Knowledge Base of English as a Second Language Teachers

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DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

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INTRODUCTION

The teaching of ESL (English as a second language as opposed to as a foreign language) has generally been a professional activity that is practiced by, if not reserved for, people traditionally referred to as native English speakers. As there are now more nonnative speaking ESL teachers than before[1], the field of ESL, when compared to other academic subjects, has become quite diverse in terms of what its teaching staff brings with them into the teaching situation. One aspect of ESL teachers' background that has a great impact on student learning is ESL teachers' knowledge.

A plethora of studies in general education have explored the nature and effect of the knowledge teachers possess, who are a rather homogeneous group within each subject area. However, efforts in the teaching of English as a language seem relatively lacking. Recognizing the diversity in ESL teachers' knowledge, this proposed study hopes to fill the gap and contribute to a better understanding of the composition of teacher knowledge and its effect on ESL teaching and learning.

In the remainder of this proposal, I will first discuss educational research in general as well as in language education, which is followed by a detailed discussion of the research design for the proposed study.

Research on Teaching

Educational research has had a long history of examining teaching based on student achievement—the so called process-product research paradigm (Britten, 1985; Erickson, 1986). Under this paradigm, teaching has been studied from an outside observer's perspective in terms of quantifiable behaviors and activities that are associated with learning outcomes (Freeman, 1996; Richards, 1998; Shulman, 1987).

This process-product view of teaching has emphasized the learners' perspectives and encouraged teachers and teacher educators to focus professional preparation mainly on mechanical skill learning and building (Shulman, 1986; Valli, 1992). According to Shulman (1987), effective teaching has mostly been about the teachers' management of the classroom (see also Brophy & Good, 1986). Shulman (1992) further argued that given the importance of teaching as "the center of all education and educational reform" (p.14),

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[1] The establishment of the Non-Native English Speakers in TESOL Caucus (NNEST), to which I also belong, has to some extent signified the increasing presence of nonnative speaking teachers.

the process-product view is unhelpful as it is rather partial and incomplete. To fully appreciate the act of teaching, the simplified and mechanical understanding derived from the process-product paradigm needed to be extended by means of including, for instance, the cognitive aspect of teaching (e.g. Erickson, 1986; Shulman, 1992; Valli, 1992)[2] and teacher knowledge is one strand of scholarship in general education that has evolved from the new focus on teacher cognition.

In language teaching, there have been efforts similar to the process-product research. For instance, Moskowitz's (1976) much cited study has listed characteristics of effective language teachers such as more use of the foreign language, less teacher talk, more movement and instructional nonverbal gestures, rapid pace, and so on. Although lagging behind general education by almost a decade, research in language education has also experienced a similar shift towards the cognitive aspect of teaching and given recognition to the central role teachers play in language learning (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). Joining the departure from a mechanical view of teaching, the proposed study is concerned with the field of ESL and aims to explore what it is that teachers of adult ESL students know.

ESL as a Discipline and Profession

Since the 1966 Recommendations of the Teacher Preparation Committee that the teaching of English to non-English speakers be recognized as a discipline (Anthony & Crymes, 1977), which reached its "maturing adulthood" in the 1980's (Brown, 1981, p.48), the teaching of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) has been described as a profession (Johnston, 1997) and "a professional activity that requires specialized training" (TESOL, Inc., 2002, p.1). Part of what is referred to as "TESOL," ESL has been defined differently. For the proposed study, I will adopt Richards et al.'s (1992) first definition, that ESL is the teaching of English to minorities and immigrants in English-speaking countries, the particular English-speaking country being the United States.

The demand for ESL instruction at all levels in the United States has risen. As far as adult learners are concerned, ESL learners who have received the most attention are

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[2] Erickson (1986) and Shulman (1992) have both also mentioned the contextual and social aspect of teaching.

immigrants (e.g. Freeman, Freeman, & Meruri, 2002; Judd, 2000; Schlusberg & Mueller, 1995). At the same time, discussions about ESL in the higher educational setting have also emerged, and ESL instruction has been identified as one of the fastest growing (Ignash, 1995; Kuo, 2000) and most important areas "in a period of institutional expansion" (Pennington, 1992, p.8).

The goal of ESL instruction, no matter who the clients may be, has been to enable extensive participation in the mainstream society and/or in the academic environment. In spite of such important objectives, ESL instructors have often been portrayed as under-trained (especially in programs serving immigrants, e.g. Judd, 2000) and ESL teaching as a venture every native speaker can undertake, with or without specialized knowledge (Pennington, 1992). Furthermore, ESL students are often marginalized and ESL programs are frequently deemed as simply providing remedial service to ameliorate student deficiencies. As a result, ESL instructors have also been described as marginalized (Pennington, 1992; Zamel, 1995) and their occupation as lacking the status of other more established disciplines (Johnston, 1997; Pennington, 1992). Even within the general field of language education, the status of ESL as "skills" is said to be lower than foreign language instruction (Auerbach, 1991). Similar to Shulman's (1987) statement of what was needed for the professionalization of teaching, facing the challenge to promote professional recognition, Pennington (1992) has proposed that the codification of teachers' knowledge and their work be the first step because specialized knowledge, according to Pennington, holds the key to elevating the disciplinary status of a field.

Knowledge Making in Teacher Knowledge Research

In the mid 1970's, after about 15 years of influence from the process-product research paradigm and a focus on professional skill building, scholars in the study of teaching gradually shifted to focus on teachers' cognition, beginning with research on teacher thinking, including "teacher planning, decision-making, diagnosis, reflection, and problem solving" (Shulman, 1992, p.22). In the 1980's, Shulman noted a "missing paradigm" (1992, p.24; also Shulman, 1986) in the study of teaching—teacher knowledge. Shulman 's 1986 article, which was "his first fully elaborated thesis on teacher knowledge" (Wilson, 2004, p.9), brought people's attention to the importance of the much neglected "content" of teaching, and he has been the most prominent figure when it

comes to discussions about this new focus of teacher knowledge (Munby et al, 2001).

The intense study of teacher knowledge in general education is approximately two decades old, and the nature and development of that knowledge, according to Munby et al. (2001), is only beginning to be understood by researchers in teaching and teacher education. Among the categories of teacher knowledge Shulman (1987) has conceptualized (see Appendix VIII), of special interest is "pedagogical content knowledge," which Shulman described as "the blending of content and pedagogy" (p.8) that enables a teacher to present the subject matter as comprehensible to the learners. A form of knowledge that distinguishes teachers from other professionals, pedagogical content knowledge has inspired much research on teaching (Munby et al., 2001; Wilson, 2004).

However, as Munby et al. (2001) also pointed out, the study of teacher knowledge has not been a compact subfield[3] within the study of teaching. "Different views have developed about what counts as professional knowledge and even how to conceptualize knowledge" (ibid., p.878; also Breen et al., 2001), and there has been an abundance of terms used to characterize teacher knowledge, most of which have been extended from Shulman's work. For instance, in addition to reviewing research on pedagogical content knowledge in mathematics, social studies, and English, Carter (1990) also made a distinction between pedagogical content knowledge and practical knowledge, with the latter characterized as more personal and situational forms of knowledge. Munby et al's (2001) article, in its discussion of how teacher knowledge is believed to develop, also reviewed the concept of craft knowledge, which Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992, cited in Munby et al., 2001) characterized as derived in response to practical experience. According to Munby et al., Grimmett and MacKinnon proposed "craft knowledge" by first amending Shulman's categories and formulating "pedagogical learner knowledge, an amalgam of [Shulman's] pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge" (Munby et al., 2001). To further complicate the discussion, attempts have also been made to draw distinctions among terms such as attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge (Richardson, 1996, cited in Munby et al., 2001), beliefs and knowledge

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[3] To borrow MacDonald's (1994) term, a "compact" discipline is one that has communal problem definitions and greatly refined concepts, constructs, classification systems, etc.

(Calderhead, 1996), and beliefs, knowledge, and assumptions (Woods, 1996). However, as all the above mentioned scholars conceded, initial straightforward distinctions have often been blurred and the concepts have been used as indistinguishable.

Even with the diversity in terminology, scholars have generally agreed that teacher knowledge is field-specific and varies across subjects (e.g. Grossman, 1990; Shulman, 1987; Wilson, 2004). Thus, in order to research teacher knowledge and apply the research results to inform professional preparation, a generic approach such as what has led to teacher skill-building will likely miss the target. While there has been a significant body of research on teacher knowledge in school subjects such as math, social studies, and English (Carter, 1990), Tai (1999) observed that relatively little effort has been devoted to language education, including the teaching of English as a language. However, given the long-term emphasis on learners in language teaching research (e.g., second language acquisition; see Brown, 1981; Freeman, 1996; Richards, 1998; Woods, 1996), information about language teachers' knowledge has been slowly accumulating. In the field of TESOL, teacher knowledge has also been listed as one research issue by Tucker et al. (2001).

The section that follows will center mostly on teacher knowledge in language education, with an interest in commonalities with regards to the ways teacher knowledge has been studied and a discussion on research designs.

Approaches to Teacher Knowledge

In addition to the characteristic of teacher knowledge being subject-specific, beyond the differences in the use of terminology, the literature seems to point to three major ways that researchers in general and in language education have approached teacher knowledge: (1) categorization of teacher knowledge, (2) explication of sources for teacher knowledge, and (3) investigation of the impact of teacher knowledge on teaching. These three areas are not mutually exclusive and are often combined in a single study.

For studies involving categorization, Shulman's 1986 and 1987 articles are frequently mentioned. He proposed a framework of categories of teacher knowledge base and readily admitted minor cross-article variations in the proposed categories (1987). As already mentioned, research into the category of pedagogical content knowledge in specific disciplines in general education has been highly active.

In language education, a few studies have involved coding and categorization. Gatbonton (1999) coded data from stimulated recall on video-taped ESL lessons for categories of pedagogical thoughts, from which domains of pedagogical knowledge were inferred. Her study, using quantitative measures, also described frequencies of different reported thoughts and patterns across teachers. Johnston and Goettsch (2000) observed and audiotaped ESL grammar classes and interviewed teachers about their class explanations. They then coded the data according to three of Shulman's categories: content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and knowledge of learners. Dittrich, Shrum, and Stewart (2000) interviewed foreign language teachers to determine what teachers need to know. They then organized their findings according to knowledge about the subject matter and how to teach it, knowledge of learners, and knowledge of self. Golombek (1998) found that personal practical knowledge is an interpretive framework for teachers and refers to knowledge of self, of subject matter, of instruction, and of context. The self-knowledge category, which Shulman (1986, 1987) did not include in his work, is gaining importance in the literature in teaching (e.g. Hamachek, 1999).

While categories of knowledge are convenient for analysis (Johnston et al., 2000) and could be adopted to inform teacher education (e.g. Dittrich et al., 2000), presenting teacher knowledge as discrete and separate categories has also been pointed out to minimize the complexity of teacher knowledge (Johnston et al., 2000), especially when the boundaries among types of knowledge are fuzzy (Sengupta & Xiao, 2002).

With regards to studies explicating the sources of teacher knowledge, Grossman's (1990) book length study of secondary English teachers' pedagogical content knowledge identified sources such as apprenticeships of observation[4] and professional preparation. She also found that subject matter knowledge is closely related and contributes to the teacher's pedagogical content knowledge.

In language education, teaching experience has been found to be associated with teachers' pedagogical knowledge (Dittrich et al., 2000), subject matter knowledge (Johnston et al., 2000; Sengupta & Xiao, 2002), and pedagogical content knowledge (Velez-Rendon, 2002; Sengupta & Xiao, 2002). Similar to Grossman's study, teacher

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[4] A concept first proposed by Lortie (1975, 2002) to describe the influence a schoolteacher's past experience as a student has on his/her teaching.

education experience has also been named as a source of teacher knowledge (e.g. Dittrich et al., 2000, including language courses teachers have taken; Johnston et al., 2000). Furthermore, collegial support and discussion has been found to contribute to content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Sengupta & Xiao, 2002) and help develop novice ESL teachers' personal professional knowledge (Sivell & Yeager, 2001).

In studies investigating foreign language teaching where teachers are likely to be nonnative speakers (e.g. Spanish as a foreign language teachers in Velez-Rendon, 2002), the value of experience studying abroad seems to be held high. Thompson (2002) used surveys and statistical analysis of a variety of scores on pre- and post-tests to demonstrate the effect of studying abroad on teachers' linguistics competence and cultural knowledge. In sum, in terms of teacher knowledge and development, the most mentioned sources are teacher education and teaching experience, between which exists a tension as Munby et al. (2001) identified in their review of literature of teacher knowledge and development in general education

The tension can also be termed as, according to Munby et al. (2001), between what Bruner (1985) has referred to as paradigmatic and narrative modes of thoughts; the former is similar to declarative or propositional knowledge (e.g. the knowledge base of teacher education), and the later, procedural or experiential (e.g. knowledge from practice). However, the two could work as an integral whole instead of two competing parts. For instance, Schoonmaker's (2002) longitudinal study of an elementary teacher illustrates how there is a dialectic among personal knowledge, teacher education knowledge, and practical experience. Like in the case of categories of teacher knowledge, some degree of interconnectedness can also be expected among sources of teacher knowledge.

Studies that have explored the impact of teacher knowledge on teaching are by far the most specified in terms of their focus. For instance, Grossman (1990) was interested primarily in the effect of teacher preparation on the teachers' teaching. Schoenfeld's (1998) synthesis of studies in general education that have elaborated on Shulman's pedagogical content knowledge concluded that that form of teacher knowledge could both shape or constrain what teachers are able to do in the classroom as well as provide a support-structure for a wide range of activities. Borg (2001) and Andrews (1999) both used observations and interviewing to investigate how native and nonnative speaking

teachers' knowledge about language, specifically grammar, influences the input for learning and instructional decisions in ESL and EFL settings respectively. Lazaraton (2003) discussed, through conversation analysis, how nonnative speaking ESL teachers' target cultural knowledge affects whether they pursued a topic or not. Constantino (1994), in contrast, discussed how teachers' knowledge of their students' cultures, or lack thereof, affects the extent of parental involvement and the establishment of a learning environment conducive to learning.

In terms of research methodology, the shift of focus in research on teaching in both general and language education, i.e. from the mechanical to the cognitive, to some extent also represents a shift of advocacy in research methodology, from a quantitative to a more qualitative orientation (Freeman, 1995, 1996; Golombek, 1994; Shulman, 1992). Although nearly all of the studies reviewed above have employed a qualitative approach in terms of data collection techniques[5], there is variation in how different techniques are combined. In most cases, observations (or, occasionally, tape recordings) and interviewing have been used. In the remainder of this section, I will briefly discuss the research designs of studies that have dealt specifically with language teachers' knowledge. While reading many of the studies, I realized that there was usually a curiously limited amount of information about the research design. Thus, the discussion here is based on what has been made available by the researchers of language teacher knowledge, with particular attention to limitations in data collection and analysis.

The major weakness in most of the studies lies in the fact that they reported brief contact with the participants within a limited amount of time. Several studies relied solely on teachers' self-report. For examples Dittrich et al. (2000) conducted one phone interview with six foreign language teachers for 30 to 50 minutes. Constantino (1994) conducted one 20-minute interview with each of her participants (5 ESL and 6 mainstream teachers). A few studies videotaped the participants without the researchers being physically there to see the teaching in action. For instance, Gatbonton (1999) recorded the classes, interviewed the teachers afterwards, and took everything teachers

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[5] Thompson's (2002) study on Spanish teachers' studying abroad experiences is the only quantitative study that I have reviewed, its data sources being self-report surveys and pre- and post-tests of teacher proficiency.

said as "truth." Lazaraton (2003) video-recorded two nonnative-speaking teachers for three times over a three-month period without being present in the classrooms[6]. Although Sivell and Yeager (2001) were present at the five study group discussions they audio-recorded, their study lasted only two months without involving extensive contact with the participants (e.g. they asked for self reports of critical incidents and did not have any conversations with the participants). Sengupta and Xiao (2002) employed a design similar to that of Sivell and Yeager (2001). Clearly, the major issue here concerns data triangulation, which is crucial for rigorous and trustworthy qualitative studies (Berg, 2001; Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Glesne, 1999; Merriam, 1998). In many cases, interviewing could have strengthened the trustworthiness the studies listed above.

For studies that have interviewed their participants, the technique of stimulated recall warrants additional attention, which according to Shavelson et al. (1986) is an important alternative for looking into teachers' cognitive processes. It can improve degrees of distortion in retrospective interviews[7] and minimize intrusiveness in think-aloud methods. While researchers like Gatbonton (1999) worried about the inadequacy of the stimulated recall to elicit all of teachers' instructional thoughts, Johnson (1992), Woods (1996), and Shavelson et al. (1986) have all pointed out how self-reporting and introspection might generate thoughts that were not part of the teaching as it was on-going. For example, the interview itself may prompt the teachers to produce extra thoughts that were not necessarily part of the teaching act. However, teacher knowledge and thinking not being directly accessible or observable[8], the stimulated recall procedure will likely remain a technique to gain access into the cognitive world. And as Shavelson et al. (1986) and Woods (1996) have suggested, researchers should take into account the potential of distortion when interpreting the recall data.

With regards to the scale of studies, a number of the studies reviewed here,

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[6] Given the methodology of conversation analysis, Lazaraton's (2003) absence in the classrooms may be excused. However, I still feel there is a missing piece in the study because, teaching being a highly complex activity, Lazaraton should have had at least some conversation with the teachers.

[7] A major weakness in Johnston and Goettsch's (2000) study concerns the decontextualized nature of elicitation. The researchers presented only segments of classroom observation transcripts, those containing grammar explanations, and asked for the teachers' retrospection.

[8] The issues concerning accessing what cannot be observed also point to the importance of data triangulation and lengthened contact with participants.

although they are well-designed in terms of data triangulation, have reported findings from a small number of participants: 1 in Velez-Rendon (2002), 2 in Borg (2001) and Golombek (1998), and 3 in Andrews (1999). While in-depth, small scale studies are not necessarily insignificant for they can provide great insights, as Merriam (1998) has pointed out, a larger number of cases "will allow the results to be applied by readers to a greater range of other situations" (p.212).

Lastly, although a common framework facilitates a research consumer's task of relating one study to another, the motto of qualitative research in seeking participants' emic perspectives might be sacrificed when a research study imposes external constructs. One such example is Johnston and Goettsch's (2000) fitting their data into only three of Shulman's categories without leaving room for other possibilities.

<u>Role of Professional Preparation</u>

Literature in teacher knowledge has pointed out the contribution of teacher education to the knowledge base of teaching. For instance, in general education, researchers such as Grossman (1990) have studied the acquisition of knowledge during teacher preparation and the potential influence of professional coursework. Comparing teachers who have gone through teacher preparation with those who have not, Grossman identified two major sources of teachers' general pedagogical knowledge: (1) teacher education, which also contributed to differences in content knowledge among her participants, and (2) apprenticeships of observation (which will be discussed further in the next section).

While the role of teacher preparation in teacher knowledge in general education has been explicated to some degree, in language education, especially in the field of TESOL, teacher educators have noted a paucity of research and theory concerning language professional preparation (e.g. Ellis, 1990; Freeman, 1996; Freeman & Richards, 1996; Lange, 1990; Richards, 1990, 1998; Tucker et al., 2001). In recent years, there has been discussion concerning the reconceptualization of TESOL teacher education (e.g. Freeman & Johnson, 1998, 2004; Yates & Muchisky, 2003; Muchisky & Yates 2004). Within this line of discussion, the tension between propositional and experiential knowledge that Munby et al. (2001) identified within teacher knowledge research has also been found to exist in language teaching; TESOL teacher educators have expressed different views on the value that should be assigned to each type of knowledge. However,

regardless of whether a value hierarchy is the ultimate goal in reconceptualizing the knowledge base of teacher education, elucidation of the role professional preparation plays in TESOL teachers' knowledge base is needed.

One aspect of the knowledge base for language teaching that has been much referred to is the teachers' knowledge of the language they teach. Teacher knowledge being discipline-specific (Shulman, 1987; Wilson, 2004), the knowledge of language and culture[9], as shown in some of the studies reviewed above, seems to be what distinguishes language teaching from other fields because language is both the subject and medium of instruction in language education. Such knowledge thus becomes part of language teachers' concerns. For instance, Flewelling's (1995) survey of nonnative-speaking French as a second language teachers in Canada reveled how maintaining language skills were thought to be important and desirable.

In fact, there has been discussion in language teacher education about the desirability of language awareness in teachers. For instance, Larsen-Freeman (1995), Liu and Master (2003), and Wright and Bolitho (1993) have all voiced their support for the preparation of linguistically aware teachers who know the subject matter they have chosen to teach and thus will be better able to help their students overcome difficulties. In addition to teachers' general language awareness (i.e. the linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of language use), Kumaravadivelu (2003) also considered it important for teachers to raise their students' critical language awareness, which concerns the "awareness of social and political factors governing language use" (p.157).

<div align="center">Teacher's Experience as a Learner</div>

In addition to professional preparation as a source of teacher knowledge, Dan Lortie's (1975, 2000) concept of "apprenticeships of observation" has frequently been referred to by those involved in teacher education, both in general and in language education (e.g. Freeman, 1996; Richards, 1998; Wideen et al., 1998). The concept expresses how a teacher's experience as a student before she enters the teacher preparation program could have an impact on her experience as a teacher learner in the teacher education program as well as on her actual teaching practice. Although some

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[9] The role of culture in language teaching will be briefly discussed under "Operationalization" in the "Significance of Study" section.

researchers such as Grossman (1990) have investigated the influence of beginning teachers' "apprenticeships of observation" on their teaching, as Wideen et al. (1998) have pointed out, research on teaching often makes assertions of alleged truth simply because the idea has been repeatedly mentioned, regardless of whether it has been carefully examined or studied. The authors gave as an example Lortie's much cited "apprenticeships of observation," which they argued has frequently been taken as true regardless of context and research design.

However, language teaching may just be a discipline where the teacher's "apprenticeships" do make a difference. Many researchers and teacher educators have noticed how a teacher's language learning experience influences her instruction. Having learned a language other than her own native language, an ESL teacher is said to know better the needs and feelings of her students (Kamhi-Stein, 1999; Phillipson, 1992; Thomas, 1999). Medgyes (1992) and Tang (1997), focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of native and nonnative speaking EFL teachers (in Hungary and Hong Kong respectively) pointed out that teachers who share the students' native language and have learned the target language view their insider knowledge and empathy towards their students as their strong points. However, such claims about a teacher's language learning experience, as what Wideen et al. (1998) have mentioned about "apprenticeships of observation," are not necessarily based on careful examination or investigation but rather on teacher educators' impressionistic accounts or teachers' self-reports[10].

Significance of Study

Teacher knowledge as a relatively new area of inquiry in language education, there is not only a need but also a space for continuous scholarly endeavors. Out of the studies I have located and reviewed in the sections above, approximately seven are about the teaching of ESL, although these studies differ in the degree of their direct relevance to ESL teachers' knowledge. The small number of studies may have been a result of the marginalized status of the ESL teachers, which, as scholars such as Pennington (1992) have pointed out, may have stemmed from the marginalized status of ESL learners.

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[10] However, in my thesis study, most of the ESL students from the community did feel their nonnative speaking teachers more able to understand their difficulties and help them understand the language.

Interested in ESL teachers' knowledge base, the proposed study will join the call of researching and defining teaching with a focus on teachers and departing from a process-product orientation (Freeman, 1996). Compared to the rather limited scope of previous studies in ESL teacher knowledge, this study will seek to portray a more complete and elaborated picture of the knowledge base by means of multiple data collection techniques as well as lengthened and extended contact with the teacher participants. In addition to informing teacher preparation and contributing to the reconceptualization of its knowledge based (Freeman & Johnson, 1998), such a portrait of ESL teacher knowledge can also elevate both the disciplinary and professional status with a codified aggregation of teacher knowledge (Pennington, 1992). In the long run, this type of studies can be valuable in helping ESL instruction to better meet the needs of the growing population of ESL learners.

<div align="center">Operationalization</div>

With the complexity and diversity of terminology use in teacher knowledge research, definitions of terms for a study are especially necessary. In the proposed study, "teacher knowledge" will be defined as the set of intellectual resources that a teacher brings into the teaching situation. The knowledge can be expressed in what the teacher believes and can be exemplified externally (e.g. on teacher-made handouts, through talking or writing, etc.). In addition, the knowledge is drawn on, consciously or not, by the teacher when she engages in teaching-related activities (e.g. planning and reflection on lessons, giving explanations, making decisions, interacting with students, etc.)

When one takes into account the objective of ESL instruction and the role of English both as the subject and medium of instruction, ESL may be a field with less clear delineation of its subject matter. Aiming to enable extensive participation in the setting(s) where learners find themselves, ESL instruction often incorporates teaching about the "real world" (e.g. see Markee, 1997, for a discussion about how "real world" is incorporated into language pedagogy). In addition, culture has been argued to be inseparable from language (e.g. Brooks, 1969) and assumed to be part of the curricular content for ESL instruction (e.g. Lazaraton, 2003). Thus, the subject matter in the knowledge base of ESL instruction may actually extend beyond language. In fact, my pilot study using classroom observation last semester (more discussion in the "Classroom Observation" section below) found the teacher participants to include both linguistic and

cultural aspects in their teaching, the latter including real world knowledge. Therefore, the proposed study will view the subject matter of ESL as encompassing more than just language.

Research Questions

The overarching question that will guide the proposed study is "What makes up teachers' knowledge in ESL instruction for adult learners?" Embedded in the different ESL instructional settings and connected to the issue about the impact of teacher knowledge on learning and teaching, the specific questions this study will address include the following.

1. What are the categories of knowledge that exist in the knowledge base of ESL instructors who teach adult learners?

   - What might be the sources that contribute to the teachers' knowledge base?

2. How are ESL teachers working with adult learners similar and/or different in terms of the composition of their knowledge?

   - What might be the factors that contribute to such similarities and/or differences among teachers?

3. What role does professional preparation play in ESL teachers' knowledge base?

4. What role does teachers' own language learning experience play in their knowledge base?

METHOD

The theoretical and methodological assumptions on which the proposed study will be based are derived primarily from Lee Shulman's work, specifically his 1986 and 1987 articles. With the objective to render an in-depth depiction of ESL teachers' knowledge base, the study will adopt a qualitative design. Also, as there is more than one setting where ESL instruction is offered, a wide-ranging study of ESL teachers' knowledge will likely shed light on the nature of teacher knowledge. The study thus will be a multiple case study with teacher participants from different settings.

With regards to its conceptual framework, the study will view Shulman's categories of teacher knowledge base (mainly those from his 1987 article. See Appendix

VIII) as informative and useful without rigidly imposing such categories on the data gathered in this study. In addition to treating Shulman's categories as tentative, the study also seeks to look beyond the seeming lack of connectedness among the discrete categories.

Settings & Participants

As mentioned above, ESL instruction in the United States is offered in a variety of settings. The most common settings where ESL instruction for adult learners can be found include communities and colleges that generally serve learners with different goals and needs in life. For instance, while both types of programs may serve newcomers to this country, it is more likely to find an academically oriented program in a college setting where learners may have as their goal to pursue a higher education degree.

Because the proposed study has as its purpose to elucidate what it is that ESL instructors know, voluntary participation will be sought from teachers from both the community-based and college-based settings, with approximately 6 participants from each. In addition, it is possible that some participants may "moonlight" and teach in both settings, especially those who work on a part-time basis. The ESL programs from which I will try to recruit participants include Austin Community College, UT ESL Services, AISD Adult Education Program, and Austin Area Interreligious Ministries. Other possible programs include Texas Intensive English Program and Casa Marianella. Even though there are several existent ESL programs in each of the two major settings, participant recruitment will proceed across programmatic boundaries. The rationale for doing so is to facilitate a focus on similarities, in addition to differences, in what the participating ESL teachers know. To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms will be used for both the program sites and the participants.

The decision to recruit a total of approximately 12 teacher participants is based on the following reasons. Based on the mini-study with two participants that I conducted last semester using classroom observations and informal post-lesson interviews (more details below in the "Classroom Observation" section), two was definitely too small a number for meaningful comparisons or analyses. Because one way the teachers exemplify their knowledge is through the act of teaching, observing them teach will be necessary. And 12 participants seem manageable in terms of scheduling interviews and observations.

In terms of selecting classes to visit for each teacher, based on the mini-study last semester and my experiment with the stimulated recall procedure (see the "Data

Collection Techniques" section below), 1 to 1.5 hours will be the ideal duration for both classroom observations and the stimulated recall interviews. Taking into consideration that teachers will likely teach more than one class, I will begin the study with the class each teacher perceives as representative of what s/he usually teaches (identified via the background interview). Acknowledging the possibility that the teacher may prefer for me to observe his/her best practice, I will also ask the teachers whether I could visit the other classes s/he is teaching in the same semester, although such classroom observations will not be as extensive as those for the typical class. For those participants who teach in both of the major ESL settings, I will observe their classes in both settings. Details about classroom observation will be discussed in the "Data Collection Techniques" section.

The teachers may also differ in terms of the languages spoken, and I hope to include both participants who are traditionally categorized as "native" as well as "nonnative" English speakers. In terms of teaching experience, I plan to recruit teachers who have been teaching at their current program(s) for at least one year.

In addition to teacher participants, a brief questionnaire will be administered to each teacher's students (more details in the "Supplementary Data" section below). Given the fact that the teacher participants will come from different ESL programs, brief interviews will be conducted with program directors to clarify the programs' mission statements and the type of students they serve.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection will begin in the fall when all ESL programs will be in full operation again. I plan to work on gaining access, recruiting participants, and finishing the IRB procedure during the second summer session.

Compared to published studies on language teachers' knowledge, most of which employed one-shot observations or interviews with a minimal amount of data triangulation, the proposed study will have lengthened contact with the teacher participants and multiple data collection techniques in order to get an in-depth look into the realm of teacher knowledge. In addition, teacher knowledge and cognition not being directly accessible, elicitation techniques should also be used in order to achieve a fuller representation of teacher knowledge (e.g. Breen et al., 2001; Calderhead, 1996). This will be the goal for the semi-structured interviews and stimulated recall protocol (see below for more detail).

The following sections describe the techniques I plan to use to gather my primary data—those from the teacher participants.

<u>Background Interviews</u>

The aim of this interview is to gather demographic information and find out about the teachers' "focused life history" (Seidman, 1998, p.11). The demographic information may be gathered via email. The "focused" portion of the interview will comprise information about the teachers' past experiences, including professional training, linguistic background, and employment history. I will probe for information on whether the teachers have taught in different ESL settings and ask the teachers to reflect on the way they taught/teach in the different settings. As mentioned above, I will also ask the teachers to identify a class they typically teach and ask why they consider it representative. This portion of the background interview will be face-to-face (although I am open to the possibility of telephone interviews) and will be audio-recorded and transcribed.

I agree with Seidman (1998) that for the "focused life history" interview, "how" questions will better prompt participants to reconstruct their past and contextualize their current experience, and thus I plan to begin the interview with "How did you become an ESL teacher?" However, I believe "why" questions, which Seidman said are to be avoided, will also have a role in the interview, especially as a probing technique (e.g. "Why did you decide to enroll in the teacher preparation program?"). The interview guide can be found in Appendix I.

As I plan to follow Seidman's three-interview series and also conduct semi-structural interviews that focus on the teachers' present experience and their reflection on the meaning they have constructed throughout the interview, I may combine interviews with different focuses and purposes especially if scheduling becomes difficult. Most likely, I may combine the background interview with the one focused on the teachers' present experience. As for the interview that focuses on reflection and the teachers' outlook for the future, I will schedule it near the end of the semester and may combine it with the final member checks.

<u>Semi-structured Interviews</u>

The two semi-structured interviews that I will describe in this section focus on, respectively, the teacher participants' current experience and their reflection on the

meaning of their experience, both past and present (Seidman, 1998). The interviews will last from about 90 minutes to 2 hours and will be audio-recorded and transcribed. All person-to-person interviews will be scheduled at a time and location convenient for the participants.

Given the nature of teacher knowledge, elicitation is important for obtaining a fuller representation of that knowledge (Breen et al., 2001; Clderhead, 1996; see the discussion of graphs in the "Data Analysis" section). In addition, as teacher knowledge is a personal and potentially evaluative topic, I plan to include indirectness[11] in the interview questions, which, according to Lortie (1975, 2002), reduces ideological statements from participants on evaluative topics. Such indirect questions will also serve to check on the reliabilities of interviewees' responses (Berg, 2001). Although the desired focus might not be achieved through the use of indirect questions, the interactional nature of the interview and the fact that the researcher is the data collection instrument will make it feasible to refocus the interviewee when necessary. However, data about the teachers' present experience will not be limited to that gathered in the semi-structured interview. Ongoing member checks and the informal conversations or email correspondence pertaining to classroom observations (more details in the "Classroom Observation" section below) will be another source of data. Appendix II is the interview guide for the "current experience" interview.

The "reflection" interview, as Seidman (1998) has explained, is not the only occasion where the teacher participants reflect and make sense of their experience; they may be constantly doing so during all of the interviews. What makes the "reflection" interview different is how it is conducted in the context of the previous interviews that concentrate on the past and the present, and how meaning-making is the center of its focus (ibid.). However, as already mentioned, this last semi-structured interview may also serve the purpose of member checks (see more discussion on this combination in the "Data Analysis" section and the "Trustworthiness" subsection). The interview guide can be found in Appendix III.

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[11] For instance, a hypothetical question (e.g. "If you were to get a gift of ten more hours a week, with the provision that it be used for teaching-related areas, what would you choose to spend that extra time on?") is indirect and has a great potential for information elicitation.

In terms of spacing of interviews, Seidman (1998) suggested that each interview be 3 days to a week apart. However, unlike Seidman's sole reliance on interviewing as the data collection technique, the proposed study will have data from other sources that will be collected over a longer period of time. As a result, the background and "current experience" interviews will take place at the beginning of the data collection semester, while the "reflection" interview will be scheduled near the end of the semester. A timeline for the study overall is provided at the end of this proposal (after "Data Analysis").

<div align="center">Classroom Observation</div>

This part of data collection is where the mini-study of two participants last semester will be most helpful. As my first classroom observation experience that focused on what teachers know, I observed 2 to 3 times each of the classes that my two participants were teaching to address the question, "How is ESL teachers' subject matter knowledge exemplified in their teaching?" I took notes of what the teachers were saying to the students, verbally or in writing on the board, as well as teacher-student interchanges. The narrow focus on subject matter knowledge that I had begun the mini-study with was quickly expanded because (1) subject matter knowledge as defined by these two teachers appeared to include both linguistic and cultural aspects (the latter including common sense as well[12]) and (2) subject matter knowledge appeared to overlap with other types of teacher knowledge that Shulman has identified (1987), especially knowledge of learners and pedagogical content knowledge. In terms of how what teachers know is put in action, I identified the following categories, which were derived from the two teachers' verbal behaviors as well as from their writing on the board: Explanation and Feedback, Elicitation of Student Responses, Correction of Student Responses, Syntheses, and Provision of Assistance.

For the proposed study, classroom observations will focus on teachers' verbal behavior and their use of the board, especially when they give instructional explanations, which, according to Leinhardt (2001), are one of the common places of teaching and a significant researchable teaching moment. Furthermore, instructional explanations are described to be "natural and frequent pedagogical actions that occur in response to

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[12] One example was "Do you give your number when the person calling asks for it?"

implicit or explicit questions—whether posed by students or teachers" (p.340). Given the fact that instructional explanations can be initiated by students' questions and comments as well as the importance that Kumaravadivelu (2003), based on his review of literature, gives to student-initiated moments in maximizing learning opportunities, classroom observations will also pay attention to the frequency, effects, and outcomes of student-initiated learning moments; for example, whether such moments are generally exploited by the teacher[13]. In addition, students' overall responses to the teacher's instructional explanations (e.g. whether there seems to be confusion among students and whether the teacher seems to notice such confusion) will also be given attention. (See Appendix IV for a page of the observation guide.) Recognizing the fact that a focus on instructional explanations will probably produce fieldnotes that contain mostly categories of teacher knowledge such as subject matter knowledge, knowledge of learners, pedagogical content knowledge, and general pedagogical knowledge, I will also take note of instances that indicate other types of teacher knowledge; the larger spaces at the bottom of observation guide in Appendix IV can be used for such purposes.

I do not intend to become a participant in the classrooms even though I will be willing to help out when asked by the teachers or their students. As Grossman (1990) mentioned in her methodology, it is crucial to establish a relationship prior to classroom observation to put the observed individual more at ease. As a result, for the proposed study, I plan to begin classroom observations with teachers with whom I have had contact before the study. For teachers with whom I have not developed a relationship, I will wait until I have conducted at least one face-to-face interview with them.

For each class, I plan to carry out observation for three weeks in a row or by following at least one unit consecutively, as I found the lack of coherence and clear unit boundaries in classroom observation to be one of the difficulties in data analysis for the mini-study last semester. Drawing on the experience of last semester again, three visits to a teacher's classroom were rather sufficient for grasping patterns of classroom activities and interaction and for glancing into what teachers know as well.

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[13] My pilot study using the stimulated recall protocol has shown that probing about why a student comment is pursued or not is rather fruitful, especially in terms of gaining glimpses into the teacher's knowledge of learners and general pedagogical knowledge.

Simultaneous scheduling of observations might be difficult. So for some classes, observations will have to start later. In addition, as I plan to ask the teacher participants who they consider as a typical teacher in their teaching situation, most likely participants will be joining the study at different times throughout the study. With regards to the idea of being there on the first day of class, because the proposed study is about the knowledge possessed by teachers who have been teaching in a particular program for at least one year, observing how teachers develop or how they gradually build up relationships with their students from day one will not be the focus of the study.

My mini-study last semester also pointed to the importance of obtaining the syllabi and textbooks for the classes so that I can better follow along during observations. The textbooks will be especially helpful in determining whether a teacher is simply reading what is printed in the books to the students without adding to the content. In addition, the interactive aspect of teaching, which is central to classroom observations, should be complemented by the preactive and postactive phases of teaching (Calderhead, 1996). Thus, lesson plans or brief conversations (or email correspondence) with the teachers about what they plan to do before the class starts will also enable me to conduct more complete observations. I will both audiotape the class and use the observation guide in Appendix IV to take notes while observing the classes. If time allows, I will talk briefly with the teachers about their observation of how the class went as well as aspects that I, during the observation, consider as needing clarification.

After a day's field work, I will sit down and write fuller fieldnotes as soon as possible (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). During the writing/digitalization of the fieldnotes and review of the audio-recorded lesson, it is probable that I will have follow-up questions that need clarification. I will talk to the teacher either the next time I visit the class or via email.

<u>Stimulated Recall</u>

Classroom observations, though necessary for the purpose of the proposed study, are not quite sufficient for gaining insights into the cognitive aspect of teaching. One way to obtain data on the "intellectual processes used by subjects as they render judgments and make decisions or solve problems" is through verbal reports (Shulman & Elstein, 1975, p.4, cited in Shavelson et al., 1986). Stimulated recall, according to Shavelson et al.'s (1986) comparison of different verbal report methods, is an important technique that

enhances the retrieval of the particulars of a past event with "its rich source of stimuli" (p.82). For the proposed study, I plan to conduct a stimulated recall interview near the end of my observation of the focal class(es) that each teacher is teaching. As mentioned in the "Classroom Observation" section, for those who teach multiple classes in a program, the focal class that will be observed extensively will be the one the teachers identify as "representative," although I will also visit the other classes. For those who teach in both the community-based and college-based settings, there will be one focal class for each setting.

With regards to the number of stimulated recall to be conducted for each focal class, my experience piloting the procedure and conducting two recall interviews with each of the two participants supports the adequacy of one interview for one class. During the pilot study, my probes during the second interview did not result in data that were much different from the first interview. As a result, I did not have to probe as often during the second interview but mostly checked to confirm what I thought based on what the teachers had said during the first interview. In addition, the timing of the stimulated recall interview in the proposed study, i.e. near the end of consecutive classroom visits, will also ensure the adequacy of one stimulated recall for each class, especially given the fact that there will have been a number of informal conversations pertaining to classroom observations. The stimulated recall interviews can also serve as an opportunity for me to ask the teachers about what I have noticed in their teaching.

The focus of my probes for the stimulated recall will be the same as that of the classroom observation, i.e. teachers' instructional explanations, teachers' responses to student-initiated exchanges, and the students' overall reaction to the teacher's explanations (especially whether the students are confused), all of which rendered rather rich data about teacher knowledge during the pilot study of the stimulated recall procedure this semester. As I had expected before piloting the stimulated recall interview, when the teachers were teaching, the knowledge they drew on most frequently could be categorized as Shulman's (1987) subject matter knowledge, knowledge about learners, and pedagogical content knowledge; there were instances of the other types of knowledge Shulman has listed (see Appendix VIII) as well[14].

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[14] This was also the case for the classroom observation study I undertook last semester. More importantly, the types of knowledge were interconnected, and some instances could be categorized into different types.

However, in addition to the effectiveness of my probes during the pilot study, there appeared to be two other explanations for why I was able to gather rich and useful data. First, both of the participants are PhD candidates planning their own research who may have a stronger background in the literature relevant for my study than most of the participants I will recruit for my dissertation study. Also, they both knew that I was trying out the procedure for my study, and they tried to be as helpful as they could. Also probably because of the participants' familiarity with the literature related to language teaching, they appeared to be highly reflective teachers and made many spontaneous comments.

Regardless of the possible differences among the participants for the proposed study, I will continue using probes that Shavelson et al. (1986) considered as more effective. They pointed out how the interviewee's cognitive processes may be interrupted or altered when the interviewer's probes are too constrictive, and recommended using more open-ended questions that will better elicit information normally available and will less likely distort the thought processes reported. So the two major probes I will use will be "Tell me what you were thinking" and "Why did you…?[15]" For the situations where I have noticed the teachers' mistakes, I will probe in a congenial manner and ask the teachers to elaborate what they meant. With regards to what Johnson (1992) and Woods (1996) have cautioned about the possibility that teachers will make up comments when they are prompted to talk, because the proposed study has as its aim to find out about what it is that ESL teachers know, such made-up comments are nonetheless important and will be considered as data for the study.

I plan to go over the complete recording of the classroom observation with a limited amount of fast-forwarding the tape (except for when the students are doing individual work silently). Instead of turning the tape to segments that I would like to probe about, I want to encourage the teachers to take charge of the stop button. In addition, segments I do not deem important or interesting also have the potential to generate data, as in the case of the pilot study. The instruction to the teachers for the stimulated recall interview can be found in Appendix V.

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[15] As far as the students' overall reaction is concerned, the probe will mainly be about whether the teacher has noticed, for instance, the students' confusion or not and what s/he might have done differently.

In addition to identifying observation focuses and effective probes, the pilot study this semester has also shed light on the more mechanical aspect of conducting stimulated recalls. I arranged to observe each of the participants teach twice, audio-recording one class and video-taping the other. I used a tape recorder with one participant and a digital camcorder with the other for the first observation. I also purposefully conducted the second stimulated recall with each participant without reviewing the recording or identifying lesson segments I wanted to talk about. After the second interview with the participants, I asked them to comment on the two experiences with special references to the effectiveness of each recording mode and my probing. The following table summarizes this pilot study in terms of the equipment involved, recording review status, and the amount of time having elapsed between the observation and the stimulated recall.

	First stimulated recall interview	Second stimulated recall interview
Teacher A	- Audio-recording - Recording reviewed before stimulated recall - Observation and recall conducted 1 day apart	- Video-recording - Recording not reviewed before stimulated recall - Observation and recall conducted on the same day
	The two observations were one week apart.	
Teacher B	- Video-recording - Recording reviewed before stimulated recall - Observation and recall conducted 2 days apart	- Audio-recording - Recording not reviewed before stimulated recall - Observation and recall conducted 1 day apart
	The two observations were two weeks apart.	

As the table above shows, even though through piloting the recall, I have experienced only once each possible combination of the different aspects of the stimulated recall interview, the pilot study is still informative in terms of explicating advantages and disadvantages and helping me be more realistic about what to expect from different stimulated recall scenarios.

Video-recording appears better for memory retrieval because it offers both aural and visual stimuli as the teachers' non-verbal behaviors are also caught on tape. With a built-in timer, a camcorder also makes it easier to determine the duration of activities. However, as some teacher participants may not feel comfortable having a camcorder in their classroom, video-taping may not always be an available choice for the proposed

study[16]. Also, the two participants in the pilot study did not feel drastically different between the two modes of stimuli, i.e. audio- and video-recording, as long as the classroom observation and the recall interview were not scheduled too far apart. However, whenever possible, video-taping will be the first choice, and I will try to schedule the recall interviews within one week after the observation.

There are disadvantages in using a camcorder for classroom observation as well. For instance, it was difficult for me to operate the camcorder while simultaneously focusing on the observation, taking notes, or copying down words the teacher had put on the board. It was particularly hard for me to pay attention to what the students were doing. When the class was video-recorded, I noticed there were more classroom incidents that I had not taken note of or remembered than when an audio-tape was used. However, before the recall interview for the proposed study, I plan to review the recording based on the focus of classroom observation discussed above, so I should be able to catch such overlooked incidents.

On the other hand, it is also possible that scheduling may occasionally call for a recall interview immediately after the observation without time for me to review the recording. On such occasions, which I have purposefully experimented with in the pilot study, I will have to rely on my notes and my sensitivity to the observation focus. The feedback the two participants provided regarding my probing in the pilot study indicated that they did feel I had not probed as much during the second recall interview, for which I had not reviewed the recording. However, the participants did not feel I was less effective in my probing and agreed with me on the impression that I was confirming what they had talked about in the first interview[17]. Also, because I plan to conduct the stimulated recall near the end of consecutive classroom observations, I feel quite confident about the amount of data I will be able to gather even in immediate recall interviews.

My experience in the pilot study has also pointed to the importance of surveying the classrooms (e.g. to figure out the layout of the rooms, whether the teacher has a desk, where the students are seated, etc.), looking for electricity outlets, and working out where

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[16] I have once heard that some ESL programs might not allow researchers to video-tape classes.

[17] Also one of the participants thought I did not probe as much during the second interview probably because of the nature of the class on that day, a class near the end of the semester.

to place the machines. If a tape-recorder is used, that matter is easier as I can simply use batteries and place the recorder close to the teacher. Also, scheduling the stimulated recall near the end of classroom observation in the proposed study will hopefully minimize many technical or mechanical issues. Compared with the pilot study, where I almost had to make a decision on the fly for where to place the camcorder, stimulated recall interviews in the proposed study will have been preceded by a series of classroom visits that will familiarize me with the physical settings.

Overall, video-recording produced better audio quality in the pilot study. But both modes of recording contained inaudible portions, especially when the teachers moved around the classroom. As a result, I am considering purchasing a microphone the teacher participants can wear but without becoming limited in their mobility. The microphone will also help pick up students' inputs when the teacher moves to work with them.

<div align="center">Document Collection</div>

Relevant documents that can be collected from the teacher participants include, for instance, syllabi, lesson plans, and textbooks, which I have mentioned in the "Classroom Observation" section. Other possible documents include teacher-made handouts, teacher-made assignments (VS from textbooks), and the teachers' résumés.

Supplementary Data

For contextualization and further data triangulation, I plan to gather documents such as ESL program descriptions, mission statements, and so on. Participation from ESL program directors will also be solicited for brief interviews (See Appendix VI for the interview guide).

When conducting classroom observations, I will also try to talk briefly to students whose views about what I have observed in the class are considered to be important[18]. *In addition, a questionnaire based on Shulman's categories of teacher knowledge, with a special focus on teachers' knowledge of learners, will be used with the students in each teacher's class(es) near the end of the semester. The students, without revealing their identities, will be asked to identify their teachers on the questionnaire, which will serve as an additional way to triangulate what each teacher participant says (See Appendix VII*

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[18] An example may be what the students feel about the teacher's explanation/answer to their questions.

for the questionnaire). For the teachers who are interested in their students' responses on the questionnaire, I will share the results with them when the semester has ended (without revealing student identities), possibly during the "reflection" interview for some.

Data Analysis

Analysis of data will be an ongoing process and will begin along with the transcription of interviews and the digitalization of observation fieldnotes. Doing data collection and preliminary data analysis simultaneously, which according to Merriam (1998) is "the right way" to do it in qualitative research (p.162), is helpful because it enables the researcher to "focus and shape the study as it proceeds," through consistent reflection on the data and attention to what the data are saying (Glesne, 1999, p.130). Throughout the research process, I plan to write memos that are analytical and conceptual (VS descriptive; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The analytical memos will provide a space for continuous reflection on the data and the research process, allow me to develop possible themes, and help better direct my attention and focus (Emerson et al., 1995; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Without making it prescriptive, I plan to use Shulman's categorization in his 1987 article (See Appendix VIII) as the conceptual framework that will help me stay focused on teacher knowledge. Shulman's categories of teacher knowledge will be treated as tentative and open to reconsideration. Through synthesizing and reflecting on the data constantly, I intend to also identify themes and relationships among such themes that will expand and further elucidate Shulman's general framework when it is applied to the specific field of ESL. In addition to categories of teacher knowledge, I will also be paying attention to discern potential sources for the knowledge and the roles professional preparation and language learning experience play in the teachers' knowledge base.

As a starting point of data management and analysis, I will first focus on individual teacher participants, possibly by "crafting profiles,"[19] to borrow Seidman's term (1998, p.102), for each of them. Profiles, according to Seidman, transform interviews into narratives that enable researchers to analyze and share what they have learned. The story belongs to both the participant and the researcher: "[it] is in the

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[19] I am not sure at this point how profiles will help. I tried using individual profiles when I was working on my thesis study, and they were not very helpful.

participants' words, but…crafted by the interviewer from what the participant has said" (Seidman, 1998, p.102). Unlike Seidman, who uses a series of interviews as the only technique to collect data, the profiles I will construct will be based on not only interviews but other sources of data as well. Similar to Grossman's (1990) three-level data analysis, the first level, which focuses on individual cases, will aim "to provide an in-depth portrait of each teacher, with as much salient data as possible, and to interpret the case with reference to the research questions of this study" (p.157). As types of teacher knowledge will most likely overlap and interrelate with one another, I plan to also use graphs[20] to represent what the teachers have told me. The graphs constructed by me[21] will be used in the final member checks.

As the proposed study also has similarities and differences in teachers' knowledge base as one of its research questions, the individual profiles may help in the discovery of what Seidman (1998) refers to as "connective threads" among the participants (p.110). The exploration of similarities and differences will proceed in a way similar to Grossman's (1990) second and third levels of data analysis (the first level being the individual cases). A cross-case analysis within each context[22] will be carried out, as well as another cross-case analysis that looks across contexts.

The idea of using technology (e.g. Nvivo from QSR) to help with data management and analysis sounds appealing at this point and could be a worthwhile investment for the future. But if this idea is not realized before data collection begins, I will simply use MS Word for data management and coding.

<u>Trustworthiness</u>

In addition to the importance of elicitation mentioned above, because teacher knowledge is not directly accessible, data analysis will inevitably be based on inference, which in the proposed study will be made mostly from the teachers' verbal behaviors. As a result, the research design needs to include measures to ensure trustworthiness of

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[20] Graphs will serve a purpose similar to concept maps in terms of visualizing main concepts and relationships among such concepts and in terms of using the visualization as a way of elicitation.

[21] In order to keep participants from feeling overwhelmed or exhausted, I will create the graphs beforehand.

[22] I plan to ask the teachers (as well as their program directors) to characterize the goal of their teaching situations. So, I am not yet able to decide whether there will be 2 contexts (i.e. college VS community) or 4 (or the number of programs from which I have recruited participants).

research results.

First of all, data triangulation will be made possible through multiple data sources. I will also have rather extensive contact with the participating teachers throughout the fall semester when data collection is ongoing. I will obtain the teachers' consent for me to stay in touch with them when I am writing up the findings of the study. Member checks will likely be ongoing as well and may coincide with the semi-structured interviews and informal conversations with the teachers. Data analysis will first focus on the individual cases so that when I conduct the semi-structured interview that focuses on reflection and meaning-making, I may also be able to carry out the final member checks. However, if this turns out not to be feasible in the fall, I will check with the teachers during the winter break or in the spring. I also plan to ask one or two colleagues to engage in peer debriefing and comment on findings as they emerge. Lastly, in addition to being trustworthy, the multi-site design of the proposed study will help enhance what is traditionally defined as "external validity" or "generalizability" (Merriam, 1998).

Timeline

July	August	September	October	November	December	Spring 2006

IRB, gaining access
participant recruitment

Interviews with directors

Background interviews

"current experience" interviews
classroom observations
student questionnaires

Stimulated recall interviews

"reflection" interviews

Ongoing data analysis & member checks

Final member checks

Writing up

Appendix I
(Background Interview Guide)

1. Demographic Information
    - Name
    - Preferred pseudonym
    - Birthplace
    - Nationality
    - Native language(s)
    - Other languages spoken, Years of study, & Proficiency
    - Sojourn in a foreign country (length & purpose)
    - Traveling experiences (frequency, location, & purpose)
    - Memberships in professional organizations related to language teaching
    - Professional conference attendance (frequency, purpose, & focus)
2. Focused Life History
    Linguistic Background
    - Clarification of what the teachers have provided in the "Demographic Information" section, if collected via email.
    - How were the languages acquired/learned?
    - How often are the languages used?
    Employment History
    - How did you become an ESL teacher?
        - Probe for other jobs held before
        - Probe for both reasons for teaching and for teaching ESL
    - What types of ESL programs have you taught at?
        - Describe how you taught at those different programs (e.g. teaching styles, focuses of instruction, materials used, etc.)
    - How long have you been teaching at _____ (current job)?
    - Who would you consider as a representative teacher in the program(s)? What about yourself? [*This question isn't really about the past, but it will help recruit participants at the early stage of the study, e.g. when this interview isn't combined with the one focused on the present.*]
    - How many classes are you teaching this semester? (for those who moonlight, ask about each job) [*For deciding which class to visit first. See italics above.*]
        - If more than one, probe for a typical and an atypical classes & Why
        - Ask for syllabi
    Professional Development
    - Please talk briefly about your post-secondary educational experiences.
    - Can you briefly talk about your professional development experiences that are related to language teaching?
        - Specialization?
        - Probe with "why" questions: reasons for taking part in the professional development programs.
        - Tell me about courses/workshops that you remember. Why do you remember them? Favorite and least favorite? Easy and difficult areas?

Appendix II

("Current Experience" Interview Guide)

1. Who would you consider as a representative teacher in the program(s)? What about yourself? [*This question will be asked here if this interview is combined with the background interview.*]
2. How many classes are you teaching this semester? (for those who moonlight, ask about each job) [*For deciding which class to visit first. See italics above.*]
   o If more than one, probe for a typical and an atypical classes & Why
   o Ask for syllabi
3. What do you think it means for someone to know English?
   o In your opinion, what makes an ESL teacher stand out?
   o If someone is a self-proclaimed expert in teaching ESL, what would you expect them to know?
4. Could you talk about the major areas that make up ESL as a field?
   o How do you think the areas relate to one another?
5. If you could work with another teacher, what characteristics would you like for that teacher to have? Why?
   o Have you ever discuss teaching-related issues with your colleagues?
   o Observed them teach?
6. If you were to get a gift of ten more hours a week (with the provision that it be used for teaching-related areas), what would you choose to spend that extra time on? (adapted from Lortie, 1975, 2002). Why?
7. How do you think a teacher should respond when he/she does not know how to answer a student's question?
   o Has that ever happened to you? What sort of questions usually?
8. Tell me what you consider as the most common disruptive behaviors of the students?
   o How do you usually deal with them?
   o Any other disruptive behaviors that you remember?
9. Could you describe your first day at the program and compare it with where you are right now?
   o How would you characterize the goal/mission of the ESL program?
10. How do you perceive your role as an ESL teacher?
    o What are your goals for yourself as a teacher?
    o For the class(es)?
11. What aspects of your past life experiences have been most influential in making who you are as an ESL teacher today? [*This question will be repeated, in the form of a concept map, in the "reflection" interview or during final member checks .*]
    o In the first (half of the) interview, we've talked about your education, language learning experience, and jobs. How would you characterize their influences?
      • Are there specific examples that you remember?
    o Tell me about any other experiences you have had that have affected how you think about teaching English.
    o Tell me about the best and worst teacher you ever had.
12. What do you feel are your strengths in teaching ESL?
    o Relative weaknesses?

13. How did you decide on the textbooks for your class(es)?
    o If mandated by the program, ask about familiarity of contents.
    o Probe about other materials & resources.
14. How often do you usually read about ESL/language instruction?
    o What do you read?
    o Which researcher(s)' /scholar(s)' work would you consider as most influential to your teaching? How has it influenced you?
15. To what extent do you plan for instruction? (Why do you plan or not plan?)
    o What does it typically involve?
16. What do you perceive as the goals of your students?
17. How do you relate to your students?
    o On personal & instructional levels
    o What do you think makes English difficult for students?
    o What could make the study of English easier for students?
18. Based on your experience, what common misconceptions do students have?
19. How do you think ESL students learn English?

Appendix III
("Reflection" Interview Guide)

1. Given what you have said about your life before you became an ESL teacher and given what you have said about your work now, how do you make sense of the teaching of ESL in your life?
    o Member check via concept maps (based on Question 11 from the "current experience" interview)
2. If you were a teacher educator, how would you design the coursework necessary to prepare an ESL teacher?
3. Given what you have reconstructed in all these interviews, where do you see yourself going in the future?
    o Do you see yourself teaching at your current program for a long time? Why or Why not?
    o Do you see yourself being an ESL teacher for a long time? Why or Why not?
        o What other lines of work would you consider?

Appendix IV
(Classroom Observation Guide)
*The table format is to help with note-taking and digitalization, and is not meant to be inflexible or exclude serendipitous occurrences.

Date: Instructor: Class: Textbooks:

Time	Topic/Activity	Instructional Explanation Verbatim	S-initiated Exchanges	On the Board	Student Reaction	Notes

Appendix V
(Instruction for the Stimulated Recall Protocol)

<u>Stimulated Recall</u>

The purpose of this activity is for me to learn about what you were thinking when you were teaching the class. I heard what you said and saw what you did during the class, but I don't know what you were thinking when you were teaching. So what I would like for you to do is to tell me what was on your mind when you were teaching.

To help you remember your thoughts during the lesson, what we are going to do now is to review the recording of the lesson you have taught. I am going to place the tape recorder/digital camcorder between us so you can pause the tape anytime you want to tell me something you were thinking during the lesson, and I will also press the pause button if I have any questions about segments of the lesson. Please feel free to say "I don't know" if you can't remember what you were thinking or why you did something because I'm not here to evaluate your teaching, nor am I qualified to do so! So relax and get ready to be entertained, by yourself ☺

<u>Follow-up Questions</u>
- Could you briefly describe your planning for this lesson?
  - Goal for this lesson
- What difficulties did you expect the students would have during planning?
- Tell me what you thought the students got out of the unit.
- How do you think the unit went?
  - How would you change the unit if you were to teach it again?
- How might you change the unit if you were teaching a much stronger group of students?
  - How about for a weaker groups of students?

Appendix VI
(Interview with program directors)

- How would you characterize the objective of the program?
- What is the focus of ESL instruction here in the program?
- How would you characterize students enrolled in the program?
  - What do you perceive as their goals?
- How would you characterize the teaching faculty? (e.g. knowledge, credentials, experiences, etc.)
  - What are the characteristics the program looks for when hiring teachers?
- Are you familiar with other ESL programs within the Austin city limits? What aspects would you say are similar? Different?

Appendix VII
(Questionnaire for students)
(*For beginning level students, translations will be provided.)

Note: Your answers to this questionnaire will be kept confidential. Your answers will not be shared with your teacher. Once I have compiled everyone's answers, I will share the general findings with your teacher after the semester has ended.

Teacher: _____   Class: _____

For Questions 1-3, please write a brief answer for each.

1. I feel the goal of the class should be…

3. I wish my teacher would teach more of the following things about English:

2. My teacher has mostly focused the class on…

For the following questions, please tell me how much you agree by circling a number on the scale.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
4. I'm interested in learning how to speak English…………………1		2	3	4	5
5. I want to improve my listening comprehension………………....1		2	3	4	5
6. I'm interested in learning English grammar…………………. 1		2	3	4	5
7. I want to improve my reading……………………………….....1		2	3	4	5
8. I want to learn more vocabulary……………………………….1		2	3	4	5
9. I want to improve my English writing…………………………...1		2	3	4	5
10. I want to know more about the American culture………………1		2	3	4	5
11. My teacher knows English really well…………………………1		2	3	4	5
12. My teacher knows how to teach ESL…………………………..1		2	3	4	5
13. My teacher knows the textbook(s) very well…………………1		2	3	4	5
14. My teacher helps me understand the American culture…………1		2	3	4	5
15. My teacher knows how English works…………………………1		2	3	4	5
16. My teacher explains how English works very clearly…………..1		2	3	4	5
17. My teacher understands how I feel when I use English…………1		2	3	4	5
18. My teacher knows it's hard to learn English…………………1		2	3	4	5
19. My teacher uses class time very well…………………………..1		2	3	4	5
20. My teacher knows about other resources that will help me…….1		2	3	4	5
21. My teacher knows the way I like to learn English……………..1		2	3	4	5
22. My teacher is able to help me with my questions about the ESL program……………………………………….1		2	3	4	5

For the following questions, please tell me how often each statement happens by circling a number on the scale.

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Not really	Never
23. My teacher helps me see how English and my native language are different and similar……………………………1		2	3	4	5

- My native language is _____

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Not really	Never
24. My class is well organized.……………………………………1		2	3	4	5
25. My teacher is ready to teach before class starts………………1		2	3	4	5
26. After my teacher explains something, I understand it immediately………………………………………………...1		2	3	4	5
27. My teacher brings in helpful outside resources…………………1		2	3	4	5
28. My teacher says to our class, "That's just the way it is You need to memorize it."…………………………………………1		2	3	4	5

Please give 2 examples of the questions when this happened.

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Not really	Never
29. My teacher's explanation helps me understand…………………1		2	3	4	5

Please tell me why you think the teacher's explanation is helpful or unhelpful.

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Not really	Never
30. Before I ask a question, my teacher seems to already know what confuses me………………………………………………1		2	3	4	5

Please give 2 examples of your questions when this happened.

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Not really	Never
31. When people have something to say, my teacher lets them talk.……………………………………………………...1		2	3	4	5
32. In class, people say things about what we're learning…………1		2	3	4	5
33. My teacher is able to answer our "why" questions about English.…………………………………………………...1		2	3	4	5
34. My teacher reads the textbook(s) to the class and doesn't explain.…………………………………………………………1		2	3	4	5

Appendix VIII
Categories of Teacher Knowledge (Shulman, 1987, p.8)

- content knowledge
- general pedagogical knowledge, with special reference to those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to transcend subject matter
- curriculum knowledge, with particular grasp of the materials and programs that serve as "tools of the trade" for teachers
- pedagogical content knowledge, that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding
- knowledge of learners and their characteristics
- knowledge of educational contexts, ranging from the workings of the group or classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, to the character of communities and cultures
- knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds

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