questionnaire will ask you to think about your ESL teacher preparation. The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine which curricular components and/or courses the preservice ESL teacher believes are the most effective in preparing him/her to become a teacher. Please fill in the appropriate blanks and sign your name in order to grant permission to use this information for my dissertation research and return it in the SASE provided for you. Those who also submit their names to participate in the interviews will be entered into a lottery. One participant from each school will win $50 (U.S.) as a prize.

Thank you,

Michele Bowman

I, ____________________, grant Michele Bowman permission to use the information that I have given in this questionnaire. I understand that complete anonymity will be upheld during coding and in the data representation in the final dissertation form.
I would / would not like to participate in an interview to be conducted by Michele Bowman at a later date. I can be reached at (please provide a phone number or e-mail address):

Telephone ____________________
E-mail ____________________
ESL M.A. Student Questionnaire

Perceptions of Teacher Preparation Program

Time began Survey:

PART ONE Please fill out this demographic information. All responses are confidential. The information will be used to understand the make-up of the respondents and to group responses for data analysis.

1. Nationality: ____________________________
2. Sex: Male Female
3. Is this your initial ESL preparation? _______
   If not, where did you first study teaching ESL?
4. Age at the beginning of your ESL preparation: _____ years
5. Did you have any professional teaching experience before entering the ESL teacher preparation program? _______
   If so, what kind and how much? _______________________________
6. What other degree(s) do you hold? _______________________
7. From what college/university ______________________________
8. When will you finish this degree in ESL? ________________
9. Do you currently have a job or will you return to a job in ESL? ________________________________________________
   If so, what is your job title? ______________________________
10. How long have you worked there? _________________________

PART TWO
For each statement in Part Two, circle the numeral that you think best matches your response to the statement. If the question does not pertain to you individually, mark N/A. Please answer each question according to your experiences and knowledge of your current program.

The response scale has the following values:
   1 = Strongly Agree
   2 = Agree
   3 = N/A (neutral or not applicable)
   4 = Disagree
   5 = Strongly Disagree

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I believe that my program's curriculum has the components needed to</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>prepare me to be an ESL teacher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My program includes a strong theoretical component.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My program includes a strong practicum/student-teaching component.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Education Foundations course(s) are important parts of the</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>program's curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The second language acquisition theory course(s) are important parts</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>of the program's curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Theoretical Linguistics course(s) are important parts of the</td>
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<td>program's curriculum.</td>
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<td>7. The phonology course(s) are important parts of the program's</td>
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<tr>
<td>curriculum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. The phonetic course(s) are important parts of the program's</td>
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<tr>
<td>curriculum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. The Applied Linguistics course(s) are important parts of the</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>program's curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. The Listening/Speaking methodology course(s) are important parts of</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the program's curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The English Grammar methodology course is an important part of the</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program's curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The Reading/Writing methodology course(s) are important parts of</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the program's curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The English Literature course(s) are important parts of the</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>program's curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The Accent Reduction course is an important part of the program's</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The practicum/student teaching component is an important part of the</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>program's curriculum.</td>
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Survey continued

PART THREE

Please answer these following questions as they pertain to your experience in your current M.A., ESL program. If you need more room to write your answers for the open-ended questions, please use an additional sheet of paper and mark your questionnaire number in the upper right-hand corner and the question number next to the response.

1. What is it about your program's curriculum that you feel best prepares you to be an ESL teacher?

2. Is there anything missing from your program that might better prepare you? If so name the courses or curricular components that you would like to have in your preparation program.

3. Do you think that MA students should have the opportunity to voice their opinions about the program in an official evaluation?

   A. If so, how might student voices be incorporated into an internal evaluation

   B. If not, would you like to provide feedback to the program in an unofficial way?

4. What do you think the benefits of student input to the program evaluation may be?

Time Finished Survey: THANK YOU.
Appendix C: Transcripts

I= Interviewer  
P= Participant

0111 interview

I: Your other ESL or EFL preparation was through the Peace Corps?
P: Yes and then I taught ESL when I got back.
I: Did you see a major difference?
P: Somewhat. ESL students have different needs.
I: I see you’re working as a TA is that in a local public school?
P: Yes. My placement is just for a quarter. I’ll be teaching an undergrad linguistics course in the Fall.
I: Did you find a big difference between your previous ESL teaching and teaching in the elementary school.
P: Yes. I think I was more conscious of the decisions I made as far as the teaching goes. I was aware of theory and then trying to choose materials. I didn’t realize that I was going by an article I read about background knowledge.
I: When you started that job, you had been in the program for how long?
P: About 8 months.
I: And the Peace Corps?
P: about 3 months. Our trainer was an MA student in EFL. She was very good.
I: What was it about this program that made you choose it?
P: Two or three things. It was part theory and part TEFL. I had missed the deadline for others, but this program still considered my application and they were generous with funding.
I: I’ll let you refresh your memory with the comments. You didn’t mark anything for “My program contains a strong practicum component.” Did you miss it?
P: Next quarter we take a course called practicum, so I left it blank.
I: You marked questions 5 (SLA) and 6 (theoretical linguistics) as one (strongly agree). What was it about these classes that made you score it so highly?
P: I think coming back to the program after teaching abroad it seemed like the theory explained what I saw in a bigger framework. I think mark teachers can mark the errors and categorize them, but really can't explain why. And then when you take some of these courses it seems to click. One of the courses that people complained about was Syntax. They said this isn't going to help me as a teacher I don't know why I need to take this. It was funny I was working as a writing tutor and a problem came up that was exactly what we were talking about in class.

I: The ones that you marked as 4 and see if there is any particular reason why.

P: I think at that time I was bored with the TESL courses. We seemed to talk for hours about what seemed like common sense. I commented that they could be cut shorter and put more on practicum. I think we talk too much about how to teach. We could teach and then talk about the experience.

I: Questions 13 and 14 you marked 3. Is that because you don't have the courses?

P: Yes.

I: On part 3, you mention in question 2 that you would like the program to be more disciplinary and flexible to meet individual needs. What disciplines would you like to see incorporated?

P: The, our program is now, it's pretty structured. You get a sheet as soon as you come here that tells you the courses that you are going to take. If you take a language course from Modern languages, well it's not in our department so you don't get a grade for it. You will get the credit, but not a grade. If you take a language in the linguistics department then you do get a grade. In courses like psycholinguistics that is taught by the psychology department aren't credited at all because they aren't in our department. I think there are so many courses taught through other departments that could be very useful, but I feel as if we are discouraged. They aren't credited even as electives.

I: In terms of ways that a student might voice his/her opinion you mentioned surveys or anonymous letters. Why do you prefer anonymity?

P: We asked the professors about surveys here and we were told that there is a curriculum committee, but it hadn't met and then there are exit interviews at the end of the second year. Our teacher mentioned that people said they would not give opinions until they had gotten recommendation letters for jobs. Maybe, because it is a small program.

I: On the last questions, you mentioned that feedback after the first year when ideas are fresh.

P: I think feedback at different times would help. At the end of the second year, people are focused on looking forward for jobs not looking
back. At the end of the first year, you are still in a position to benefit.

I: Programs can evaluate themselves through professional organization guidelines. Evaluation can be done internally as well. What do you think the program should study?

P: I would think that certainly some sort of practicum or teaching experience should be required. Although from my position, already having taught, I'd like the opportunity to shorten that.

I: Flexibility?

P: Definitely flexibility. I think TEFL as it gets more competitive they are looking for someone with a niche. Someone who has the MA but also work in something like creative writing, film, psycholinguistics or something like that. This program has people who have never taught or many years. They have different needs. Maybe some kind of exit requirement, like comps and a thesis.

I: OK that evaluates the students. There are guidelines for teacher preparation programs from TESOL, although they're more suggestions. A program could make its own guidelines. If your program were to decide to make guidelines for internal evaluation, who should be on that committee?

P: I think it should be a mixture of faculty, 1st and 2nd year students, maybe even alumni. I'd also like to see TESOL and other school guidelines.

I: Is there anything you would like to add for student input?

P: I think there should be a lot because ultimately that is how a program is judged.

I: Do you think it is happening in your program now.

P: No, not at all.
I: I read here that your initial preparation was in the peace care.

P: Yes, I was one of the initial Peace Corps members to go in with early child care to work with the orphanages, but we didn't have much cooperation with them so I went to teach English in the high school to try to gain more acceptance into the community. Then I went to take the EFL training. The focus there was on using English language training as raising a consciousness. She was a great believer in Paulo Freire and in communicative methods for teaching English. So that's the short training I had.

I: I see you also taught in middle school.

P: My undergrad is in elementary and middle school. The teaching was in Romania, middle school, but I did my student teaching in 7th and 8th grade science and I went straight into the Peace Corp from there.

I: What was it about this program that made you want to come here?

P: Well, money was a big issue and I had a friend who did the program here and told me that there were a lot of Peace Corp people here. I was accepted here and got an assistant ship. I was also accepted at SIT, but didn't get any assistantship.

I: In the Likert scale section, look at that to refresh your memory. On number 4 (Education Foundations) you chose number 3. Was that because they don't focus on it or it is not offered.

P: Maybe I don’t really remember, probably because it doesn’t focus on it much. They really assume that you already have that here. I think here the pedagogy is much more specific. It’s not within the Linguistics Department.

I: And English Lit.

P: Not applicable

I: Accent Reduction?

P: I see I crossed out two and put 3. We did have a course about teaching pronunciation and it helped to plan out a curriculum, a program of study for a targeted group of students. Maybe because of the way it was worded, accent reduction, I

I: I see, because phonology and phonetics is over here?

P: There was some theoretical and this was a small part of it and I attended a workshop through speech and hearing, but as part of this program, not so much.

I: Could you narrow down to one or two things, what you feel to be the strongest components in your program?
P: to go into the classroom?

I: Yes.

P: I would say the English grammar methodology because it was one course we were worried about. Our professor is wonderful and takes a very practical view of teaching the course and puts the responsibility of class activities. So what we did was research a grammar point and then make a presentation and a demonstration...through all phases. Because I work that way, it’s better for me. It’s not really authentic. I chose teaching also because I’ve had the opportunity to take what I’ve learned in classes and apply them to my teaching. My other methodology courses are also high on the list.

I: So the application has been the best for you?

P: yes.

I: You mentioned that your teaching assistantship (at the intensive English Language Program) has been invaluable. Could you explain what it was about the T.A.ship.

P: I really didn’t feel like I was prepared for teaching. So I’ve had two years to work with different types of students different language groups. It’s the practical aspect of being able to put into practice all of the things that I was learning in classes. I wanted to make the bridge between the theory and practice. The contact with students has been invaluable.

I: In # 3, you refer to ways in which students

P: I mentioned face-to-face interviews. We do exit interviews and I think they should be done more often. They could be given to the curriculum committee, but there should be a response. I think programs would run more smoothly if the students feel they have a say. I think at this level you’re training people to be teachers and you should practice what you preach and be a part of that process.

I: There are guidelines by TESOL that are more suggestions for teacher preparation programs. A program could do an internal evaluation as well. If your program were to organize a committee to prepare an internal evaluation, who would you like on the committee?

P: Well, People who know about the TESOL guidelines and know what they mean. Maybe from the College of Education, but I don’t know about anyone here. Obviously, members of the faculty from the theoretical tract and the applied, TESL tract, the department chair. I don’t know how practical, but someone from each of the programs IEP etc. not to have a major voice, but what kind of coursework they would like to see. Something from International students who are getting degrees here to have some sort of voice. Sometimes they have a different view. As I said before, students should be involved in the program.

I: What criteria would there be?
P: The balance of theory and practice, they need to consider the input that students give in their Exit interviews. I know we gave specific information about the practicum, so needs and desires. See what other programs are doing around the nation. That was one thing that I enjoyed about the TESOL conference, hearing about different ways of doing things. Also, employment opportunities for students who are leaving the program. Have a better balance, be aware of the focus of the courses. The TA’s had a really good situation, but students who were into EFL really lost out. They have to make sure they get a foundation based on where they are going to go.

I: You mentioned a benefit for students as an ownership in their education. Could you explain?

P: I think I meant we have input, but they need to give feedback. Just to know that they are taking into consideration the comments. I think that if they actually have students, Of course graduate student on that committee, if they have students on the committee I think the environment that would exist would be great. Students would feel that they had more ownership and that they would really make a difference.

I: Can you think of any other benefits for program or students.

P: I think it would be a great selling point for getting students to come to the program. People coming from the Peace Corps or teachers going into a program where every thing is prescribed would sell very well. But if there is a balance of theory and practice and yes we want to hear your opinion and allow students to sit on the curriculum committee. I think teachers would see a difference because the students would be more interested because it is something they’ve asked to do and they’ll perform better.

I: Is there anything you would like to add?

P: no.
I: I noticed that you have another degree in linguistics.

P: Yes, linguistics and anthropology

I: I also came into education through linguistics.

P: I also have a Masters in Anthropology and then I switched.

I: What was it about this program that made you want to study here?

P: Well, I was already here, so probably the biggest factor was that I could transfer courses and it was only going to take four quarters, maximum to complete the program. But I did come into speak with Dr. X and Dr. Y and just from what they said, it sounded like a program that would work for me. At least I thought it would. I guess the biggest factor was convenience. I have always had an interest in teaching ESL. I did a project when I was doing my bachelors. I did a project for my English class on Bilingualism and it sort of branched off. I said I might like to volunteer after all of this and my professor gave me the name of a person at the Adult Education Center and I started teaching there. I had this in the back of my mind. And when I decided not to continue with the Ph.D. in Anthropology, I thought what I really might like to do is teach English.

I: How long did you volunteer there?

P: Maybe 6 months, just once a week, not a whole lot.

I: I understand you're tutoring now. For how long?

P: Right. Since January.

I: So that's a part-time temporary job?

P: Right.

I: The tutoring, is it once a week?

P: I work with three different students for 75 minutes. They are all at different levels and we do different activities, speaking and idiomatic expressions etc. One is a businessman.

I: You wrote a question next to the Educational Foundations statement. Basically, it refers to the History of Education, Educational Psychology etc. You marked three, would you change your answer?

P: Well, if I were doing certification, I'd have to take some of those courses, but the program I'm doing now, there isn't much focus on that. I mean, there's the base classes like SLA, I don't know if that would count. Maybe that's what I'm lacking.
I: Let me show your Likert Scale questions so you can follow along. On the “theory component” of the program, you marked one. Why did you mark 1.

P: I think you need a strong theory component to understand where the methodology is coming from. I use it because of this theory, so I understand what works or doesn’t and apply what’s relevant.

I: I guess that applies to #5 also?

P: Yes, that’s always the first class everyone takes. That was something that I didn’t know about before I started the program. I knew a little about first language acquisition from linguistics classes, but hadn’t really studied second language acquisition. I was curious about it also from my own experience of studying French.

I: Let’s look at #3, the practicum. You marked 5.

P: That might be a bit extreme, but there basically isn’t one, unless you’re doing certification. I think that is something some of the professors would like to change. We’re doing this methods class and we hardly any practice and I desperately needed that practice. The teachers did what they could, but there needed to be some class, maybe observation one quarter and another course where you could teach whether you’re doing certification or not. I realize people doing the certification have to do student teaching. Now there is a field experience class that you can take. It places you in an elementary or middle school. It really wasn’t helpful because they were preparing for a proficiency test, so they were working on that and I didn’t have the chance to see a regular class. She had students in and out all day. It was kind of disappointing. They had all kinds of things going on,

I: But you did manage to get into an ESL classroom.

P: Right and I did get to spend half the time with individual students. If they had a test in another class, they were allowed to come to the ESL class to get some help. It was good to work with them one on one. As far as I’m concerned, there is no practicum available. I know Drs. X and Z had said they tried to get some interest going, but they weren’t able to do it. I think a lot of students would like that. I have all of this information, but I don’t know how to apply it. In a methods class, we did lesson plans and created some things, but nothing was real life.

I: Number 15 reads a little differently and you marked 4. You don’t think it’s emphasized at all.

P: Not for lack of for the teacher’s part but… I’m wondering if I marked these others wrong, Do I think these should be...

I: No, if they are...

P: OK
I: Go ahead and take a look if you want to change anything.

P: We have one methods, but spend only about one class period on reading, writing, listening and speaking each. There's no English Lit. I did take a Syntax course in the linguistics department and it's recommended as an elective, but it's not part of the core courses.

I: In the open-ended questions, you mentioned that students should have the opportunity to voice their opinions in an official capacity, perhaps in a survey. Do you mean something like a course evaluation?

P: Those focus more on the teacher and not the classes. There's no survey that says, "Are you happy with the program?" I don't know how you would get people to fill out a program like that, perhaps before they leave the program. But the course evals. focus on the teacher rather than the course.

I: In terms of program evaluations, TESOL has some guidelines for programs for preparing ESL teachers. What do you think of guidelines that come from a professional organization?

P: I think it's a good idea. I just sent away for something from TESOL that says what employers are looking for in teachers. I think a program should include these things. I don't know if our school would conform to that. It might make programs more comparable instead of entirely different programs.

I: Those are generally called external evaluations. You can also have an internal evaluation. For example, if your program decided to create something that would be conducted once a year to make sure the program is up to par.

P: There should be some basic areas that every program should have.

I: Who, not names, but types of people, should be on the committee to develop this internal evaluation?

P: I guess students to start with. Ph.D, MA, M.Ed. students should all have representation. I imagine some of the professors as well. I don't know if anyone higher up, a director or education in general. I guess the coordinator of the program.

I: What sort of criteria should be the focus, what should be studied?

P: That's a good question. Well,

I: It can be general.

P: I guess look at the classes that are being offered and if they meet the expectations of the students. I guess it needs to be compared to what employers are looking for, what are desirable characteristics. They should decide if we have a balanced program or if they want to focus more on theory if you want to do research.
I: Those are different areas, theoretical, practical or research, interesting.

P: Yes.

I: What about the student input into the evaluation? Can you give me one example of how students could participate in the evaluation?

P: Just ask their opinion. Do we think what is taught matches what we will do in the real world. Ask in a survey or somehow ask us how our education will be useful to us.

I: Can you think of a benefit for the students from participating?

P: Well, you would feel more involved, you might have a say in the direction the program is going. Many may be happier with the program in general You know some just complain and can’t do anything about it. So the students might have a say in the direction or get a program that is more fitting to the needs of the students.

I: That’s a comment from the open-ended questions.

P: It could improve the program in general. If there is a lot of focus in one area and another is completely ignored that should be addressed, it might strengthen the program and make it more competitive with other programs.

I: You always want to try to do that. Is there anything else about program evaluation or student input that you would like to add?

P: Just that there is a lot going on in my own program with lack of professors and other things.
I: You taught EFL in Merida?
P: Yes
I: For how long?
P: Six months.
I: And you plan to teach EFL after you finish...?
P: Yes.

I: On the Likert scale you stated whether you agreed or disagreed with a list of statements about your program’s curriculum. On the Likert scale section of the survey you marked items 6 & 7 as NA. And 7 & 8 were marked as not present.

P: Talking with other students and for myself I didn’t feel there was much emphasis placed on these two courses in our core program. Probably the most extensive coverage has come in the SLA course, Dr. X’s class. We discussed (Language Acquisition). We discussed some aspects of each, but a friend took the phonetics class in the linguistics Department. And she said it was helpful.

I: I wanted to clarify your three...the last three. First English Literature...

P: English Literature is not present, nor is the accent reduction, practicum. I think I was one of the few people who already had certification in another language. I was able to compare programs and my Spanish program was much more practical. I observed and had teaching experience. With the ESL program there is a definite disadvantage to not observing, not going out in the field. I think it’s a major component that is missing.

I: Which courses do you think best prepare you to be an ESL/EFL teacher?

P: I think Methodology was the most important for me. Although, the SLA was the most interesting. It was a good balance. I didn’t have any exposure to theories before. The practical courses best prepare me for the classroom.

I: What do you think could be improved about the program?

P: I think the program would benefit by dividing the methodology course sections to cover the information adequately. We only did surface. Everything was crammed into one quarter. In addition, observation should be required.

I: In #3 you were asked if students have the opportunity to voice their opinions.
P: I think they should have the opportunity. We do have course evaluations. I doubt if they have any effect based on past experience.

I: How about for the program as a whole?

P: A student evaluation may help them see if they are meeting students' needs. I would assume they would get information from course evaluations.

I: Is there any other...

P: Perhaps after graduation. They would send out a survey to re-evaluate the program. I got one from my program at X.

I: TESOL has some guidelines for Teacher Education programs for ESL...

P: I'm not familiar with them. I've received materials from programs at other universities that seem similar to ours. Guidelines could be restrictive, may sacrifice other courses

I: Internal evaluation who

P: Professors and students. International and American students because needs will be different. They need a voice.

I: What criteria would you want the committee to review?

P: Meeting students needs, courses. Considering the different environments that students will work in, field experiences. They also need to take into consideration ESL vs. EFL. Many will be in the latter situation. They need to develop classes accordingly. They could bring in different perspectives besides the American perspective. A lot of our students are not Americans and won't work here. They need to think about what will be applicable.

I: How else can student input be elicited?

P: There could be a survey at the end as mentioned before. That's a written way. Perhaps each group of graduating students could have a meeting with professors about what they liked and disliked. People could bounce ideas off of each other to grasp what you went through.

I: So oral and written input...You mentioned some benefits for students and programs.

P: Students benefit, if not current ones, then future students in the sense that they will have their needs met. They will feel that they have a voice into their education process. They won't feel like just another voice in the crowd, but what is going to be delivered in the courses and what can they get out of it. As far as the faculty, I believe the faculty knowing the students' needs, will be able to address needs more easily, having had discussions and surveys from the students, it will be easier to meet their needs in the classroom. It could foster a better relationship between the students and the faculty.
members, which I think a lot of times we lack. For my own experience I try to keep a good relationship with my professors. I try to visit them often, see how I’m doing, sometimes just a general chat... Then, I feel better in class and perhaps the professor is more comfortable addressing something that could be problematic. So the program could benefit by the faculty meeting the students’ needs and fostering a better relationship.

I: Anything else about Student Input?

P Hmm. In my own experience, there is a particular faculty member who has really tried to have student input with the course. I think she does a pretty good job of it. I’ve had other professors where it is more “old school” style classroom, more teacher directed. In the other classes, there has been more student freedom. There is a better rapport, even among the students. There is more attention; there is more discussed. I think people are more apt to discuss their opinions as opposed to the other classes where it is more rigid or tense and students are more hesitant to force their opinions or participate in classroom discussion or what not.
0302 Interview

I: Basically, I just want to clarify some things from the questionnaire and then I’ll ask you a couple of other questions about program evaluation and the MA students participation.

P: OK

I: I wasn’t very clear on your preparation here. Are you in the MA program?

P: I just graduated.

I: OK. You just graduated. On the Likert scale, I had 15 statements and disagree and agree. Two of them you had neutral or not applicable and I just wanted to clarify which one it was. The listening speaking methodology, is it you just didn’t have a strong opinion about it or did you not have it.

P: OK. What was I supposed to do?

I: OK. The statement was the L/S methodology courses are important parts of the program’s curriculum and you marked NA (3). Was that because it’s not as strong as...

P: Do you mean in our particular curriculum?

I: yes

P: Or, I can’t remember your question, do I think it should be?

I: Is it part of your program?

P: No, I personally think it should have more emphasis.

I: Yes, you put that in one of your open-ended questions. I appreciate that. And number 13, The English literature

P: No

I: Some of the programs that are in English Departments, so that’s why it’s in there.

P: Uh huh.

I: You felt that the strongest parts were according to the Likert scale, theoretical linguistics and English Grammar methodology. Which do you think has the most emphasis?

P: emphasis or the best?

I: Let’s go with the emphasis.

P: OK. Then they are theoretical.....?
I: Theoretical component, theoretical linguistics and then English grammar methodology.

P: Theoretical component

IOK Which did you find to be the best in your opinion?

P: I think the theoretical component.

I: OK the same one.

P: They are all pretty close.

I: They are all close, ok. The one that you strongly disagreed on was that Accent Reduction course is an important part of the program’s curriculum. Is there...

P: There isn’t, so that’s what I was trying to say.

I: OK That helps me there.

P: The Listening/speaking is weak.

I: Right, you say that here. Pronunciation, stronger speaking/listening instruction, stronger practicums, more teaching experience. So, did everyone get some teaching experience?

P: Yes.

I: OK, but not always...

P: Not always enough unless you were a TA. If you were a TA, you got plenty.

I: So there weren’t always enough TAships to go around?

P: Right, and quite a few non-native speakers who wouldn’t be given jobs like that right off the bat.

I: I see. Now, you mention course evaluations as one way that MA students could voice their opinions. That’s done in almost all of the programs that I’ve spoken to. And TESOL also provides some guidelines for these MA programs. What basically should they, should the student have upon graduation. Now if you were to create an internal evaluation, rather than external like TESOL. First of all, being at a university, you have to have a committee.

P: Uh huh. I think they actually do that kind of thing, I don’t really know.

I: Oh really? That’s interesting. What kinds of people would you like to see on that committee? Not specific names, but

P: They have committees that function with student representatives.
I: Oh.

P: Like for I think the thing that you talking about. Maybe not evaluations, but suggestions about how to do certain things. I can't remember the name of the committees. I was never on any of them.

I: Yes, well it looks like you were quite busy anyway.

P: Yeah. but they had student representatives on the personnel committee and curriculum committee in both the linguistics and the TESOL halves of the department

I: So there were student reps on those committees. Are there any parts of the curriculum or criteria that you would like to have them study?

P: I don't know. I really don't what is done so I can't say what should be done.

I: Well, then you can think of this as a new committee. This committee is going to create a program evaluation, study the whole program to see whether it is preparing to be competent ESL teachers. Is there any part of the program that you would like to see evaluated?

P: Well, I guess the Listening/Speaking aspect of it.

I: OK so the L/S part of the curriculum needs to be looked at?

P: Yes.

I: You do mention some benefits for the program in that they will get a different perspective and they will hear requests from a variety of people with differing needs. The needs analysis is something that's done with this type of evaluation. What type of benefit do you think the student might receive?

P: By being a part of the process?

I: By being a part of this evaluation process, exactly.

P: Well, if they're going to go on to work in this type of an area they'll get a look at the other side of this question. The faculty point of view, than always just the student perspective.

I: Anything else.

P: I don't think so.

I: one last question. In your answer to "What is it about

P: that goes along with the theoretical aspect that I think they did a good job of emphasizing that method of teaching or approach whatever you want to call it.
I: That’s right, all kinds of different terms. Is there anything about program evaluation or MA student participation that came to mind since filling out the questionnaire or while we’ve been talking?

P: I have real mixed feelings about student evaluations and anonymous evaluations in general. I guess that studies have shown that it’s fairly accurate, the information that is derived. But I think there’s a real restraint on students even if they’re anonymous to writing down what they really think. And I also think that there’s a, with the anonymity, the teacher can be placed in a difficult position of maybe making the course easier so they’ll get a high evaluation. I think it’s a touchy area. Personally, I’m not crazy about it.

I: OK. well that’s the point.

P: But I (inaudible) the results though.

I: So there might be some point in emphasizing the anonymity for the students anyways.

P: Well it isn’t really. It is, but it isn’t.

I: Well there have been some suggestions that...

P: Well from the students’ perspectives, if they were sure that it was anonymous, they might be more forthcoming. But from the faculty perspective an anonymous to me, an anonymous, a person can write down anything for any reason if they have a grudge. or been treated what they don’t think is quite right. I don’t...

I: OK, I see what you mean.

P: I think there’re problems no matter which way you do it...from the different perspectives.

I: I see, some valid reasons for both sides.

P: Really. I do. I can see as a teacher it could be difficult. If you’re being evaluated as far as your promotion and that kind of stuff based on an anonymous student evaluation.

I: Right. I always ask if there are any other comments in a telephone interview because I can’t see if I’ve cut you off...
I: On the Likert scale, you stated whether you agreed or disagreed with a list of statements about your program’s curriculum. There were three that you marked neutral or not applicable. The first was “My program includes a strong theoretical component.”

P: I wrote disagree? I’m taking theory methods now for writing. We’re studying, well, maybe what mislead me was strong. If it meant a lot, it’s neither strong or weak. Just a lot.

I: Just alright?

P: Yes, that’s what I think.

I: That’s why I like to go over these in the interview, so I can translate what the marks mean. The second was SLA courses.

P: They are, what did I write?

I: You wrote neutral.

P: Oh my God, that’s definitely...

I: So is that strongly agree or agree?

P: That’s strongly agree.

I: OK. L/S methodology?

P: We just have an oral practicum. That’s it.

I: So, you’re in the middle with that one.

P: Yes. Not that much.

I: You disagree that Education courses...

P: I studied Education in my undergraduate degree.

I: But in this program...?

P: There’s just one class. I think they should have Educational Components.

I: Does your program have any English Lit courses?

P: No. I studied some in my undergrad program.

I: Does your program have an Accent Reduction course?

P: Well, they don’t have it. A couple of teachers offer a course. I’m planning to take it but it isn’t in the curriculum.
I: What was it about this program that made you decide to study here?

P: I didn't choose the university. I got a scholarship from the American government, a Fulbright scholarship. Then I wanted to study TESOL and well, this university accepted me to start last spring.

I: OK. What is it about this program that you feel has been the most effective in preparing you to be an ESL teacher?

P: The theory/methods is very important. At the moment, I'm taking Materials in TESOL. Also, I'm taking, it's related to computer learning & teaching...I don't know, there are students who don't have a very good command of English. They can study the linguistics an all of it. I think they need to be sure the students have a command of the English language.

I: So that's something you might want to have added?

P: Yes. I think they should offer English classes for graduate students, especially for oral skills.

I: A lot of TESOL teachers preparation programs are different around the US. They are in a lot of different departments. TESOL has some guidelines, but they aren't requirements, they are sort of suggestions. That sort of external evaluation can be used. There is also the possibility of doing an internal evaluation. If your department were to organize a committee to create an internal evaluation within the department, what types of people would you like to see on the committee? Not specific names, but types of people.

P: Linguists

I: Within the department?

P: Well, I don't understand that.

I: The program is going to see if it is going to meets its goals.

P: Oh students, the professors, graduate and undergraduate students. The students are always complaining. They always have an idea and they often have experience. I think they can really add something. I don't know about administrative staff, they usually just think of the money point of view and not the learning. Students have a lot to say.

I: It would be impossible to get every single student on the committee, so how might it be possible to voice their opinions?

P: There is a group of master's students, I don't know if they call it a union or what. They have an organization within the department. And I guess they could come up with some ideas. I know one of the students who is very involved in this organization and in TESOL. That would be a good way to reach them.
I: One interesting thing on your questionnaire open-ended questions was that you wrote both surveys and discussions, so you had an oral and written way...

P: Yes, you could do a survey. You don’t know what is in their mind sometimes. An oral, when you talk to a person, they might be more eager to talk. Survey is good for statistics, but discussion is good so everyone can speak.

I: What sort of benefit might the students gain from voicing their opinions?

P: Every program should meet the students needs. I don’t know if the teachers know what the students need. It might change over time. They might be looking for something that is not offered. If the students see that they are going to be taken into account, students will be willing to participate. I understand that in this department when you talk, when students ask for something, usually it is given. That is what I’ve heard. I guess the department would be open if it’s done in a systematic way.

I: What sort of benefits might the program gain?

P: It’s going to be updated. If it’s not updated, it is going to be out-dated. If they are going to do this, other programs should be studied. If students want to try out other courses, the program could be upgraded and good because the students’ needs would be listened to. At least we are on the right track, we may not have everything. There is going to be benefits for both sides. And of course the name for the university, oh yes they have a great program. If they are looking for more international students, it would help.
I: In the questionnaire you mentioned in the Likert scale several strongly agree statements. I'm going to read those to you and I'd you to see if you can pick which one is maybe the most important part, in your opinion...

P: about the...?

I: your program.

P: about the TESOL program

I: exactly

P: OK

I: The three that you marked strongly agree were: The theoretical linguistic courses were important parts of the program's curriculum, the phonetic course, and the listening/speaking methodology courses were important parts of the program's curriculum.

P: I said that I agree that they are important parts

I: Yes

P: And now I need to explain why?

I: Is there one that you think is the strongest?

P: Well, the phonetics.

I: The phonetics, OK. What department is your program in?

P: Linguistics.

I: You said that your practicum or student-teaching component is not very strong.

P: It really wasn't this last, there's an oral production and a written production one and they have students sign up either from the community and... we had 25 student teachers and only 3 classes. Which means we only taught 6 days a week, sorry 6 days for the entire time. Now this time they have the same number of students and only 6 student teachers. So I just got signed up for the practicum probably at a bad, a semester when we didn't have enough students to learn very good or practice teaching on.

I: I see. So there are a limited number of spaces.

P: Well, they were offering the oral practicum course to teach oral production every semester and then they stopped. And then I think they realized they had too many student teachers in one semester and not enough students, so I think they've changed that back.
I: OK. So, that caused a small problem in your program, your personal

P: My personal journey through the program.

I: OK you also said, you disagreed that the English grammar
methodology course and the Accent reduction course to be important
parts of the program's curriculum.

P: I'm not really sure that the...the grammar course that they've
offered what they did was they had a linguistics person who knew, it's
called pedagogical grammar and the professor who taught that taught the
semester that I had, she knows her stuff she knows syntax and all of
that, but she really didn't teach us how to teach. And one of the
reasons that I chose to get my masters in TESOL was because that's one
of the weakest areas that I had. is the grammar, so I was very, very
disappointed because we ended up doing it seems like syntax through the
entire time and did very little regarding teaching. I've learned more
about grammar in the last 2 weeks getting tutored with a professor than
I did the entire semester.

I: Oh.

P: So they switched professors because the one professor is on
sabbatical, so hopefully this semester the students will actually have
a stronger teacher.

I: Hopefully. And you strongly, the accent reduction, do you have one
of those courses.

P: I don’t think so if we do I haven’t taken it...

I: What about, excuse me?

P: I don’t know why I would have strongly disagreed.

I: You probably meant not applicable.

P: Yeah.

I: And I assume that's what you meant with English lit also.

P: Yes.

I: Usually the linguistics programs don’t have those. OK. What was
it about your program that made you decide to go there?

P: Actually I was teaching over in Korea and I met a graduate of X and
she really encouraged me to go there and she told me about it and
helped to pave the way for me. I had really never really heard of x or
any program. I looked at a couple of programs before I chose X.

I: How long did you teach in Korea?

P: I taught there for just under 2 years.
I: OK. You’re getting ready to graduate in the spring, right?

P: Yeah, getting that thesis written.

I: Yes. What was it about this program that you have found to be most beneficial in preparing you to be an ESL/EFL teacher?

P: I think the most beneficial thing that I personally have had, and unfortunately not everyone gets that, is the, I was hired as a grad assistant in CESL department and I’ve been able to take the things that I’ve learned in class, in my grad courses and immediately apply that in the courses that I was teaching.

I: OK that’s...

P: That is basically some of the things that have been good for me but they only hire maybe 12 people. And non-native speakers don’t get that opportunity at all or not very often. A couple do.

I: Now your practicum your job at the IEP?

P: My job in IEP, CESL is just a grad assistant. There’s a practicum that we take which is basically a course. There are two. There’s an oral practicum and a written practicum.

And I’m taking the written practicum right now.

I: OK then I’m misunderstanding this oral practicum. Is it teaching?

P: It is teaching. What we did was we met, the university offers a class called Linguistics 100 and it’s an oral production class. People from the community or any university students can take it. The oral practicum course, what happens is student-teachers sign up for it. It’s a 500-level course. Every few weeks they get, there are three levels in Ling 100 we’re assigned to teams and then we teach in the class and then we watch our peers teach. Also we didn’t have enough students and too many teachers.

I: Are you teaching ESL or linguistics?

P: The Ling 100 is oral production, so it is ESL. It’s called ling 100, but it’s basically oral production.

I: I see.

P: Now the written practicum course that I’m taking right now, we have the choice of either tutoring or helping a teacher, a writing teacher, grade papers, so we really don’t have a chance to teach. Last year in the written practicum course, all they did was tutor.

I: I see.

P: so they really don’t have anything set up. but I have an advantage, 12 of us have an advantage, because we are grad assistants for the CESL, an IEP

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I: right

P: And also I took a materials and TESOL class, developing materials and theory of methods, which is basic teaching, and when I started teaching in CESL, I was able to take both of those things and immediately apply it and it was great.

I: Right.

P: But not all of the students in this program get the chance to do that.

I: So that is a selective thing. You're very lucky to have that opportunity.

P: Yes. I've been very fortunate.

I: Is there anything that you would have liked to have had that you didn't have? For instance, do you think there is anything missing from the curriculum?

P: Well, having a better teaching grammar course and I think we've already covered. And I think we've already addressed it well enough to the administration that they're aware of what happened. Other than that I can't think of anything else.

I: How did you give that information to the administration?

P: Well, through the evaluations. I know that I personally have, I don't know if it has ever formally been given to the administration, but teachers hear students talk.

I: OK

P: I know that I mentioned it to a couple of professors and they said, "I know, I know, I heard."

I: So there's been formal and informal...

P: I don't know if there's been any formal, but I know that there have been a lot of informal complaints about that class.

I: OK. Well, at least they're hearing you.

P: And they do. And that's one thing that I respect about the administration here. They hear, listen to the students and take our suggestions.

I: That's very interesting. Have you heard of any TESOL guidelines for the teacher preparation programs?

P: Huh huh.

I: There do exist some guidelines. They're more like suggestions in
terms of what an ESL teacher preparation program should include. And that’s sort of an external source, an external evaluation. And what I’m interested in is a more internal evaluation. Now I think we have already addressed partially. MA students have the opportunity to give their opinions about the program?

P: Yes

I: In what ways

P: There are several ways at X that we have, that we can talk about the program. Maybe a more informal way, as students we do feel comfortable going to the director of the linguistics department and talking to him directly. Also if we don’t want to burn any bridges that way, we can also go through the linguistics student association. And we have student reps that belong on different committees, for example the executive council. and if it were really necessary the rep of that committee could bring up that issue.

I: Now is that executive committee for your department?

P: For the department, yes. I don’t know. I personally feel totally comfortable going into the director’s office and saying “I don’t like this”. I personally have never done it, but I....

I: You would feel comfortable doing it.

P: I was just in there today talking about pictures on the wall. He is very personable. People are just very, work gets done, but I’ve always called the department my linguistics family.

I: It’s very helpful. Now you mention in your open-ended questions that there is an exit interview.

P: As far as I know.

I: so you really don’t have any personal experience with that.

P: Not yet. In three more months I will.

I: OK. They do course evaluations.

P: Yes at the end of each course.

I: At the end of each course, but that’s about each course specifically.

P: Yes.

I: Can you think of any other way MA students might be able to voice their opinion about the program?

P: I can think of a way that we almost did.
I: What is that?

P: There's a temporary professor this past semester and she really has not clicked with the students. And she is teaching some of the core classes. And she is a brand new professor, she is ABD. She is teaching written practicum this semester and somebody came to me and said "Y, you are the only person that this might happen to. We're thinking about making it so no one in the class signs up for the course so we can show the department that we don't want her as a professor". So it's a real informal channel.

I: So sort of unofficial.

P: Yeah, it's a real unofficial thing. It just turned out that some of the people decided not to take her. And they have promised to offer the class next year at a different time and the professor, a lot of it was that she would not be hired back.

I: All right. There are official and unofficial ways that you can go about that.

P: Yes, it was more or less a revolt, it would have been. but it didn’t happen.

I: I see.

P: When it was threatened, and I, of course, because it would have affected my graduation because I was the only one who needed the course to graduate this year. I went to my advisor and nipped it in the bud.

I: OK If your program were to decide to create its own evaluation, maybe for the revamping of the entire program or just a review, who would you like to see on this committee to create the evaluation. Not specific names, but types of people.

P: To create an evaluation for the entire program.

I: Right, the evaluation is going to have to look at certain things about the program.

P: So they would create the evaluation or conduct the evaluation?

I: They would create it.

P: I think that that type of evaluation should be done by someone who does that kind of stuff.

I: So you’re thinking of people who are not in the program

P: Not directly related to the program. I don’t think an internal thing like that would be as effective.

I: Let’s say that your program has already decided to do this. What sort things would you like to see them check into. What parts of either the curriculum or any part of the program, what would you like
them to focus on.

P: Is it (inaudible) or the courses and can the teachers, the professors actually teach. Some people get their Ph. D. and they really can’t teach. Thank God most of the people at the X department can. If it...You’re teaching teachers, so you know higher expectations. The content of the course, is it relevant to what we want to do. Things of that nature.

I: What benefit would students receive from giving input into this type of program evaluation?

P: I'm not sure that it would help any current students. I think that type of evaluation, it would help for the future. If you evaluate, for example if you get a teacher evaluation, there’s nothing they can do for the class that they just got the teacher evaluation from. However, they can look at how they need to improve in the future improve on that. And that’s the same as any other evaluation.

I: OK. Do you think that any, or the reflection of what they’ve learned will provide any benefits for the student? Thinking about what they’ve studied in this type of evaluation, making a conscious effort I mean.

P: We do that all the time.

I: In what ways?

P: As far as is this class relevant. When we choose our classes. I have people come up to me and say, I heard you took that Materials in TESOL class. Should I take it, is it relevant is the teacher good. because they had such a hard time with one of the new professors. Am I going to learn any thing am I going to be able to take that into the class. so as students we always look at the content of the courses talk to people who have already taken it. So I think that is already done. However, I’m not sure the department looks at it very much.

I: OK. What about the program? What sort of benefits might the program receive from listening to the students?

P: In the future, they can keep on working towards excellence and any type of evaluation that they can get from any group will only make them better if they listen to it.

I: OK. Is there anything else about MA student participation and program evaluation that you would like to mention?

P: Nothing that I haven’t already mentioned.
This is your first ESL experience?

Yes.

Just as a refresher, on the Likert scale section, I spoke about various parts of the curriculum and you stated whether you agreed or disagreed. You agreed that the various parts were important parts of your program's curriculum. The two that you put as neutral or NA were English Lit and Accent Reduction. Now was that because...

They don't offer those classes. They aren't part of the program.

OK not applicable. I just like to clear that up. Now, what was it about this program that made you decide to study here?

Well, actually when I first decided to come to X, I hadn't really studied the program that much. They sent me a flyer (inaudible) I felt like they offered a broad range and I was particularly...I liked the fact that they had an internship that was a full semester and a practicum too because I really like the real experience in the classroom before I actually go out and get a job. It helps your marketability to do that.

It sure does and not all programs have that opportunity. What do you think is your program's strength?

Probably the variety of classes that they offer and I haven't taken a theory class yet and that's always good to have, but I'm glad everything isn't theory. They discuss different aspects of language that I hadn't thought about before...the different varieties and dialects and phonology and things like that that I hadn't really considered before. There are really two main professors who work with us in depth. I really like that because we get to know them on a one-on-one basis and it's a small program.

Yes, that's one thing I noticed with this group. Is there something that you would like to add to the program? Maybe there is some kind of weakness or something you think there should be and you haven't seen it in the list of courses yet?

I think I wrote down on that something about more training on teaching reading.

OK

We have writing and we have speaking...Things that are incorporated in the reading/writing class, but reading comprehension, all the different things that go into that. I guess phonology would fit in somewhat, but just more concentration on reading skills.

I see. You have reading instruction including information on testing.
P  Yes. I’m taking a methods class now and we’ll probably get into testing (inaudible) learn more about the methods behind that.

I  What do you think of Guidelines for ESL Teacher Preparation Programs? For example something coming from an external source like TESOL...Do you think there could be some sort of benefit for programs by having specific guidelines?

P  As part of the program?

I  No, well, TESOL has some suggested guidelines for what a TESOL program should include. So if you were going to create a program you could see, ok, we need this and this...Do you think these guidelines are helpful?

P  I think any guidelines are helpful, especially ESL would be beneficial. Just so they know there are uniform criteria across different states or how different colleges operate the program. I think it helps when you get a job to have those types of things in common. But at the same time not to make it so rigidly. These are 15 things your students have to have to get a degree, but have some general guidelines.

I  The TESOL guidelines do tend to be quite flexible they focus on general areas and what a teacher needs to know and not specific courses. Now that’s external...

P  Yeah, that’s good.

I  If your program were to create an internal type of program evaluation, let’s say they wanted to be sure the program was up to par. First of all to create such a program evaluation in a college, you have to have a committee, right?

P  Right (laugh).

I  What kind of people would you like to see be on this committee? Not specific names, but types of people to create this internal evaluation?

P  I think it would be important that it come from all different disciplines. Of course, I would want someone from TESL and maybe I’d want a regular English professor, a writing professor, but even a professor that teaches in foreign languages, communications, technology. It’s better to offer a broader range of viewpoints. I really value that.

I  That’s interesting. Anyone else?

P  Maybe someone from the sciences since they have a different approach to everything.

I  Yes. What sort of criteria do you think the evaluation should study about the program? What should they look at?
P How effectively they prepare you to teach in all different environments.

I OK. Is there anything about the program you would like there...

P Like the curriculum, what they offer?

I That's a possibility. Is there anything about the curriculum?

P One thing I can think of here they give comprehensive exams and I would like to have the option of not having to do that, but having the option to write a thesis.

I Oh, I see.

P I think that would be an added bonus of something you could do.

I Possibly two different tracks?

P Yes.

I OK. Last quarter, did you have the opportunity to give your opinion about the program in any official evaluation?

P No. We, in our classes, we do instructor evaluations, but they're more for the university's sake.

I I see. How might you be able to include the MA students' opinions in an internal evaluation?

P I would think you could do that in classes.

I OK. Orally, written?

P Oh, ok. I would say, actually, I like both. I know I've done that for my undergrad degree program, an oral or written. Maybe you could have someone from the outside someone who is an accreditor who could ask some questions and get some feedback and give it to the department. And you could have some written feedback too.

I What benefit do you think the students might receive from this type of input into the program? The program evaluation, having the opportunity...

P I think they would have the opportunity to have classes that are more of their interest and their choosing because our classes are basically scheduled, all four semesters. So, we really have no flexibility at all and even if we could have a couple of different possibilities... They say you have to take this class this semester.

I OK. So they might listen to the students interests a little bit more?

P Yes.
I OK. What benefits might the program receive from the student input?

P It could be more student-oriented, focusing on the desires of the students.

I So, that might help the program improve itself?

P Yes, I think student input...they are the ones being taught. It shows they are valued.

I That's true.

P Not that they don't, but to take it a step further.

I Good. You mention that the Practicum and internship provide useful experience. What's the different between your Practicum and internship?

P The practicum is something we have to take with methodology and that's just observation. We call it participant observation. The internship is actually teaching classes and we have the option of doing it overseas, like in Mexico or Korea or at the University teaching international students.

I I see. That's a good description. Is there anything else about an internal evaluation or MA input that came to mind after filling out the questionnaire or this interview that you'd like to mention.

P ..No.

I OK. Thank you.
0507 Interview

I: Just to refresh your memory. The questionnaire asked about your opinion of your own teacher preparation program and a little bit about how MA students might be able to give their opinions in a program evaluation.

P: UH huh

I: On your Likert scale, you mentioned that your program included a very strong theoretical component, education, L/S, English Grammar, R/W

P: Right

I: You think your program has a strong practicum or student teaching

P: Uh huh

I: you marked one question as 3, and I just wanted to see whether it was neutral or not applicable. It...

P: What question was that?

I: Accent reduction.

P: Accent reduction?

I: Yes. do you have a course like that?

P: What course is that?

I: Basically it teaches the MA student how to help an ESL student lose an accent and teach the student how to pronounce a specific sound, rather than a general speaking course. So did you have anything like that?

P: Yes.

I: OK was it your listening/speaking methodology course?

P: Yes, we would just try to train the ESL students how to pronounce the sound correctly.

I: OK. I just wanted to clarify that. Why do you think you chose this program? What was it about this program that made you decide to go there?

P: Study what I’m studying?

I: Yes.

P: Well, I’ve always received training in the field of education especially in...foreign or second language.

I: And why did you choose X university

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P: Because I have some of my, people coming from my country who were here before me and told me good things about X and the program and how important it was and how good the program was and that sort of attracted me.

I: Right. Word of mouth is always good. What is it about the program that you have found to be the most beneficial to you as an ESL teacher?

P: What part you mean? What course?

I: Yes. What was it about the program’s curriculum that you felt best prepared you to teach ESL or EFL?

P: Well, actually there are many parts that focuses on ESL and EFL. And the curriculum is consistent and very, it’s right to the point about ...whoever wants to teach ESL or EFL. They ought to focus on SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION.

I: OK. If you could add anything to the program, what would you add? What was missing?

P: Let’s see. Well, actually they do have practicum that is a possibility for MA students to practice what they learn to real students. But I wish we had more of this because we don’t have enough practice.

I: I see. So there aren’t enough positions for all students?

P: That’s right.

I: That happens in a lot of programs. In terms of evaluating these ESL teacher preparation programs...Are you familiar with TESOL guidelines...there are some suggestions for programs, a preparation program. do you think this kind of thing is beneficial for a program?

P: Yes. TESOL

I: That’s external. The other thing that I wanted to talk to you about is the internal evaluation and this refers to the MA students themselves.

P: Uh huh

I: You mentioned that MA students should have the opportunity to voice their opinions, but you didn’t mention any specific way. How do you think MA students might be able to give their opinions to the program.

P: Excuse me, again,

I: Could you give me example of a way that MA students could voice their opinions about the program? How could we get this information from the students?

P: Well, usually at the end of each term we evaluate the professors or
the subjects. At that time if they could have a general evaluation of
the program at the same time. That could be helpful, I guess.

I: OK, so there is something that could be on-going throughout the
program not just at the end.

P: Yes.

I: If your program were to develop this type of evaluation, who do
you think should be on the committee to create this evaluation? Types
of people, not specific names.

P: For the program evaluation?

I: Yes.

P: well, this should involve both students and teachers.

I: Students and teachers. What is it about the program that you would
like to see them study in particular. What should be the focus of the
evaluation?

P: Uh the focus of the evaluation of the program?

I: Yes. Is there anything that you would like to see them study
specifically?

P: Those who are dealing with the evaluation of the program?

I: Yes. For example, you mentioned that you would like to see more of
a practicum.

P: Uh huh.

I: So, perhaps one of the things that you would like to have them
study is the availability of the practicums within the curriculum. And
the other thing that you liked a lot was the SECOND LANGUAGE
ACQUISITION. So that’s something else they could ask about.

P: Yes.

I: IS there anything else that you would like to see them focus on?

P: Well, Except for...usually (inaudible) language and culture in the
program are weakly dealt with. If they could focus those two, it would
be helpful in SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

I: yes. What do you think the benefits would be to the students who
actually get to voice their opinions? The MA students. What would be
the benefit for the student?

P: Uh...

I: Why would it be a good thing for them to be able to give their
opinion?
P: Well this is going to be a good contribution to put the students to good use. The majority of the MA students, they are not kids any more. They can contribute something in the program. This is going to give them some self-confidence and also it can give them the impression that people are caring about their needs.

I: Right. So that reflection helps them professionally and personally. What benefit do you think the program will get from listening to the students?

P: This is the (inaudible) problem. It should be focused on the students' interests and needs and then be able to improve, see different ways. But I think most of the time the decision-makers fail to listen to the, what do you call it, benefactors of the thing that they want to implement. So if they get ideas from those who benefit from the program, it can help them improve a lot.

I: OK. The needs idea there is something that we see in terms of a needs analysis, but it isn't always taken into consideration.

P: Uh huh.

I: Now you said that in your program, you do evaluations for individual classes.

P: Yes

I: On your questionnaire, you said that you will not finish until the year 2000, so you don't know if there is anything at the end or not.

P: Yes.

I: Thank you.
I: I’m going to ask for some clarification on some of your answers,

P: O.K.

I: And then ask you some more questions about MA student participation in program evaluation.

P: OK

I: First of all, you wrote, or you marked strongly agree for my program includes a strong theoretical component. Can you give me an example of a class...

P: For example, the class that I was offered your thing in was Theory in second language acquisition and the course that I had taken previously with the same professor was also required and was also a serious second language acquisition. Another course that I am taking right now, It’s called a foundations course, but it’s really a study of theories of Education. Really kind of heavy for me.

I: You had marked neutral for Educational Foundations courses, was that because you hadn’t taken one yet.

P: Yes, I hadn’t had one yet. I have one now, but like I said it looks more like theory. Educational Philosophy.

I: O.K. You marked disagree for my program includes a strong student-teaching/practicum component.

P: Right. There’s really only one practicum type thing that you have to do in the end. And for me, that’s pretty weak. If you’re going to get a masters in something that’s related to Education I think you should spend a whole lot more time with the kids, or the students, or whomever.

I: Right. And you marked disagree also for the theoretical linguistics courses are important parts of my program.

P: I’m not into theory.

I: Do you have any linguistics courses?

P: Not right now, but I have had them.

I: So they aren’t part. Now in relationship to the strong practicum or s-t component you marked kind of neutral to the

P: I don’t know because I haven’t taken yet since it’s the last step and it’s not integrated I don’t know how well they treat it.

I: You mention that you felt prepared beforehand and the Masters is merely a formality.
P: I am already what I would call, and I think my bosses would call a successful ESL teacher. And almost all of my students that I've had have either tested out of their levels or skipped levels, so I'm already pretty effective and that was before taking any of these education or theory courses. I think that was just natural teaching skills.

I: You mentioned that you do have a job. Is that in a public school system?

P: No, it's for international university students.

I: And you do mention that the practicums that are useful are slightly missing.

P: And also, some of the practicums that I've seen them doing, they come into my class. It's funny. They come into my class and I'm not even a quote "real" teacher because I haven't got the masters and the degree although I teach every day and get a salary for it. And yet they come into my class who, I guess I'm not considered a professional by degree, but they come into my class to see me teach and then they base what their MA is going to be on me teaching which is kind of silly.

I: OK

P: Do you know what I mean?

I: Yeah, now is the job you have a teaching assistantship?

P: Yes, except I'm not an assistant to anyone. I actually have my own class.

I: Yes, but the, it's, you weren't hired...

P: Right, that's what it's titled by the university.

I: Right, an assistantship does not mean that you're an assistant to a professor, it merely means you're a graduate student.

P: Right. Some, in a lot of the departments in this school, it does mean an assistant type thing, so just to clarify.

I: Yeah

P: But that's the title. I teach two classes everyday. So I basically teach all morning and then I go off and do my own thing.

I: OK. Now, TESOL does have some guidelines for MA programs. Basically, what a teacher should be able to do by the end of a teacher education program.

P: Right.
I: More like suggestions of competencies and there are other ways to get an external evaluation of programs. However, some programs have been interested in doing internal evaluations and for that... Usually, at a university you have to have a committee... Who would you like to see on a committee that would initially create an evaluation of your MA program? Not specific names, but types of people.

P: So, if I had the choice to say who would be on the committee to evaluate the entire program or just my program?

I: The MA program.

P: I would say teachers, professors whoever, whatever instructors that I've seen in the past that actually put an emphasis on teaching, as far as educating people, not just preaching at them.

I: OK

P: You know because and I think maybe this is because I feel bitter about all of these theory courses. But I feel that most of my classes are useless to me because it's just someone sitting up there preaching about what the like or don't like about some other academic. That's useless to me.

I: Right OK. Anyone else on the committee?

P: Maybe some students that had been through the program and knew what they could glean from it or knew what they thought was effective.

I: All right. This committee is going to have to create some criteria or focus. What is it about your program that you would like them to focus on.

P: Practicality, I think, I'm not alone in this thought. And thank goodness that I don't have to pay my tuition. But many people are paying for courses that they don't think they're learning anything in I don't feel really make them better teachers. And yet the state is, whether you're state or private whatever. The university is getting money from, yet you're learning nothing. So I don't think a service hasn't been rendered.

I: Yeah, That's a concern.

P: That's my biggest concern how practical it is because I've gotten past that thing where academia is this nice, lofty place and I've gotten to the place where it's this big business and it wants to take my money. And the government is just helping it by making all of these regulations...So, if I have to sit through all of this BS then I want it to be useful.

I: OK. How can we be sure that students get to voice their opinions in this internal evaluation?

P: Well, no one likes to fill out survey upon survey so I wouldn't say that something mandatory would be the best way. But, certainly you
have to do something where you interview the students or find out their opinions. I don't know. I've never heard of an internal evaluation that took students into account, so I don't know how to answer that.

I: OK If you wanted to be sure that the either the professors or the chair of your department heard your opinion, how would you go about that?

P: I would tell them.

I: OK, so you would just go one on one.

P: Yeah, that's what I usually do.

I: OK Let's say there is a MA student who is a bit shy or worried about getting a recommendation. How might that student let the administration know...

P: I think those students are almost powerless. Because I've run into to, not MA students, but my students who have problems with other professors of theirs. And as much as I encourage them to talk to their professor, they just can't do it. They think that they'll be thrown out or something will happen to them and so I feel that the whole institution thing strikes a lot of fear into some people even though most college students are pretty laid back. I don't know how to help those kids or the MA students because it's either help yourself or stop bitching.

I: OK

P: You know? I don't know, I feel bad because there's nothing I can do unless they have an intermediary that they can trust, you know?

I: All right. What sort of benefit might a student get being able to voice his or her opinion?

P: Well, I think personal satisfaction is the one that most people are looking for. Just telling your opinion often times makes you feel better whether you change the system or not. I find that really helps people. Sometimes it actually falls on ears that are hearing and things get changed. I'm not putting professors to blame for all of the crap that they are forced to teach us because of the whoever decided what the curriculum has to be. Some of them are actually, pretty good folks who will listen and do whatever they can. I mean not go crazy, but they'll do something to help you out.

I: OK. What about the program itself? What sort of benefit might the program get from listening to the students?

P: Well, I think they'd get more students coming to them if they listened to their students. I think students have a pretty good network and a lot of the, especially at the graduate level where it's sort of who you know and what you know and what places you've heard about and where people have had good experiences. And I know that we're not turning out too many Ph.D. students at my school, but I know
that grad schools are always looking for more people and some of these places are dying out because they’re not getting enough folks. And that is one of the major things they would get if they improved their programs. They would be able to get more people just by word of mouth.

I: OK Good. Is there anything else about this program evaluation or MA students being able to voice their opinions?

P: Let me think, I think it would have to be taken seriously and I think it would have to be put forth to the grad students in that manner because too many times it’s just fill in the bubbles and you don’t feel like anyone is going to get back to you about how you felt about it.

I: OK so maybe there should be some feedback.

P: Some feedback and a genuine effort to say hey guys we’re actually going to listen to what you say. Please do this because we do want to do something with it. Not just, the type of prof. feedback where they give it to the prof. and say Oh look half your class liked it, half the class didn’t. Nice job. See you.

I: OK

P: Nothing ever gets back to the students and nothing ever changes.

I: OK right. I always ask that question at the end of the telephone interview because I can’t tell if I cut you off at anytime.

P: Oh, well, I didn’t feel cut off.

I: Good, thank you.
I: I see that you have been teaching for over 4 years at a university.

P: 4 1/2 years

I: 4 1/2 OK. What was it about this program, this MA ESL program that made you decide to choose it.

P: You mean

I: Correct.

P: You mean this university or this MA program?

I: The MA program

P: Well, one reason why I think it will be helpful for me, when I was still in China I felt everything was so old. It was hard for us to find textbooks. I never want to use the textbooks that are edited by Chinese. I don’t think they are really good. If I want to use something from overseas it is 10 years old. It’s really hard to find a real good textbook. Sometimes you have to look through many books, maybe take many parts from books to meet the needs of your students. And the problem, I don’t know about the modern, everyday language here. Sometimes I have trouble with that. Like, man.

I: How did you choose this university?

P: Many Chinese people know each other.

I: That’s ok I know many people choose...

P: I have friend here, I want to be near him.

I: On the questionnaire, I asked about several parts of the program and I just want to get some clarification before we go on. You said that your program includes a strong practicum and student teaching component.

P: I disagree.

I: Oh, then I think we have opposite answers.

P: If they don’t have it for everyone, but I don’t know if I will have an opportunity next semester. I’m supposed to teach one ESL composition. It’s not really a class, it’s like a lab, a workshop. If the enrollment is really low, they will cancel my session. I didn’t have it last semester and not last semester.

I: Oh. Let’s check these answers. Does your program have required Educational Foundations classes? This is like Educational Psychology and History of Education.
P: No. There are a lot of required classes that we can choose. Those courses are in the M.Ed..

I: Are you getting an M.Ed.?

P: No, I’m getting MA.

I: OK. The second language acquisition theory courses, do you think they are important parts of your program’s curriculum?

P: I think important.

I: What about the phonology and phonetic courses? Does your program have required courses in phonology and phonetics?

P: No, there is only one linguistics course.

I: OK, so it’s part of the linguistics course?

P: Yes.

I: On the methodology courses, do you believe that the methodology courses are very important parts of your program’s curriculum?

P: You mean?

I: Like Reading/Writing, Grammar...

P: You mean they are strong like they should be, or they are in reality?

I: In reality.

P: Oh, no

I: Is there a listening/speaking methodology class?

P: No

I: Is there a grammar methodology class?

P: There is one, but I don’t think it is very good.

I: OK. What about a reading/writing methodology class?

P: Oh,...I don’t think it is very good.

I: OK. Is there a required English Literature course?

P: Nope.

I: OK Accent Reduction? It would be similar to your linguistics class.

P: What is that?
I: It is a class where you would learn how to help students with their pronunciation.

P: Oh, no.

I: What is it about your program’s curriculum that is best preparing you to be an EFL teacher? English as a Foreign language.

P: You mean?

I: What is the best part of the program so far?

P: I think for me it opened my eyes to some modern trends in language acquisition and language learning and teaching. Like some new approaches. I am really weak in this, you know theory and new approaches.

I: So second language acquisition theory?

P: Yes, for me I think that is the best part. That’s where I have problem.

I: The question that asked you if there was anything missing, is there anything you would like to add, you mentioned that you would like to have more practicums more student teaching.

P: Yes.

I: Is there anything else that you would like to have added to the curriculum? Is there anything else missing?

P: I don’t know. The courses, I feel like the class period is really short. They give you some idea of theory, but not details

I: examples?

P: Yes, examples. They talk about it very superficially.

I: OK. There are very few ways that we can evaluate our ESL programs because our MA programs are in some many different departments at different universities. There are some suggestions about what kind of qualities an ESL teacher should have, but no list for curriculum as they have in other departments in the college of Education. Some programs have started internal evaluations. They have created ways to evaluate their program to see if it is successful and effective. If your program at the university wanted to create such an evaluation, who would you like to see on the committee to create such an evaluation. Not particular people, but kinds of people.

P: Do you mean their...

I: No, What kinds of people would you like to see on a committee?

P: Do you mean what kinds of... like linguistics teachers?
I: OK. Linguistics professors, who else?

P: I think professors who have experience teaching ESL.

I: Anyone else?...OK Think about that. You mentioned something about one of the classes that they weren't really getting deep into the topics. You thought it was rather superficial. So maybe that's one of the criteria that they need to study. Are the classes focusing on what the MA students need.

P: I think the class itself is ok. I think maybe the professor style, I really don't like. The class is about second language, but he always talks about foreign language like Spanish. Maybe it's his style.

I: OK. Is there anything else about the program that needs to be improved or is there anything good that they need to keep.

PP: I think the linguistic theory is good.

I: Is there anything that needs to be added?

P: As I told you before, I don't know anything else.

I: OK, once we have the committee. How do you think we can get the MA students to participate.

P: I think the most important thing is, maybe the routine like the course evaluation. But I think that somebody in charge should really do something according to what the students say. Sometimes they say, oh I can't do anything about the professor.

I: So they could do a questionnaire like a course evaluation, but they should actually,

P: Take some action

I: take some action, show the MA students that they are paying attention and that might make the MA students participate more?

P: Yes, if you say that to them so maybe we don't think there is any use in doing the evaluation.

I: What sort of benefit do you think the program will get from listening to the MA students? Why should they listen to them?

P: Because it's like, if the students don't like it, a lot of students will leave the program. Many people in our program are from different cultures and a lot of the professors have never been to different countries. And sometimes they don't know what is expected in a foreign country. So I think that is important.

I: So, they aren't quite sure what the needs of the students are.

P: Yes.
I: OK. Interesting. Why would it be a good thing for the student to participate? What sort of benefit might the student receive?

P: I think, if the program is improved it can lead them better and they even like the program better and they can study better. They have more interest. You really can't study hard because you don't want to.
If you are in a really good program, sometimes when I don't have interest in the course I feel like I don't want to study to be a teacher.

I: OK. Is there any other way for students to voice their opinion in addition to questionnaires?

P: Maybe. You can go to somebody like the director. You could talk to him directly.

I: Maybe some verbal input would be helpful.

P: Yes.

I: Is there anything else about the content evaluation?

P: I think maybe you can give them microteaching.

P: OK. Something related to your student teaching problems. Is there anything else about program evaluation that you want to add?

I: I am not very familiar with evaluation.
I: What was it about this program that made you enroll there?

P: Basically, there were a lot of factors. One of them was location because we wanted to be on the east coast and my sister lives in Washington, DC so I wanted to be close to her. But as far as the program itself goes, I liked it because it's very practical. There's not a there's not a thesis requirement per se. There's a portfolio requirement at the end.

I: OK

P: The portfolio contains such things as our best work and a resume and all of that kind of stuff. It's really geared toward finding a job and being in the situation that I am right now in my life it was very important to me. To make sure that I have something practical that I could go out and actually use to obtain employment.

I: Very interesting. On the Likert scale, I'll refresh your memory here. "My program includes a strong practicum/student teaching component...disagree"

P: Right

I: What was it about the p/student teaching that you felt was unsatisfactory?

P: I should preface it by saying that for me personally, I'm getting a good practicum experience. I'm going through it right now. But the only reason I'm getting a good practicum experience is because I've gone out and set it up myself to make sure that I was paired up with a good teacher who would actually let me teach.

I: OK

P: The practicum itself at X, they set you up at the ELI within the university and they pair you off with a teacher for I believe it's just 6 weeks. It's pretty much up to the teacher what you do and what you don't do. And the majority of my classmates tell me that they don't teach at all. So they go and sit in the classroom, they watch and it's really boring and not at all helpful as far as your future is concerned. I knew this was happening so I had a friend who was teaching at Georgetown and I asked her if I could do it with her instead. That has been very rewarding because she has let me do a lot of the teaching and a lot of the preparation and that kind of thing. So I am getting a good experience, but if I had not met this woman, I would have been very disappointed.

I: OK. How did you meet this woman, outside?

P: She taught a class at X during summer, a curriculum development class. I got to know her that way because it was a very small class and we got to be pretty close. So she just basically suggested to me that when I do my student teaching I should see if I could do it with
her because we got along very well and our personalities are different enough that we could learn from each other and that's how it worked out.

I: That's great.

P: Yes, I'm lucky

I: Now, are you agreed with the statement that the Grammar methodology course is an important part of the program's curriculum

P: Right

I: But the L/S methodology was combined with another class.

P: Right.

I: What about the R/W methodology?

P: R/W, I took a class over the summer that was just R/W

I: Would you say that that's an important part of the program's curriculum?

P: Are you asking if the program thinks it's an important part of the curriculum or do I think it's important?

I: The program.

P: The program, I would say no because it was an elective and it's not offered very often. So, I don't think so.

I: OK. And then the English Lit and accent reduction, you marked N/A, so there aren't classes or at least not required classes.

P: Right.

I: What was it about this program that you have found to be most beneficial?

P: That's a hard thing to answer. I think overall it's a very practical program. When I got into the whole TESOL field, I hadn't ever really done a lot of teaching. I didn't really know for sure what I was getting into and I think it has been a very good comprehensive look at the whole TESOL field. It's a good balance between the research/theoretical side and the practical/what to do while you're in the classroom side. So, I think it's a really good practical program that really helps you to know exactly what it is you need to do when you get into the classroom and at the same time it does give you the theoretical basis to be able to do that successfully.

I: OK. When asked if there was anything missing from your program, you stated that there is a practicum class, but it is poorly organized and only gives the student maybe one day of actual teaching. And you just stated a little more about your situation. so is the practicum set
up as merely observation and teaching if the cooperating teacher wishes it. Or is there any other actual class time combined with it?

P: It’s set up to where the first half of the semester you’re just supposed to do observations. And during that part you go through and observe several different teachers. Then the second half, you’re supposed to be in a classroom and it’s supposed to be, from my understanding, it’s supposed to be more of a student teaching kind of thing. Not necessarily where you would teach every day, but where you would definitely get some teaching experience.

I: OK

P: But just from the people I’ve talked to and people who have gone through it before, I think it ends that they get into a classroom and the teacher doesn’t want to let go of the control of the class and won’t let them do anything.

I: Oh, OK. Is there anything else that you would like to add to the curriculum. Maybe is there a class that is an elective that you think should be required?

P: Yeah, I thought about that a lot and it would be nice if they had more phonology and pronunciation type of classes. They do offer electives every now and then, but it’s kind of hard especially where the program is so short. You don’t want to wait around until they offer one.

I: Right.

P: The same thing with ESP English for special purposes. They haven’t offered that since I’ve been in the program that takes four semesters. I would appreciate see more of that. And also the grammar class that we have, I’m in the middle of it right now, it’s good as far as the real good theoretical basis as how the English language works, but it’s not very practical as far as how to teach these different things.

I: OK, so it seems to be a little bit more theoretical.

P: Right. It would be nice to have something more practical.

I: OK. You mention here as a way to have the MA students voice their opinion about the program: evaluation forms could be used.

P: Right

I: But something more than just a Likert scale should be employed

P: Right.

I: Could you give mean example of what else could be used?

P: Sure. At X, they have the regular evaluation forms that look like a bubble sheet and the university looks at those to assesses the professor and the course based on those and they’re real general and
the same for every class. Then they give us a sheet with it where you assess the strengths and weaknesses of the professor and the class and the materials. But it has recently come to my attention that the only people that see those are the professor themselves. The university doesn't even see those, so it seems like waste to even express your opinion, especially if it's a negative opinion because the only person to see it is the professor and if they don't like what you've written, it just never goes anywhere.

I: OK

P: so it would be nice if when people take the time to break down what they feel are the good parts and bad parts, that it actually goes somewhere.

I: Right, OK. If we think about the ESL teacher preparation programs, there aren't really any guidelines that are followed by all the programs. TESOL does have some guidelines, but they more like suggestions about certain qualities that an ESL teacher should possess by the end of the program. If there were something that suggested certain classes that should be involved or how much of a practicum should be involved, there could be some sort of external evaluation.

P: Right.

I: What some programs are doing is creating internal evaluations, so they're coming up with the criteria themselves.

P: OK I see

I: If your program were to create this sort of internal program evaluation, which kind of people would you like to see on the committee? Not specific names, types of people?

P: to discuss how to do a program evaluation?

I: To actually create the evaluation.

P: For my school, right?

I: Right

P: OK. Definitely some students, that would be my first choice.

I: Students who are in the program now?

P: Yes. My second choice would be alumni who are out in the job field now because I think they would have really good insight into what we're lacking that we might not even realize that we're lacking. Then, maybe even, since we have a lot of adjuncts at my school, adjunct professors. I think a couple of them would be good because most of them have been working in the field for a long time. Although if you get them in there I don't know if they would be able to be objective.

I: OK
P: That would be hard to say. But I would definitely say students and alumni.

I: What sort of criteria should they be looking at? What about the program should they study?

P: Once again, I’m real gunho for the practical side of things. I think they need to look at when you’re in the classroom what sort of skills you need and the classes should reflect that and give you hints on where to start and how to proceed as far as what actually goes on in the classroom.

I: What sort of benefit do you think the program could get from listening to the students?

P: Well, I think that if the students are graduating with a degree that they feel confident with and that is actually helping them once they’re out in the job field they will recommend the program. On the other hand, if they’re out in the job field and they’re not pleased with their experience, chances are word-of-mouth is going to go downhill and they wouldn’t be able to recommend that program to future students. Also, the program in itself, I think that improvement is always good. I would hope that the professors at my school, and I think they would, would be willing to listen to students and to make changes work if we really felt there was a need.

I: What sort of benefit do you think the MA students would receive from voicing their opinions about the program?

P: I think it helps gaining ownership of the program. We’re obviously paying for this program and it costs a lot of money. I think it would help us to know that our voices were heard if nothing else.

I: OK Is there anything else about program evaluations or the MA student input that you’d like to add at this point.

P: Not really other than if we took the time to give input, I really wish they’d look at it.

I: OK Thanks.
I: What was it about this MA program that made you choose it?

P: Location.

I: OK. When you filled out the Likert scale on, and I appreciate your marking a couple of them as N/A to distinguish them from neutral, the education foundations...The statement was: The education foundations courses are important parts of the program’s curriculum. And you marked disagree. These are courses like educational psychology and History of Education. Do you have courses like those in your program?

P: No, you said I marked disagree, right?

I: Yes.

P: Maybe I should have marked N/A because that isn’t part of the program. I had those courses as an undergraduate because I was a secondary science major as an undergraduate.

I: I see.

P: So I had those classes as an undergraduate. But they weren’t part of the MA program, no.

I: OK. I wanted to look at just the MA program.

P: OK.

I: You marked that your program includes a strong practicum and student teaching component. You strongly agreed with that

P: Yes.

I: And with some theoretical components, and applied linguistics and then English Grammar methodology.

P: Yes.

I: Can you choose, maybe one of those as being the most important part of your curriculum?

P: Hmm. Choosing between the practicum, grammar methodology, the linguistics...

I: Right.

P: That’s difficult. Probably I would have to go with the practicum.

I: OK

P: I say that with a mild degree of trepidation because all three of them are pretty equal, but if I had to choose one I would go with the practicum.
I: OK. Your answer to the open ended questions was that there was a good mix of theory and application.

P: Yes.

I: So the actual application is an important part.

P: absolutely. I’ll just expand on that a little bit.

I: Please...

P: I came into the program with a fair amount of teaching experience that a large number of those in the program in the program that I’m in came into the program with almost no teaching experience. And so, I see the value of it even more for those individuals, not that I’m saying I didn’t, certainly I think I learned some during the practicum as far as the application of teaching ESL and doing so in the practicum type environment, but that’s why I’d say it’s extremely valuable.

I: Right. In terms of anything missing from your curriculum, you mentioned a grant writing class. Could you expand a little on that?

P: Well, I think the reason that that is so in the forefront of my mind right now is that I work for a non-profit organization that helps refugees and within that area funding is always an important concern. If you’re teaching ESL classes and we do, and we teach them in an effort for the refugees to get employment as soon as possible. We’re constantly in need of funding and constantly in the need for someone being able to write the grant. I think that sometimes MA programs like ours focus only on individuals going on to teach in an EAP environment, English for academic purposes.

I: Right.

P: and they don’t necessarily take a lot of time to consider those of us who might work in a different type of environment, with immigrants, with an adult-type ESL environment. Of course, if you are going to teach EAP you don’t want to hear about writing grants because you’re going to be working at a university and you’re going to be on a salary track and so forth. but if you’re not working in that environment, being able to fund yourself and get yourself paid would be of value.

I: right.

P: I’m going to try to, I’ll graduate this summer and I need an elective this summer. I’m going to try to convince one of my advisors to let me have an independent study and that independent study would be about writing grants.

I: That would be good.

P: I don’t know if I’m going to be successful in convincing her, but I’m going to attempt that.
I: Well, good luck with that.

P: Yes.

I: There aren't any real guidelines for our ESL teacher preparation programs. TESOL does have some suggestions, but they are more about the qualities that an ESL teacher should possess rather than actual parts of the curriculum. If we had that, we could have some type of external evaluation. What some programs are doing, They are creating actual internal evaluations. They are creating these evaluations from inside. If your program were to decide to do this, who would you like to see on the committee to create the evaluation? Not necessarily specific names, but types of people.

P: OK. Wow. I think it would need to be a mixture of students in the program, professors in the program, but also individuals in the field. I don't know where they would come from if they would be former graduates of the program or maybe not even connected with the program, but members of the field, working in the field.

I: OK

P: Working in the ESL field, some kind of mixture, combination of that.

I: What would you like them to study? What should be included in this evaluation, what criteria?

P: OK. We're looking at the program, evaluating the program?

I: Exactly.

P: I'd somehow or other evaluate the content.

I: Like the curriculum?

P: Exactly. But then somehow I'd have them evaluate, get deeper than just the curriculum. If we say does the curriculum offer some grammar and does the curriculum offer some linguistics classes, but then somehow get into what is being done in that grammar class and is it effective and what is being done in that linguistics class. And I say that because I would want to know that the person, the professor, however the grammar class is set up or the linguistics class, whichever one we are talking about... Is it set up so that the material is being taught. But also will the students come away from that to then turn around being able to teach that. And I think just in the program that I'm in there's a great mix of the material has been presented, but then also how to turn around and teach that in an ESL class. The grammar knowledge that you've learned and then how to use the phonetics what have you learned in linguistics and then how can you turn that around into the practical application.

I: You know, that seems to match your comment about the mix of theory and application. OK. Now, how do you think they could get MA students to give their opinions?
P: You mean in a tangible way?
I: Yes.

P: I would like to see it in both a written, but also verbal way. For some reason, I don’t necessarily feel that when I’ve completed one of those surveys,
I: Do you mean a course evaluation?

P: right. Sometimes I don’t feel that my true feelings have been revealed in those questionnaires. Maybe some mixture of a written evaluation form, but also a verbal type. You know answer/question.
I: Could you tell me what kind of benefit there might be from either one?

P: Hmm
I: Let’s try the written first. Why would that be a good idea?

P: The written would probably be a good idea because of confidentiality. Maybe you would, someone would feel a little more, well if the professor isn’t right in front of me or some person of high esteem is not sitting right in front of me and I can say what I want to say on this paper. Now, the other side of that is that I sometimes feel constrained by that paper. I want to be able to be verbal in that and put some emotion into it as well. I think that can happen more in a verbal interview.
I: OK. What about the verbal input? What would be good about the verbal input?

P: Just because then you’re not kept in a box maybe. You feel I can express myself here. I can...I don’t know if I’m explaining it the way I’d like to.
I: I understand it like you’re not being limited.

P: right. The limitations are not there. If it’s the kind of person who feels free to do that. I know some individuals would not. They would think, this is my voice and they’ll know exactly who this is. They’ll know exactly who is saying these things. But there are individuals, and I think I am one of them, that would feel that this is an even better way of evaluating the program, with my words with me saying them.
I: Yes. What sort of benefit do think the MA program would receive from receiving this kind of input? Why should they listen to them in other words?

P: Well, why should...well, to me it’s just the obvious...
I: Go ahead and state the obvious, that’s fine.
P: Well, they are the ones, the students there. They are the ones in the here and the now. They’re not necessarily the ones in the lofty, ivory tower to borrow an expression.

I: OK

P: I think sometimes we, sometimes a fair number of students are already in the field and are teaching ESL. We are actually actively involved and feel, and myself included, feel like they have a very valid voice that should be heard.

I: OK. Perhaps if we think in terms of results. What could they do with these voices?

P: Perhaps weed out some unnecessary curriculum that could be replaced with something of more value. I can’t think of a good example in our program because I have been fairly pleased with the curriculum. But I do know that within the last few years they have changed the program to include more of a practicum. And as they changed it to a practicum, they kept refining it to make it better and better and that did result from a large input from students.

I: OK. What benefit do you think the students receive from giving input to a program evaluation.

P: I think ultimately just a better program. And then, you know having some feelings of validating what I say is important, And that just goes into the entire circle of making the entire program better.

I: OK. Is there anything else that comes to your mind when you hear the term “ESL teacher preparation program evaluation” or “MA student input”?

P: I think that when I first started this program, and I started several years ago because I took a year off to teach overseas. And now I’m back in the program to finish up. So I had a large practicum if you want to look at it that way.

I: OK

P: If you had asked me that question when I first started, I might have laughed because I would have thought they don’t listen, don’t ask or if they do ask, they don’t listen. But now my opinion has changed and that could just be because I’m older and wiser. Or I see more of what goes on in the program or our program has changed, but I think that now I would say it’s valid, it should happen and in my case, it does happen. I see results because of it. I see positive results, I see positive change because of it.

I: OK. You mentioned you taught overseas. You taught for how long?

P: One year of ESL. I taught another year of American students and I was teaching just some basic computer science courses and stuff like that, but one year of ESL.
I: OK. Where were you?

P: I was in the Republic of Czechoslovakia..(inaudible) Slovakia.

I: OK. Great.
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I: I see that you had one training class of ESL preparation before this program?

P: Well, yeah. It was a six-week training course for a program that I did overseas. And part of it, about 10 hours was ESL training. It was just sort of thrown together.

I: I see. How long did you teach overseas?

P: About 4 months.

I: OK. What was it about this program that made you decide to study there?

P: At X.

I: Yes.

P: From what I could tell and comparing it to other programs, it seemed like there was an emphasis on the practical part of teaching and it just wasn't all theory. I guess that's what drew me toward it the most. And it was convenient for me. I had friends in Atlanta, so it was easy for me to move there.

I: OK. I'm going to go over a bit of the Likert scale. I'll remind you of the statements and then ask you a couple of questions.

P: OK

I: The Education Foundation courses are an important part of the program's curriculum. You marked "3", which is N/A. Is that because there are no education courses or because it was just in the middle?

P: Education Foundation courses, that's like Learning theory?

I: Right, and Educational Psychology and

P: Right, they weren't part of the program.

I: Applied Linguistics...you put 3 also. Is that...

P: I didn't really understand what was meant by applied linguistics. My degree is in applied linguistics, but I had one linguistics class and there was no application involved. It was just basically linguistics 101.

I: OK, so that was kind of neutral.

P: Yeah.

I: English Lit. Were there any courses in English Literature?
P: No.

I: Accent Reduction...

P: Not really

I: Maybe a unit within another class?

P: Yeah, we had a sound systems class which touched on things like that, but (inaudible)

I: OK. "My program includes a strong student teaching/practicum component" disagree...and then you say that you strongly agree that it was an important part of the program's curriculum.

P: Yeah, as I went through the program I found it wasn’t as much of a practicum oriented program. There was only one class that really touched on what went on in the class room and practical applications. A lot of it was theory. When I said it was an important part...it was important...

I: Because that’s what you thought it should be?

P: The one class that I had I felt was really important, there just wasn’t enough of it.

I: OK Now the practicum course that you had, does that include any teaching?

P: Yes, half of it. We attend classes for half of the time. Then the other half we’re either observing or teaching under supervision.

I: OK So you had hoped there would be more teaching.

P: Yeah, I think so.

I: It seems like you felt that the program had a strong theoretical component in terms of phonology, phonetics, and then listening/speaking methodology.

P: In terms of the sound system?

I: Yes, you marked strongly agree for the phonology and phonetics courses.

P: Yes, that class was a good class.

I: OK You also marked strongly agree for the listening/speaking methodology. Does that have to do with the sound system class also.

P: Yes.

I: Now you also marked disagree with "The English grammar methodology was an important part of the program"
P: Yeah that had to do with our program. Our grammar class was highly theoretical and we talked about some serious grammar issues, like, the emphasis of some adverb, I don’t know

I: OK

P: And it didn’t prepare me for ESL. To this day I have to study to keep two steps ahead of my students who know all of the rules for articles, you know.

I: And have memorized them.

P: Right. So that class I felt really could have been a lot better. The professor is a wonderful person, but the class itself just didn’t help me very much.

I: Right you mentioned this about the grammar and the reading in your added note. That’s very helpful I appreciate that information. You also say the strong point of the program was the practical application or the classes that were mixed.

P: Yes

I: with theory and practice. OK. In terms of adding anything, is there any class that you would like to add that was not there?

P: A class that I would like to add...no, I think the classes themselves had the potential to cover everything. I think the main problem was that the classes that were there, not all of them but a lot of them, they tended to air on the theory side. There wasn’t much there that prepared me for ESL.

I: OK. So, the grammar and reading are like that?

P: Yes,

I: Then the student teaching, you wanted more in-class teaching time.

P: Right.

I: There are some guidelines provided by TESOL for ESL teacher preparation programs, but they’re more like certain qualities that ESL teachers should possess. If we did have actual guidelines for what should be included in an ESL teacher preparation program there would be a possibility for an external evaluation of the program. However, what a lot of programs are doing are internal evaluations. They are actually creating the guidelines of what should be studied.

P: The departments themselves,

I: Exactly

P: Not from outside.
I: Right. Since we’re at a university, we have to get a committee to start this right. If your program, your MA program wanted to do an internal evaluation, who would you like to see on the committee to create the evaluation? Not specific names, but types of people?

P: Well, I would probably want someone who is really into communicating with teachers and the students too, to see what their needs are. I find that’s probably the biggest drawback in our department. Professors who have been doing this theory for years and they’re really interested in it and really fascinated by it, so they push it on other people. But they never stop and think what do the students really need? What are teachers doing in the classroom that makes this relevant? And I think that’s a quality that’s missed.

I: OK. That might be one of the criteria that should be studied in the committee, but who is going to be on this committee in the first place, to create the evaluation. Who is going to create the evaluation?

P: Evaluation of the program?

I: Yes. of the program.

P: I think I’m misunderstanding, like the type of person?

I: Yes, who can we get to work on this committee?

P: But not names

I: But not necessarily names right

P: I’m still not getting it.

I: OK. You’re saying that there are some professors who are too theory oriented and not listening to students. Are there other professors who

P: oh yea

I: So maybe you would like some professors on there who are willing to listen to the students needs.

P: Yes.

I: Would it be beneficial to have some of those theory-based professors?

P: Hmm. Well, if the point of the committee were to evaluate teacher preparation, then I’d want someone who understood teachers and understood what they need and what goes on in the classroom.

I: OK

P: Having someone who is really into the theory side really kind of misses the point.
I: All right.

P: So, I can’t really see that. I can’t see pointing them all together but, a committee should have those kind of people with that purpose in mind.

I: OK. Anybody else on the committee?

P: people who are committed to having a good mix of theory and practice. How does practice fit into theory and how does theory fit into practice. I feel that those are the classes that really helped me the most, the classes that integrated the two. And that kind of goes along with teachers’ needs too. Somebody who is willing to take those two and integrate them practically.

I: OK. Would you like to be on the committee?

P: Sure.

I: OK. So, are you still in the program?

P: No I just graduated.

I: Would it have been beneficial for you to be part of the committee while you were still in the program?

P: Yes, I think so.

I: So maybe a graduate student. Now that you’re not in the program, do you think it’s beneficial to have a graduate of the program.

P: Yes, somebody who is a graduate of the program or still in the program. I’m still working at X and a lot of my friends are still in the program. We talk about these all the time, they always come up.

I: Good.

P: It’s usually the students who are still in the program who are having the most trouble with it. They’re trying, struggling with their classes, their own classes plus teaching and they really don’t get the preparation they need to deal with this.

I: OK

P: And me, I’ve been teaching there for almost two years now and I’ve sort of gotten used to it, but I’m still in that situation (inaudible)

I: Right. Now you mentioned one of the criteria that you’d like to study in terms of students in terms of combining theory and application. Is there anything else about the program’s curriculum that you would like to have studied?

P: Anything that I could have added to the curriculum?
I: That’s one possibility.

P: Well, the one class that I was interested in taking, but no one offered it, was a class called intercultural counseling. It’s kind of off the ESL path a little bit, but it’s still kind of related.

I: OK

P: And that was one class that I really searched hard to find somewhere in the school, but no one taught anything like that.

I: So maybe there were some different needs that weren’t always addressed

P: Actually one thing that I just thought of. Our program is an English for academic purposes program and it’s connected to the university. What ends up happening in our classes is that students who can’t get into X end up being referred or deferred to ESL because of their native languages. But what ends up happening is a lot of these students have more than language problems it’s learning support

I: OK

P: And it’s really hard to tell the difference between the two. A lot of them have gone to American high schools and they have bad study habits. That’s always a big problem. It’s really hard to separate all of that. There’s no one at X that’s willing to tackle that issue. They seem convinced that well that’s probably just one or two students here and there; they’ll catch up. But I really think it’s more than that; I think it’s a big problem. And I think a lot of the graduate students and teachers in the program would probably agree with me, but it’s just something that is not our field.

I: OK That’s not something that we generally think about. Now you mention that a questionnaire might be one way in which students’ voices could be incorporated into an internal evaluation.

P: Yes

I: You like the idea of confidentiality.

P: Yes, I feel like a lot of people really would be uncomfortable with voicing their opinions if they knew...any dissent

I: Right

P: You know, you get out of graduate school and the only references that you have are the professors in the department. Some professors, I really felt like if I disagreed with them even if...as politely as I could, they would still take it the wrong way because they’ve got so much more education and blah, blah, blah, which is a valid point you know, but I’ve had that feeling myself and I don’t think anyone’s willing to jeopardize their career just to say I think we should do it this way.
I: OK Under benefits of student input to the program, you mentioned that there would be a better communication of students' needs to teachers. You also mentioned a more realistic view of what constitutes teacher preparation. Is that a benefit for the student or the program?

P: The ESL student?

I: The MA student

P: The MA student, let me think, could you read that to me

I: Yes. You wrote: “A benefit of student input to program evaluation would be a more realistic view of what constitutes teacher preparation.

P: OK, so,

I: Is that because of the students needs?

P: Yes, that’s what the students really need to know.

I: So, that’s for the program?

P: Yes.

I: What kind of benefit might an MA student get out of participating in the program evaluation?

P: The student might become better aware of the needs that they do have. A lot of students go through this: I don’t really know what I should be doing. I don’t know what I’m doing wrong. I just know that it’s not working. Maybe with pointed questions, students might be able to isolate the problems that they need to work on and the questions that they need to be asking because

I: OK

P: I know when I first started I just didn’t know enough to ask the right questions. And that might help them in that way.

I: OK. So a little bit of reflection might put things into perspective.

P: Yes, yes.

I: Is there anything else about MA student input into program evaluations...either how to do it or the benefits that you can think of.

P: Hmm. Well, first of all knowing that they’re being heard.

I: What does that do for a student?

P: It empowers them a little bit. It gives them some control over what’s happening.
I: OK

P: The stereotype of graduate students, they're just lonely clerks for professors. I think a lot of people kind of feel that way. Oh I'm just taking two years out of my life and I don't have any control over what's happening to me and... but having more input might be a good thing and making you feel good because this isn't take time out from your life this is empowering you to move forward.

I: OK Good. Thank you.
I: I see that you wrote down that you had some EFL teaching experience.

P: I had some teaching experience in China.

I: OK, and you're working as a teaching assistant now?

P: No, I’m a research assistant.

I: Oh, I see teaching assistant here. OK. What was it about this MA program that made you choose it.

P: OK, hold on a minute.

I: Sure.

P: I said I worked as a teaching assistant.

I: There’s, on here I asked if you...

P: In China, the EFL it’s called a teaching assistant.

I: Oh, I see. There’s something about if you currently have a job or if you will return to a job and you said a teaching assistant-2 years. Was that the same thing?

P: I guess it was in China.

I: And will you return to that same job?

P: I don’t think so.

I: No, OK. What was it about this program that made you choose it?

P: Well, it was, this program was about teaching English and I used to be an English teacher. so I wanted to learn something. (inaudible) I didn’t learn anything about education (inaudible) before when I was a teacher.

I: Why did you choose this program and not one at another university?

P: Well, I applied for several programs and was accepted by some of them, but this program gave me a scholarship and much financial assistance.

I: Oh, OK. On your Likert scale, and I’ll refresh your memory, there were a couple of statements that you marked “3”, which could be neutral or not applicable. And let me just ask you about them. The one statement is, “The theoretical linguistics courses are important parts of the program’s curriculum”. You marked “3” which is neutral or not applicable. Do you have those kinds of courses...
P: theoretical?
I: theoretical.

P: Well, yes, we have several linguistics courses. I think I'm going to take a course called Social Linguistics.
I: OK

P: About linguistics, I can't decide how much I can get from the course that would help with my future teaching.
I: OK

P: That's probably more of a neutral. I think that maybe in the long run it will help me, help me in my future teaching, but I can't see anything now.

I: OK, also, on the statement, "The English literature courses are important parts of the program's curriculum". Do you have any English Lit courses in your program?

P: No.
I: OK.

P: I think we could include some.
I: I see your degree...

P: (inaudible) include.
I: Maybe electives?

P: Yes.

I: And the only statement that you disagreed with was about the accent reduction course. Do you have anything like that?

P: No.

I: OK. The part that you think is most beneficial so far is the teaching techniques and approaches to develop a repertoire.

P: Yes.

I: And you think there is not enough grammar information?

P: I mean that for me I don't need much grammar information because I have learned all that when I was learning English. But for me, I think we should know more about how to explain to the English learner.

I: Oh, OK. Is there anything else missing from your program, perhaps an elective class that you would like to see as a requirement?
P: Yes there is. I think the assessment class.

I: Which class?

P: Assessment. This program is offering a class called assessment testing and assessment, something like that. I think we really need to know something about that, I mean language assessment (inaudible)

I: OK. One of the things in ESL teacher preparation programs is that we do not have written guidelines about what should be included. TESOL has some suggestions about qualities that ESL teachers should possess...

P: Yes.

I: But nothing to really make an external evaluation. What some programs have done is create an internal evaluation. And, basically see what is good and what needs to be improved in the program. If your program wanted to create this type of evaluation, who do you think should be on this type of committee? Not necessarily specific names, but types of people.

P: I am not sure what they are doing. What I do know is that students cannot evaluate the program. I think there should be a committee.

I: Right, that's what we want to create.

P: Students should be included in this committee.

I: OK

P: There should also be teachers, ESL instructors and maybe one or two administrators of the university. (inaudible)

I: Pardon me.

P: I mean what I would say is the committee should be professors of the program ESL teachers and students of the program also maybe deans from the college or something.

I: Right. What do you think they should include in the evaluation or what needs to be studied?

P: What needs to be studied?

I: What should we look at in the program?

P: Well, first what courses should we offer. The committee can decide what courses will best help students for their future teaching. Also, they could evaluate how effective are the courses. Are the teachers, professors doing a good job, getting feedback from the students in the program.
I: Right, OK. How might this committee get the MA students to voice their opinions?

P: Well, the members of the committee should be voted by the students in the program.

I: OK. How can we get the other MA students to tell what they think about the program?

P: Well maybe a questionnaire.

I: OK, so a general questionnaire to go out to all of the students?

P: Maybe they could put a list, I mean a e-mail list, so they can send their opinions.

I: Oh, OK. E-mail would be a good way to do it. What sort of benefits do you think the program will receive from listening to the MA students?

P: Well the program will be a program that listens to the students. They will improve the quality of the courses and they may also make changes as to which courses should be offered.

I: OK. What sort of benefits would students receive from giving this input?

P: Well, they can be able to, I think students will feel more comfortable in a program that listens to their voices. Also when the program can improve, the students will benefit they get what they needed most from the program.

I: What did you mean by "they will feel comfortable"?

P: I mean they feel that they are respected as students. They don’t just follow what the professor says they have their own voice. You feel better if your voice is heard.

I: I see. Is there anything else about teacher preparation program evaluations that comes to mind?

P: Actually, this is the first time that I hear about it and I think it is a good idea. Whether it is an external or internal evaluation, I think it is a good idea.

I: Is there anything else about the MA student input.

P: I think it is a good idea to for a program to hear the MA student and I think the MA student would be glad to share their ideas.

I: OK. Thank you.
0833 Interview

I: You didn’t find any class yet that you didn’t find beneficial. What was it before you entered the program that made you decide on attending X.

P: As opposed to another school?

I: Right.

P: Oh, well. Actually just because it’s local, because it’s within driving distance.

I: OK. Convenience. That’s not an unusual answer.

P: I didn’t know if I wanted to say that or not.

I: That’s ok. You can be completely honest. So, you do feel that the curriculum is preparing you to be an ESL teacher.

P: Yes.

I: OK. On the Likert scale questions, most of them you marked 1 or 2, but there are some that you marked 3 which is neutral or not applicable. I would just like to clarify which one these are.

P: OK.

I: The education foundations courses are important parts of the program’s curriculum. Do you have any education foundations courses?

P: I wasn’t sure.

I: OK. An education foundations course might be something like educational psychology course or history of education.

P: I don’t think we have anything like that.

I: OK. You’re in an applied linguistics department, aren’t you?

P: Yes. Now I remember, I did a couple of questionnaires.

I: Oh, you’re trying to remember which questionnaire.

P: I remember when I was filling it out (inaudible)

I: You marked phonetics and phonology as #1.

P: I put them under...as sound system.

I: The sound system, ok. The theoretical linguistic courses you marked as 3. Would that be because they were just average or you haven’t taken any?
P: I haven't taken any.
I: OK. Are they part of the master's program or are they electives?
P: I don't know. I'm really not sure.
I: How about the applied linguistics courses
P: This is only my second quarter, so I don't have much to go on.
I: Have you taken any methodology courses yet.
P: No.
I: Are there any English Lit courses.
P: No.
I: and accent reduction.
P: No.
I: OK. Let's go on to the open-ended questions. You said you weren't really sure if there was anything missing from your program because you are only in your second program. Are there any classes that are listed as electives that you think should be required.
P: Actually, I'm going to look my list.
I: Sure.
P: I'm having trouble remember what some of the electives are.
I: Right. You also mentioned the practicum
P: I found my list.
I: OK
P: Actually, I don't think any of the electives should be required.
I: All right. Let's go on to your comment about the practicum. All of the required courses, especially the practicum in my case because I have never taught before, cover areas in which I need to learn more in order to be a good teacher of ESL. Could you describe a little more about your practicum?
P: OK. That's what I'm taking next quarter.
I: You really don't know how it's organized.
P: Well, I do. We're supposed to go under a cooperating teacher. We go sit in a classroom with the cooperating teacher. At the beginning we just observe. After a while (inaudible) we become more involved and
towards the end, if the cooperating teacher is willing, we can take on
a more of a teaching role with someone watching over us.

I: Right. Are there any classes in conjunction with the practicum?

P: Yes, one of the teachers has a class. You go once a week if you
have found a cooperating teacher. If you haven't found a teacher, you
go twice a week.

I: I see

P: (inaudible) make it up for people who work or don't have the time
to do the practicum.

I: OK. You mentioned that the MA students write a course evaluation
about the class or the professor. I think that's pretty common in
universities now. How might the program elicit information about the
program in general from MA students? Any other ideas?

P: I don't Know, but on the back side of the course evaluations you
can write any comments about what you thought about the class.

I: OK. TESOL has come up with some guidelines about what qualities an
ESL teacher should possess, but they're not detailed about any courses
or competencies. If there were, there could be some kind of external
evaluation of all MA ESL teacher preparation programs. What some
programs are doing is creating internal evaluations to see that goals
are being met. Being at a committee, we have to have a committee.
Think of your own program, what kinds of people would you like to see
on the committee, not specific names.

P: I don't know, maybe students as well as faculty

I: OK

P: Maybe someone from the college in general maybe someone (inaudible

I: OK there's another possibility. What sort of criteria would you
like to see them study or focus on. What should be looked at within
the program?

P: I'm not really sure. I think sometimes some of my professors to go
TESOL, often times they speak to people who run ESL programs and ask
them what they're look for. People that they hire (inaudible) focus a
lot on computer skills they want people with more computer knowledge.

I: so not only what should be in the curriculum but what sort of
competencies should result from that

P: They said a lot of people get their masters and get into ESL
programs but they are not very good at working with others. Oh I'm
smart I just got out and I know everything... They don't really know
how to work well with others. So our professors have been trying to
get us develop other skills with committee work and things like that.
I: Oh good. There's a lot to be done there. That's interesting. How might this committee get information from MA students about the program. Any ideas

P: You mean other than the questionnaire

I: OK questionnaire might be one way.

P: They could suggest that if you have any questions or suggestions you could write a letter it could be anonymous.

I: What sort of benefits do you think the program might get from the student input

P: I guess they might find if the students are getting what they need, maybe if they want more (inaudible), maybe they would put more of that in

I: So, the program might listen and actually make some changes.

P: Yes, what's the point of trying to elicit responses if you're not going to do anything about it.

I: OK So the program might be able to improve itself. Is there any other benefit that the students might be able to get from this input

P: I don't know

I: did anything come into your own mind while filling out the questionnaire

P: I don't think so

I: Is there anything else about teacher education program evaluation

P: No.
1011 Interview

I: You mentioned that you did do some ESL work beforehand in a Fulbright TAship. How long was that?

P: One academic year.

I: One academic year. On the Likert scale, you mentioned that the reading/writing, English grammar, and listening/speaking methodology courses were all part of one course...

P: Yes.

I: You did mark the listening/speaking methodology as not applicable is that because it wasn’t addressed much in the course or...

P: Applicable to what?

I: Let me read it again. The listening/speaking methodology courses are important parts of the program’s curriculum.

P: Oh I see. I guess I marked that just because there isn’t a course in that per se. It’s just a small part in the general methodology course.

I: OK. That makes sense there.

P: I guess that’s why I marked it.

I: OK. You marked down here: My program includes a strong practicum/student teaching component and you marked strongly disagree. Can you explain why.

P: Unless the students are awarded TAships I would say it applies to them. If you do have a TAship, there is a strong practicum.

I: OK

P: For the students who do not receive TAships, they gain barely any kind of teaching experience whatsoever. Like non.

I: OK. What percentage of your class would you say actually got TAships?

P: Do you mean starting out?

I: Yes the year you started.

P: The year I started, there were maybe 6 TAs and

I: Maybe 20 students altogether? I mean MA students.

P: Let me think. Not that many. There were 6 TAs and maybe 5 non-TAs
I: OK that’s about 50%. Your TAship, what do you call it there a practicum?

P: a TAship

I: Just TAship. OK so it’s not necessarily a required part of your curriculum.

P: Absolutely not. It’s an award really because you get tuition and a wage and you get teaching experience.

I: OK. So when you said the other 5, you meant there’s nothing there.

P: Right

I: as a component per se. You have a question mark under Education Foundation courses. I assume that means you’re wondering what kind of courses that would include.

P: Right

I: Education foundation courses might be something like Educational Psychology or History of Education.

P: Doesn’t sound like anything I’ve had.

I: All right. The three components that you’ve marked as strongly agree as being important parts of your program

P: OK

I: were a strong theoretical component, the applied linguistics, and the practicum because you have a TA ship

P: Right

I: Of those three which would you consider the strongest or perhaps the component which is best preparing you to be an ESL teacher.

P: I have a hard time picking the one best thing

I: OK

P Because I think the best thing about those three is that they complement each other so well. I think practice is nothing without theory and you have to have theory behind your practice. And the applied linguistics was essential to help deal with the cultural differences that we encounter as ESL teachers. So I don’t want to pick one.

I: OK. that’s fine. What was it that made you decide to choose this program at this university.

P: To be perfectly honest with you, it was the only one to offer me financial support, so I took it.
I: That's not an uncommon answer. Is there anything else that you would like to add to your program if you could. You did mention curriculum development and a mentoring program

P: Yes

I: Is there anything else?

P: Well, a critical component. I think is important.

I: Yes I see critical literacy, in terms of what?

P: In terms of getting both teachers and students to think a little more critically about the system as it were. About education, the whole process of education. So it's not just focusing on content, which would be language I suppose in this case, but on the whole learning process the whole educational process and what we can do together to make it better.

I: Good.

P: Thinking critically about education. That's very broad but I think it's now do it the way it's always been done and I want to resist a little more than that.

I: Right. TESOL does have some guidelines for an ESL teacher preparation program, but it's discussed in terms of qualities that an ESL teacher should possess rather than actual curricular components of the program or competencies of the ESL teacher,

P: Is the critical component included in that, like the ability to think critically.

I: It's not listed as such, but that idea is included. Now if curricular components were included, we might be able to conduct an external evaluation of our programs. What some programs are doing are creating internal evaluations.

P: OK

I: Making sure goals are being met, needs are being met. If your program wanted to create such an internal evaluation, who would you like to see on the committee to create such an evaluation? Not specific names, but types of people.

P: Well, certainly students.

I: OK.

P: Listening to you talk right now you said, there are evaluations to see if goals are being met, and I'm wondering who is setting the goals in the first place. Not just who is evaluating.

I: Good point. That might be one of the criteria to be studied.

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P: That would be important I would think. Recently there was a faculty search in a department where I know people. There was a student representative on the search committee with four professors. That’s all well and good and it’s great to have a student representative and to have them included and we hear their voices, but when it comes right down to it, the student’s voice doesn’t mean anything. There are a lot of things already in place to ensure that students’ voices are heard and they give their feedback.

I: Like course evaluations

P: Like course evaluations and little token memberships on committees. But it just doesn’t change the reality that students are in subordinate positions to professors and politics always win out.

I: OK

P: A student is hardly going to vote against a professor with whom she is going to have to work however many years in a program. I have no answer for that and it’s the hardest thing to change I’m sure. It’s just such a big problem for any real feedback I don’t know how to fix that.

I: Right. OK. You mentioned goals of the program. Is there anything else you would like to see them study?

P: At my school, I’m at a big research institution. The point of this university is to do research, get grants and for faculty to publish. Teaching, teacher training, students, fall way down the priority list after publishing and research and politics. So, again it’s another extremely difficult issue to get at.

I: So, perhaps are students needs being met? So that’s another criteria we could add.

P: Sure or What are the priorities? Are the needs being met or are research and publishing more important for the faculty.

I: OK

P: How do faculty divide their time between research, publishing, students’ needs, and curriculum development in their own classes and in teaching students how to develop curriculum and so forth.

I: OK. How might this committee elicit information about the program or the opinions of the MA students?

P: OK. I think it can’t be done any one way.

I: OK

P: It can be elicited in many different formats: anonymously or not anonymously; written or verbal.

I: What would be the benefit of the anonymous format?
P: Just the issue I mentioned before of the students being honest if they have to continue working with the professor.

I: OK. What would be a benefit of it being identified, not anonymous.

P: It might motivate the students to put a little more thought into it and not just rattle off a bunch of complaints.

I: I'm going to continue as devil's advocate here. What would be the benefit of it being verbal?

P: Because I think people can explain their thoughts more thoroughly in a verbal situation. Then if the interviewer or whoever is listening doesn't understand anything, they can ask for clarification. They can get a more thorough understanding rather than a written one where it could be interpreted in a number of different ways.

I: OK Can you think of a benefit of it being written?

P: Well, it's a little more fixed in time. You can go back and read it over. It's a little more concrete in terms of collecting data I suppose. In terms of data analysis.

I: OK You mentioned that this could force professors or administrators to get off their high horses and listen to how their decision making affects teachers/the field/the profession. It could make them more accountable basically.

P: Yes

I: OK Can you think of any other benefit for the program itself?

P: Well, I would think that if a program is really in tune to its students needs and they can really demonstrate interest in them and in fulfilling them it would be of long-term benefit to the program because it would attract benefits. Theoretically, it sounds like it would be a great benefit. And it would improve the quality of the program. I don't think it could help but make it better, make it more cutting edge, dealing with real problems that teachers have, with problems students have with becoming teachers. It would, instead of some theoretical ideas and leaving students off to make the connections on their own, I would think it could have more hands on in that process.

I: OK. What about the students? What benefit would they get from giving their opinions about the program?

P: Well, I think it would give them a sense of worth. Rather than just their filling chairs and paying tuition, it would show that the program values them as students and values them enough to actually respond to their input. And invest resources, like time and money, into getting their needs met. Rather than just a person and a number. When you show people that you're interested in their needs, they're going to respond and they're going to develop and be more interested.
I: This sounds like you could relate it to the idea of critical literacy/pedagogy that you mentioned about something that could be added.

P: That’s definitely the perspective that I’m coming from.

I: OK. Is there anything else about program evaluation or MA student input that you’d like to add at this point.

P: I think it’d be nice to do a longitudinal study. When a student graduates from a program, what that student does after graduation, what kind of jobs they get, what kinds of problems they have. Or even, it could highlight the success of the program, how did the program prepare these people particularly well. It’s not just to point out the downfall, or weak points, but also the strong ones. That’s important too.

I: Exactly. Thank you.
Interview

I: On the questionnaire that was Likert scale, there were a few responses that you responded neutral or not applicable and I just wanted to clarify these responses.

P: OK

I: The education foundations courses were an important part of the programs curriculum. Would you say that these are just average or there are no courses?

P: We have a methods course.

I: That would be under the methodology. This would be something like Educational Psychology or History of Education.

P: No, there is nothing like that in a requirement. You can go out and take that elsewhere

I: So not applicable?

P: Right.

I: OK Phonology courses. Did you have phonology?

P: No.

I: OK. English Literature courses are an important part of the program's curriculum.

P: Same thing. not applicable

I: And the accent reduction course....

P: I would love to take one. Not applicable. I probably need one myself.

I: You stated that you strongly agree with the statement that my program has a strong theoretical component

P: Absolutely

I: You also stated strongly agree for Applied Linguistics and the practicum/student teaching components.

P: Yes.

I: So you would say they are both very important parts of your program's curriculum

P: Yes, and I think that its even objective to say that the teacher who teaches the Applied Linguistics is so outstanding that I think that even weights it more. Perhaps if someone else taught it, the
material would not be as influential. Because of the way it’s taught and the instructor, it’s a great course. And because of that I think that a lot of us have a pention toward taking courses related to it.

I: OK.

P: So, I think it might be leaning more that way in the future, but that’s not for me to say. That’s for them to decide.

I: Right.

P: But I know that just in terms of what we have all, at least in my year, as we start to prepare for what our master’s projects are going to be, blah, blah blah. It tends to look at a lot of stuff that we took a look at in that class.

I: Great.

P: so I would strongly agree with that. And the practicum is awsome.

I: OK. could you describe the practicum for me.

P: OK I’m a Teaching Assistant. I’m one of the lucky ones who has an assistantship. And the first year. Well, I teach Listening this year and next year I will teach writing.

I: OK

P: So you get a year of college-level Listening/speaking and a year of college-level writing as a second language

I: I see

P: To be able to come out with experience in both, I would have to believe is a plus. Just in terms of, I didn’t have any formal teaching experience when I came here. Obviously, it’s a pretty weighty task when you first come in. We would have weekly meetings on Fridays, we would do some readings, we would have some discussions during the week via a chat-room almost about the readings. Offering your insights, what are you trying in class, what are some of the activities you’re doing, what do you think about this, how’s this going? And there was a constant stream of communication and a really strong support if you needed it, just for ideas or for how to handle a difficult student or an unusual situation, anything like that. So in my opinion, it was very hands on, not letting you sink or swim. And a lot of the coursework in the classes you could tie into your teaching. Hey look at something going on in classroom use that as a basis for your paper.

I: OK You say you are a TA, so this is not actually a requirement for your program.

P: Well, if you’re not a TA then in the second year there is an internship/practicum that is that is required. That’s going on right now. I don’t know if you’ve heard from anybody who is participating in that.
I: Yes, I have. So, they have a combination of an observation and student teaching situation.

P: There’s no question that it has been a huge plus for me to be able to be in the classroom on both sides of the desk.

I: You've mentioned that for the non-TAs the teaching component is lacking. Is there anything else that you’d like to see as a core course in the program. Perhaps not completely lacking, but it’s an elective and you think it should be required.

P: Whoa, let me think about that. I can’t think of anything off the top of my head. I’ll probably think about it 30 seconds afterwards.

I: That’s fine. just stop me and let me know. Now there aren’t any real guidelines set up for ESL teacher preparation programs. TESOL does have some things that are suggested qualities that an ESL teacher should have upon leaving the program. If there were some guidelines, we could have an external type of evaluation. However, a lot of programs are creating their own internal evaluations. They are creating a program evaluation from the inside. If your program wanted to do this, who would you like to see on the committee? Not necessarily names, but types of people.

P: OK. I would say some representatives from where people end up working. Whether it’s principles from public schools or um...

I: so you do want some representation from the outside as well as internal.

P: I think it’s real beneficial. I can imagine it would be a real benefit in terms of keeping in touch with the practicality of whatever ideas you propose.

I: OK. What about on the inside?

P: I would say from Psychology, Counseling...

I: OK, this is from your program, not your university. From the masters program itself.

P: OK. Student representatives and I would say all of the professors because they all come from different () they all sort of play off each other.

I: OK. That would be interesting to have, a little diversity. What should be some of the criteria? Or what should be studied in this evaluation. What would you like them to look at in the program

(silence)

I: let me give you an example.

P: Ok
I: You really think that it's beneficial that there's the opportunity to teach and take course work. You're sort of looking at that practicality or the applicable nature of what you're learning. So, you might say that you want them to study just that, the, Is this course truly applicable to the classroom. That might be one of the criteria.

P: I would say, Do the teaching styles taught and encouraged here translate outside of X. You know another environment. You know we teach graduate level L/S to a certain type of student. What happens, do the same bag of tricks still work when you go into a public elementary school, you know, that kind of situation?

I: OK. Is there anything about the curriculum, the required courses, that you would like them to look at?

P: Probably the, I, they integrate it really well.

I: OK. that's fine.

P: I would say, perhaps is there a possibility of a little leeway in pulling from other fields and expanding the selection of electives.

I: OK

P: One thing, if you said what would be a good requirement or an additional requirement. And I'm going to say this and then I'm going to smack myself because I'm going to wish I hadn't. That would be a language requirement. I think there's a real strong advantage to being a student in a language classroom when you're teaching also. Because you remember, you ask your students to do things. And maybe you're doing it because you don't actually remember what it was like to actually do them. So I think it's a great advantage. If you're asking people to learn English, go out and learn something else.

I: OK. Things that they are going to study don't have to be negative. It could be something that they're doing and you want to make sure that they continue doing it.

P: One thing that I did notice or have noticed is that when the classes tend to overlap or integrate is that it sticks more. It makes a lot more sense

I: So integration is one thing that we need to look at more. OK. If we want MA students to have some input into this, not just talking to the professors, how might we get the MA students to voice their opinion?. How could we elicit this information?

P: I would just say ask them verbally. I mean questionnaires and forms have the advantage sometimes in anonymity when people might not feel as comfortable....

I: Then what would be the benefit of verbal session?
P: Did you say "what would be"?

I: Yes, what would be the benefit of it being maybe a discussion group?

P: I think people could help each other. And sometimes you don’t think of something, but when someone else voices it, you have an opinion, either similarly or conversely. I think there’s a lot to be said for teachers and students being face to face having real conversations where students feel that they are a part of this process and not just a supplier of a form that the teachers look at it and make a decision from. Let’s sit around a round table and really kick this stuff around and hear why you from a student’s point of view hear what goes into the thought process of a department head. What do you want to know, what are you looking for, why are you asking these questions. What are the real life constraints that you are looking at? Ultimately, there are people in this program that could go on to be in that position that could be beneficial in the process. To find out how these really function.

I: OK. That’s interesting. What benefit do you think an MA student could get from giving this input to the program evaluation?

P: Well, I don’t know who said it, but anytime you get a chance to vote, vote. If you have a chance to, to me, it takes away your complaints. Rather than having people bitch and moan in their cubicles, they have been given a voice or an opportunity to voice something. If they choose to do it, they’ve done it; if they choose not to do it then you’ve go no one to kick but themselves. I think it’s a real life process of learning how, I think one thing, very practically, that anyone can learn from a process like that is learning how to diplomatically state your views. And also how to positively, to give positive feedback is a good thing to. So I think those are invaluable skills wherever you go whatever you do. It’s just one of the things that could happen in that situation. I think another positive thing, obviously, if you voice something, we’re not in this situation because we’ve had some new hirings lately, if you have a stagnant type of program where things are done the same way for a lengthy period of time. Students voicing fresh views and seeing things change could be very motivational for them.

I: Good Point.

P: To have them feel like this is our program, we have some ownership in it, we have a stake into it. And therefore, we are going to put more into it and get more out of it and da da da da. And then it snowballs. Idealist sitting here.

I: OK What benefits would the program receive from the student input.

P: Well, I think what’s kind of neat, I can only speak from the people that I’ve met. They are so varied from where they come from, and their experience and what they want to do. Everybody’s coming from a different point of view. Some people want to teach abroad, some people want to teach here. Some people don’t even want to be in the
school, some people want to do research. I think if you have that many
types of interests and backgrounds, someone is going to bring up an
idea or look at something in a way or see a need or see a strength that
someone else would never have seen. And I think any program if they're
sincere in who they're bring in, wants to hear from them. If they scour
through those applications, and really do say there's value to this
person being here, then why wouldn't they want to listen to them.
Where's the value? The value to the program would be constant
different lenses. Like anything good that's questioned; if it's held
up, great; otherwise it's going to get changed, molded and shaped
differently.

I: Great Do you have any other thoughts about the ESL teacher
preparation program evaluation or the use of MA student input.

P: Well, this is something that is just an issue here in Pennsylvania.
There is no such animal as being certified in ESL. And I think it is a
huge problem. You get out and you have a masters, you might have a
masters in ESL, but you're still not certified to go teach somewhere in
a public situation. At least at X, to get your certification, it's
prohibitive because it's like 52 credits or something in addition. So
it's not like you can come and do both at once. And I do think that,
if there could be a combination type of program where you'd come out
with a Masters, and maybe it's a longer program. Maybe it's a 3-year
program or something. But if you'd come out and you'd have either
secondary or elementary certification plus...I think if there were some
type of combination program that would allow you to do that, that's
really worth taking a look at.

I: There's something to take to Pennsylvania TESOL.

P: I really think that's a huge problem. I know I spent spring break,
I visited an elementary school there and worked with the ESL teacher
there. And they're getting paid by the hour because it's a weird
situation. I think we can do better.

I: OK. Thank you.