LEADERSHIP IN LANGUAGE IMMERSION

SCHOOLS: CASE STUDIES OF FOUR

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS

By

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Abstract:
Since 1971, foreign language immersion schools have existed in the United States, generating a robust body of literature to explicate the benefits and challenges of children learning the school curriculum through the medium of a foreign language. However, there is little knowledge about what elements contribute to effective language immersion school leadership. The purpose of this study was to examine immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on effective immersion school leadership. The assumption was that those beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions directly influence their school's achievement of the distinctive goals of immersion programs in terms of the students' learning and the teachers' practices.

The design of this research is exploratory, using a descriptive case study of four elementary school principals in immersion education, two in Spanish and two in French programs. Participants were recommended by the office of language immersion and research of the Center for Advanced Research in Language Acquisition (CARLA) as experienced immersion leaders who were successful in terms of student achievement and best practices. Data were collected through principals' interviews and direct observations of their day-to-day activities and leadership practices. The data analysis was a two-step process utilizing the software NVivo: first using an open coding design followed by Hallinger's model.

The following conclusions are based on the findings. Leadership in an immersion school is especially complex and demanding because leaders in those schools must perform all the leadership tasks common to any elementary school with the added responsibility of providing the language component. Although they described their leadership styles in collaborative terms, all four principals were strong instructional leaders in demonstrating the elements of the instructional leadership model in defining the school mission, managing the instructional programs, and promoting a positive school climate. They performed these instructional tasks in the language of instruction, either Spanish or French. Challenges include hiring and retaining quality immersion teachers, professional development for principals, the influence of the school context, and the teacher turnover rate. Characteristics involved a passion for learning languages and immersion education and the willingness to stay informed of the latest research to find practical applications.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1965, the first foreign language immersion program aimed at providing

functional bilingual skills for English-speaking students at the elementary level started in

Montreal, Canada (Safty, 1991). Following its success, a similar program was introduced

in the U.S. in 1971 (Lenker & Rhodes, 2007). Over the years, the number of foreign

language immersion programs in elementary schools increased steadily until 1997 when

the number started to decline. Rhodes and Pufahl (2009) conducted a national survey that

showed the percentage of elementary schools offering foreign language instruction

decreased from 31% in 1997 to 25% in 2008. Of those programs featured in U.S. public

schools, only 14% are early immersion; the most common is the exploratory model,

which provides basic exposure to a foreign language in 47% of elementary schools.

Private schools counted for only 2% of immersion programs. These figures represent

about 181 elementary schools in 83 school districts and 38 private schools with an early

immersion program (Center for Applied Linguistics [CAL], 2006).

Gilzow (2002) reviewed seven successful models of early immersion programs

and noted a common feature: "They have strong leaders with a vision of foreign language

teaching and learning who know how to inspire others and organize the

people and resources necessary to build an effective program" (p. 2). Coffman (1992) previously noted the importance of the principal in a traditional school to make the program effective. He pointed out that the same role in an immersion school takes on a new dimension because of the language component that requires more qualities. As a result, this role is crucial to the success of the whole program (Coffman, 1992). Met and Lorenz (1997) suggested that hiring the right administrator "can be a key to program viability" (p. 244). Rhodes, Christian, and Barfield (1997) reported that in some schools, an immersion coordinator plays a pivotal role in the success of the school: "One of the reasons the program is so successful is that the coordinator helps set high standards and then monitors all aspects of the program" (p. 278). In most immersion schools, the principal assumed these roles.

The significance of a principals' beliefs and philosophy is found in the new Educational Leadership Policy Standards (ISLLC, 2008) the Council of Chief State School Officers adopted. Standard 5 in particular deals directly with the notions of beliefs and values. "An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner" (p. 15). Standard 5 is not the only one that applies. Standard 1 addresses vision of learning; Standard 2, school culture; Standard 3, learning environment; Standard 4, "collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources" (p. 15); and standard 6 "understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context" (p. 15). The implementation of all of those standards is affected by principals' beliefs and attitude to promote and achieve student learning, which is the ultimate goal of education, and reaffirms the importance of school leadership as stated in the introduction of the Standards: "Research now shows that leadership is second only to

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classroom instruction among school-related factors that influence student outcomes" (ISLLC, 2008, p. 9).

Based on the premise that good leadership produces a quality program, this study investigated the beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions of four principals in relation to their leadership practices to make their school successful in meeting language immersion specific challenges. This chapter covers the following areas of the study: problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical framework, procedures, significance of the study, and definitions, and conclude with a chapter summary.

Problem Statement

Rhodes and Pufahl (2009) declared, "Communicating in more than one language is vitally important in the interconnected world of the 21st century" (p. 8). Since 1971, foreign language immersion schools have existed in the United States generating a robust body of literature to understand the benefits and challenges of children learning the school curriculum through the medium of a foreign language. Fortune and Tedick (2003) stated that immersion programs are the "most effective type of foreign language program currently available in U.S. schools" (p. 1).

Numerous researchers (Hallinger, 2010; Heck & Hallinger, 2005; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006; Leithwood & Massey, 2010; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Richard & Catano, 2008) have established the importance of the principal for school effectiveness. As a result, having a competent principal is crucial to the success of any school. The national survey conducted by the U. S. Department of Education during the school year 2012-2013 found that of all principals, "78 percent remained at the same school

during the following school year" (Goldring & Taie, 2014, p. 2). The attrition rate for principals is high, adding to the challenge of finding a competent principal.

Leadership in a language immersion school is even more complex and multifaceted. Beyond attributes necessary to leaders in all instructional settings to meet the goals of the school, Coffman (1992) argued that "the immersion school principal's role is even more vital, requiring additional talents, skills, and qualifications" (p. 155). Nonetheless, there is little knowledge about which elements contribute to effective language immersion school leadership. The importance of the principal in a language immersion setting underscores the need to understand the beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions of immersion school principals toward immersion education leadership to inform prospective immersion leaders about the requirements as well as leadership programs who prepare them for immersion school leadership. This research study adds to the empirical body of research by specifically looking at examples of effective leadership in language immersion schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on effective immersion school leadership. The assumption was that those beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions directly influence their school's achievement of the distinctive goals of immersion programs in terms of the students' learning and the teachers' practices. The findings of this study helped clarify the decisions and processes regarding students' and teachers' use of target language, the content of professional development, the link between second language and culture acquisition in school, and the assessment of content and target language outcome. This study also provided insight on the unique qualities and characteristics that are significant in effective leadership of modern

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language immersion schools. Therefore, interviewing principals about immersion education leadership, their role in leading the school, and observing their stance in decision making provided important data to the understanding of effective leadership in language immersion schools.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

- How do the principal's beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions influence the school mission?

- How do the principal's beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions influence immersion programming?

- How do the principal's beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions influence the school climate?

- What characteristics exemplify an effective immersion school principal?

Theoretical Framework

This study informs the literature regarding leadership in immersion schools because it is important to understand the effect of leadership on successful immersion programs. Some have looked at how principals conceptualize instructional leadership in all-English elementary schools (Ruff & Shoho, 2005) while others have dealt with characteristics of successful language immersion programs (Gilzow, 2002; Lenker & Rhodes, 2007). Consequently, there is no framework that specifically addresses principal leadership in language immersion schools. Therefore, the findings of this exploratory study were analyzed in two ways: first using open coding, and second using Hallinger's (2010) model of

instructional leadership. Such a sequence is designed to prevent any tainting of the framework on the quest for themes and trends emerging from the data.

Hallinger (2010) conceptualized instructional leadership in three dimensions: (1) defining the school mission, (2) managing the instructional programs, (3) promoting a positive school climate (p. 65), that outline ten functions (see Table 1). He reported that this model is the basis for the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale that has been used extensively in empirical studies in at least 14 countries and more than 125 studies.

Table 1

Instructional Leadership Model (Hallinger, 2010, p. 65)

- Defining the school's mission
    - Framing clear school goals
    - Communicating clear school goals
- Managing the instructional program
    - Supervising and evaluating instruction
    - Coordinating curriculum
    - Monitoring student progress
- Promoting a positive school learning climate
    - Protecting instructional time
    - Promoting professional development
    - Maintaining high visibility
    - Providing incentives for teachers
    - Providing incentives for learning

School's mission

In the school mission dimension, the school principal is responsible for *defining a school mission* that has a set of goals focusing on student achievement and *communicating those goals* to staff and community members. Each goal must be clear, quantifiable, and delimited in time. These goals should be supported by teachers and be part of their daily practice. Hallinger (2010) pointed out that the process of developing goals in collaboration with staff members is less important than the outcome.

Managing the instructional program

In managing the instructional programs, the school principal is responsible for *supervising and assessing* teaching and learning occurring in the school using his or her expertise in the domain. The principal is also in charge of *coordinating the curriculum*. Hallinger (2010) warned that this contention is, however, problematic in large, secondary schools with different curricula for each discipline of which the principal might have little knowledge. Finally, the principal is accountable for *monitoring student progress*.

Promoting a positive school learning climate

The last dimension, positive school climate, is very broad and has several functions. It includes the development of a climate of permanent improvement both for faculty members through *professional development* opportunities and incentives and for students through *incentives for learning*. It also consists of the principal's *high visibility* in classrooms, as well as the *modeling* of values and practices that contribute to school improvement. It further encompasses *protecting instructional time* from undue distractions and perturbations (Hallinger, 2010).

Procedures

The design of this research is an exploratory qualitative research using a descriptive case study. In his landmark book on case studies, Yin (2009) granted that all types of research methods can have for purpose to be either descriptive, exploratory, or explanatory. The difference among the three methods are, " (a) the type of research questions posed, (b) the extend of control an investigator has over actual behavioral events, and (c) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events" (p. 8). "What" questions that seek to develop a hypothesis and propositions leading to more questions are justified in an exploratory study while "how much/many" and "what" used in this sense along with "who," and "where" are more fit for survey method or archival analysis. On the other hand, a line of questioning that uses "how" and "why" requires the use of experiments, case studies, or histories; the difference resides in the level of control and the historical aspect. As in this proposed research, "The case study is preferred in examining contemporary events, but when the relevant behaviors cannot be manipulated" (Yin, 2009, p. 11). He added that the case study's distinctive advantage compared to historical studies is to have access to interviews, observation, and artifacts. Yin (2009) also conceded that, "Even though each method has its distinctive characteristics, there are large overlaps among them" (p. 8).

Critics of case study method have pointed out that this form of research might lack rigor (Yin, 2009). However, unless it is used for case study teaching and has been altered to make a point, "every case study investigator must work hard to report all evidence fairly" (p. 14). Yin (2009) also recognized that a concern often voiced is the lack of generalization possible after having looked at a single case. Nevertheless, he argued that the ability to generalize is seldom based on a single experiment, but relies on multiple experiments

focused on the same question in different contexts. Others have complained that case studies contain lengthy narratives that are difficult to follow and take too long to complete. Yin (2009) insisted that writing does not have to produce a massive and unreadable paper, nor does it have to take as much time as ethnography. Finally, case studies can effectively complement randomized field trials—that have seen a renewed interest in education—instead of replacing them because case studies can provide better insight on "how" and "why" a treatment works rather than whether it works or not (Yin, 2009).

Case studies have at least four main applications that fit this study very well. They provide (a) an explanation for a possible causal link in context that surveys or experimental strategies cannot narrow down due to its complexity caused by the interaction of too many variables, (b) a description of an intervention and its context, (c) a descriptive illustration of specific topics within an evaluation, and (d) some understanding when no clear outcome results from an intervention (Yin, 2009).

In this study, the main unit of analysis was the principal of the immersion school in terms of beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions. Yin (2009) considered that the use of multiple-case studies is justified "to have subgroups of cases covering each type" (p. 59), not a larger sample size. Similarly, Stake (2006) wrote that cases have to present similarities to be studied using a multi-case design. In order to replicate the study in the main two-languages used in immersion, I conducted the study in both Spanish and French immersion programs because they have similar features and can be viewed as different types of the same group.

Data were collected through interviews, field notes, and document analysis. These data provided information on the beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions of the school administrators about effective immersion school leadership and the influence of those beliefs,

attitudes, and dispositions on the principals' school's achievement of the distinctive goals of immersion programs in terms of students' learning and teachers' practices. Stake (2006) declared that "To study a case, we must carefully examine its functioning and activities, but the first objective of a case study is to understand the case" (p. 2). The powerful advantage of using two cases is that "Analytic conclusions independently arising from two cases, as with two experiments, will be more powerful than those coming from a single case (or single experiment) alone" (Yin, 2009, p. 61).

Bryman (2004), who reviewed 66 qualitative studies on leadership conducted between 1979 and 2003, warned about a pitfall often occurring when researchers use qualitative methodology to study leadership: "There has been a tendency for some qualitative research on leadership to look like quantitative research on leadership but without numbers" (p. 762). He believed this tendency is due to focusing on formal role and practices of leaders, which is what, he commented, most quantitative studies do. In order to make significant contributions, qualitative studies should look at areas neglected by quantitative research or areas of leadership that are new, such as e-leadership (Bryman, 2004). This study focused on leadership in immersion schools in term of beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions of the principal in conformity with Bryman's assertion that qualitative research should focus on new or neglected areas of leadership.

Subjectivity Statement

This topic is both professional and personal. I worked for 10 years in a full-immersion program and have observed two different principals informally through my employment, as well as several other. My conclusion has been that leading an immersion school is a complex endeavor due to the language component of the programming. As a

result, I posit that school districts should hire candidates who are interested in and preferably have a knowledge of a foreign languages.

Some of the basic tasks are common to all schools, but others, such as being an advocate for the program by maintaining constant visibility, as noted by Gilzow (2002), require dedication and an infallible commitment to the goal of the program. Yet, there are still few resources and little research available that is specifically geared toward leadership for those programs. As an aspiring school principal, I wish there were more information from principals who have been able to reach the specific goals of immersion schools in order to understand better what made them successful, mindful of the uniqueness of each site.

As an immersion teacher, I believe that second language proficiency for students is what makes the program worthwhile. The key to achieve that goal is to spend not only more time using the target language but also time to make the target language comprehensible at the students' level which in turn contributes to their progress. Regrettably, the emergence of high-stakes testing and choices made thereafter or lack of faith in the immersion model result in teachers using more English than necessary. My personal preference is for introducing English as late as possible, as some programs wait until grade four to do it, with no more than 20% of the instructional time in English. Therefore, I need to be cognizant of my views to avoid bias and to maintain objectivity in my research.

At the personal level, I am convinced that immersion programs are invaluable, not only because of the globalization of our society that requires proficiency in more than one language, but also because I come from Switzerland, a country with four national languages. My desire is to see language schools become more prevalent, especially for younger students who can develop native-like pronunciation. Unfortunately, being proficient in a second

language is not yet considered necessary in the U.S., including among many educators, which makes promoting and supporting language education more difficult. Also, knowing a second language is tied to the politically charged topic, immigration. With more budget cuts in education looming, language programs are often the first victims. Once cut, it can take years to bring them back to their previous level; some programs never fully recover.

Participants and Setting

For the purpose of this study, the principals selected were experienced immersion leaders who were successful in terms of student achievement and best teaching practices. The selection process consisted of asking for recommendations of principals who would fit into the profile of the study from the office of language immersion and research in the Center for Advanced Research in Language Acquisition (CARLA). Those administrators needed to be recognized as being successful immersion school principals with at least two years of leadership experience. Once potential participants were identified, I contacted them to obtain their consent and requested full access to the schools. Consent required not only the willingness of the principal to participate in the interview and to be shadowed but also the ability to observe classes and to examine school documents such as teacher bulletins and parent newsletters. All participants were required to sign the consent forms (Appendix A) before taking part in the interview.

Data Collection

In order to examine immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions toward immersion education to ascertain what makes their school successful, the data collection process relied heavily on the principals' interviews as well as direct observations of their day-to-day activities and leadership practices during the shadowing phase. It also

involved examining school documents such as newsletters and staff bulletins both current and archival records. Prior to going to the school, I gathered data about the school demographics, setting, program history, school characteristics, and student achievement on state tests from the district's websites. In each school, I conducted an individual interview with the school administrator at the start of the school day to have a good sense of the principal's philosophy before shadowing him or her for the rest of the day and conducting informal observations of the school setting and various classrooms as we visit the school. During those observations, I took field notes of events and conversations related to my inquiries. At the end of the day, I finished the data collection by asking the administrator follow-up questions that came up during the day. The visit and shadowing in each school occurred the same week to minimize travel time and to focus on data collection, but I was not able to do the four schools in one trip. I visited the first two in 2011 and the last two in 2013. I then sent each principal the appropriate interview transcript. I also remained in contact with them to be able to ask clarification questions during the data analysis phase.

Data Analysis

Upon my return from the field, I transcribed the interviews and prepared the data for analysis. The analysis of the various types of data were performed with the help of the data analysis software NVivo (QSR International, 2012). The analysis consisted in a two-step process. Due to there being little research in the area of immersion leadership, I used first an open coding design which Warren and Karner (2010) defined as gaining insight by immersion in the data. I searched for trends and patterns that suggested beliefs, attitudes, dispositions, and characteristics that promote the effectiveness of immersion programs. Then, I used Hallinger's model to make sense of the data. Creswell (2009) noted that the theoretical

framework is helpful to make sense of the relation among the patterns emerging from the data. Using the open coding before looking at the model allowed me to analyze the data without the influence of the theoretical model.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on effective immersion school leadership. The assumption was that those beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions directly influence their school's achievement of the distinctive goals of immersion programs in terms of the students' learning and the teachers' practices. Gaining a better understanding of immersion school principals' specific sets of beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions provides insight on what influences their leadership practices to be successful in terms of effective teaching behavior and high level of target language proficiency. Immersion education, as it exists today in the U.S., is a relatively recent field that functions in a unique context. Moreover, a review of the literature on immersion education indicated that the influence of the immersion school principal is not well understood. This consideration underscores the need to document the immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions toward immersion education leadership to ascertain their influence on their school's achievement of the distinctive goals of immersion programs in terms of students' learning and teachers' practices.

Therefore, this study has the potential to inform both theory and practice by providing a rich description of immersion school leaders' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions in the operation of the school. This data and the findings could contribute to the leadership literature as well as open the door for more studies in this area of conceptualizing leadership in language immersion schools. Data from this study could also inform other immersion

programs about key beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions in leadership and help district leaders

make sound decisions regarding selection of immersion school leaders. Aspiring

administrators or newly appointed principals willing to progress have an opportunity to look

at data that may become significant for making adjustment in their own beliefs, attitudes, and

dispositions.

Definitions

Definitions are organized by topic areas to facilitate understanding of their relationships.

Attitude – a way of thinking, a conviction.

Belief – a conviction that something is true.

Disposition – prevalent tendency to think or act in a certain manner.

Practice – applied professional behavior.

Educational Leadership

Distributed Leadership—model of leadership—also called shared leadership—that

    emphasizes the participation of teachers in the decision-making process.

Shared Leadership—model of leadership that emphasizes the participation of teachers in the

    decision-making process.

Collaborative Leadership—model of leadership that emphasizes team building and power

    sharing.

Transformational Leadership—model of leadership that emphasizes the role of the leader as a

    change agent through inspiration.

Language Education

Language Course—traditional language class, typically for older students, where the

    language is the subject of study primarily through learning the grammar and

    vocabulary. The instructor may or may not use the language in class very much.

Target Language—the foreign language used for instruction in immersion programs (L2).

Additive Bilingualism—process of learning a second language without interfering with the

    acquisition of the first language, as opposed to subtractive bilingualism. In foreign

    language immersion education, this process occurs simultaneously with the

    development of the child's first language.

English Immersion—in the U.S., classes primarily taught in English for immigrant children

    whose native language is Spanish, sometimes referred to as the swim-or-sink method

    or subtractive bilingualism.

Bilingual Education—teaching content in two languages. In the U.S., it often refers to classes

    primarily taught in Spanish for immigrant children whose native language is Spanish.

    The program can be either early-exit or late-exit, students then attend mainstream

    classes exclusively in English.

Early-Immersion Program—foreign language immersion program that starts at the lower

    elementary level, typically Kindergarten. The program can be either a one-way—full-

    or partial immersion— or a two-way design. The goal is additive bilingualism.

Two-Way (or Dual) Immersion Program—instructional method using a foreign language to

    teach the basic curriculum. Ideally, half of the students are native speakers of English

    and the other half of another language, typically Spanish. Half of the day is taught in

    the other language and the other half in English.

One-Way Immersion Program—instructional method using a foreign language to teach the

      basic curriculum. In the U.S., students are almost exclusively native speakers of

      English and instruction in English does not start until three or four years later

      gradually increasing in the following years. The instruction in the target language

      exceeds 50% of the time once English is introduced in full-immersion programs or

      less in partial immersion programs.

Full-Immersion (or Total-Immersion) Program—one-way immersion program where the

      ratio of time spent learning through the medium of a foreign language exceeds 50%

      of the class time once English has been formally introduced which occurs sometime

      between 2nd and 4th grade depending on the program design.

Partial-Immersion Program—one-way immersion program where the ratio of time spent

      learning through the medium of a foreign language does not exceed 50% of the day.

Summary

Despite a wealth of research on immersion education and on the importance of the school principal on school success, there is little knowledge on immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on immersion leadership. Effective leadership in successful immersion schools is even more important than a nonimmersion school because principals need to possess special qualities beyond what is already required in monolingual schools. This data could contribute to ascertaining the principal's role in making their immersion programs successful in terms of the students' learning and the teachers' practices.

The research questions were the core of the interview process to gather data about how immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions influence the school mission, the programming, and the school climate, and whether there were any

characteristics that exemplify effective leadership. I analyzed the data first using open coding

before using the framework based on Hallinger's model. The procedures to present the

direction of the study explained the process.

This chapter included a description of potential contributions for both theory and

practice. The following two chapters include the literature review and the methodology for

the study. Chapter Four presents the cases; Chapters Five and Six include the data analysis

and a discussion of findings and conclusions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter is an overview of important concepts in school leadership and in immersion education. I begin with a discussion of the major leadership models in education and the role of the principal in elementary schools based on the literature in the field. Although each model is presented separately, there is some overlap, and their differences are not as clear cut as one might expect.

I present next a brief history and background information on language immersion in the U.S., including a short description of the different types of programs to place them in perspective and a presentation of the benefits for students and the challenges for schools. Then, I consider the role of leadership in immersion education and its unique characteristics and challenges. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary.

Leadership in Education

History

Leadership in education has changed several times since the first public schools were established. Harris (2005) stated that looking at the history of school leadership shows a circular evolution throughout the centuries. First, it started with experienced and

shows a circular evolution throughout the centuries. First, it started with experienced and

successful teachers who, at a time when teachers had a more important role in the

community, took on leadership roles as "principal-teachers." Then, educational models

underwent radical changes following the Industrial Revolution. Schools went

predominantly from small villages and cities to large urban agglomerations while school

leadership adopted the bureaucratic model used in business and administration. Principal-

teachers assumed increasing managerial responsibilities while their job title shortened to

principal at the same time that teaching focused predominantly on instruction in the

school setting. Finally in 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education

published "A Nation at Risk" that painted a dismal picture of the schools in the U.S.

following the decline of the country's superiority in science and technology. As a result,

teachers started to become more socially implicated and principals involved with

oversight of instructional programs and teaching evaluation while still maintaining a

managerial role (Harris, 2005).

The few schools deemed to be successful at that time became the focus of

abundant research to find out what made the difference. In those early studies of effective

leadership, principals working in schools with low-income students in urban districts and

had made drastic changes mostly through very directive style that resulted in improved

student outcomes. Spillane (2005) dubbed this leadership style "heroic leadership" (p.

143). Ironically, those schools that were rather the exception tended to become the

expected norm for other schools deemed to be failing (Hallinger, 2010). That body of

research on effective schools lead to developing a set of variables called the Effective

School Correlates: "(a) clear and focused missions, (b) safe, orderly environments, (c)

high expectations of achievement for all, (d) time on task/opportunities to learn, (e) principals as instructional leaders, (f) frequent monitoring of student progress, and (g) positive home-school partnerships" (Harris, 2005, p. 3).

However, as Harris (2005) emphasized, there were several issues with the application of these correlates, a significant one is school context. Similarly, Hallinger (2010) noted that the emerging model of effective schools neglected to take into account school differences in terms of context, need, and resources available for which a unique style of leadership is required. He contended that principals have many roles in a school and instructional leader is only one of them. In addition, educational research has focused on school effectiveness based on students' achievement in particular, studying principal leadership as success agent to the point that there is rarely any mention of other positions in a school in relation to instructional leadership (Hallinger, 2010). He conceded that feelings of inadequacy among principals who could not fit within this early model generated other models of instructional leadership.

Leadership Models

There is consensus in the field of education that recognizes the influence of the principal on school effectiveness and improvement which has been confirmed by later review of earlier empirical studies (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Heck & Hallinger, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2006; Marzano et al., 2005). In the early theories, leadership was considered an innate trait that had to be recognized in candidates, the trait leadership model; then, it became a set of behaviors exhibited by successful leaders that had to be taught to candidates (Erätuuli & Leino, 1996). However, Hallinger and Heck (1998) acknowledged that from an empirical standpoint the construct of leadership in school is

constantly evolving, that organizational style depends heavily on the context, that the different frameworks to study school leadership are not necessarily based on empirical models, and that the organizational life of a school is extremely complex both in terms of internal and external processes.

Although Hallinger and Heck (1998) included studies only if the independent variable was the principal's behavior and if one of the dependent variable was school effectiveness, their review of evidences on the principal's contribution to school effectiveness over 15 years (from 1980 to 1995) had clear limitations, They noted that earlier models tended to conceptualize the principal as instructional leader while later studies used the principal as transformational leader. The four areas of leadership influence in the organizational systems are (a) purposes and goals, (b) structure and social network, (c) people, and (d) organizational culture (Hallinger & Heck, 1998, p. 171). This highlights the indirect influence that principals have on school effectiveness, although "relatively small [yet] statistically significant" (Hallinger & Heck, 1998, p. 158). Nevertheless, Hallinger and Heck (1998) insisted that even a small effect can translate into a meaningful difference in the daily operation of a school. There are two major exceptions to the cautious conclusions described above: Marzano et al. (2005) and Leithwood et al. (2006) concluded that leadership had a large effect. The former conducted a meta-analysis of research carried out over a 35-year span and insisted that school leadership is crucial to student learning. The latter asserted that school leadership is the second most influential factor following quality teacher in student learning.

Instructional leadership

Marzano et al. (2005) pointed out that instructional leadership is probably the most widespread theme in educational leadership; however it is still not clearly delineated. They described one popular model as having four roles for the principal: providing material resources for teachers, providing instructional resources through modeling and training, communicating the goals of the school, and being visible throughout the school (Marzano et al., 2005). Hallinger (2010) conceptualized instructional leadership in three dimensions: (1) defining the school mission, (2) managing the instructional programs, (3) promoting a positive school climate (p. 65); these dimensions delineate ten functions of the school principal. Hallinger's (2010) model served as theoretical framework for this study.

In their attempt to clarify the meaning of instructional leadership, Mitchell and Castle (2005) did not find any obvious answer. In some schools they observed that if the principal took notice of teaching and learning, then school personnel paid attention to that aspect too. In other schools they saw that principals would delegate instructional leadership to teachers because of the increasing demand of school accountability or their emphasis on managerial tasks (Mitchell & Castle, 2005). They concluded that there is more than one way to practice instructional leadership, depending on the context of the school and the dispositions of the principal, which underscores the complexity and unpredictability of the tasks principals have to face on a daily basis (Mitchell & Castle, 2005).

Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership is a decades-old model based on the capacity of the leader to "motivate followers by raising their consciousness about the importance of organizational goals and by inspiring them to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the organization" (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 375). Marzano et al. (2005) summarized the required skills for effective transformational leaders in the four I's that are *individual* consideration, particularly those who feel left out, *intellectual* stimulation by considering old problems from a new perspective, *inspirational* motivation by communicating high expectations for both teachers and pupils, and *idealized* influenced through modeling expected behavior and attitude (Marzano et al. 2005).

Hallinger (2001) compared and contrasted instructional and transformational leadership to conclude that these models have more similarities than differences: they both address school vision and goals, high expectations, and high visibility/modeling. Their main difference resides in the orientation: instructional leadership is more directive in nature and considered a top-down approach while transformational leadership is more distributive by seeking participation of other staff members, similar in that regard to distributed or shared leadership. This, in turn, results in first-order changes which are more visible and direct as compared to second-order changes that are more internal and personal and occur with conditions following the creation of a school climate that fosters motivation and commitment to school improvement. Hallinger (2001) added that another distinction is that instructional leadership uses the existing structure and keeps the *status quo* in order to reach a set of objectives while transformational leadership creates new

relations through the aspirations of the staff members. He asserted that both elements are found in research on effective leadership and are necessary (Hallinger, 2001).

Donaldson (2006) claimed that although each school has a principal, it does not mean it has a leader. He defined school leadership as, "the mobilization of people to adapt a school's practice and beliefs so that every child's learning and growth are optimized" (p. 3). Moreover, he warned that expecting school personnel to respond to a leader's commands in the same way a business or a sport's team does leads to failure. In his view, to be successful, the field of education must have its own leadership models (Donaldson, 2006).

Organizational leadership

For Ogawa and Bossert (1995), leadership is not the function of a few people designated as leaders but a phenomenon present at all levels of an organization. They argued that the terms leadership and management are too narrow to encompass the scope of the field and that organization is more appropriate. Consequently, they advocated for more studies and research based on organizational theories. They concluded that most educational theorists failed to establish a direct link between principal leadership and student outcome (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). This trend toward organizational leadership quickly lost steam with the rise of the accountability movement at the turn of the century following the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) that triggered a new focus on leadership and learning which actually gave name to the new paradigm of leadership for learning (Hallinger, 2010).

Shared instructional leadership

Unlike transformational leadership that maintains a clear structure, shared instructional leadership is not based on a hierarchy of leaders and followers but on a more equal system. Marks and Printy (2003) defined the term as follows: "Shared instructional leadership involves the active collaboration of principal and teachers on curriculum, instruction, and assessment" (p. 371). Spillane (2005) pointed out that shared leadership is often called distributed leadership or even team leadership or democratic leadership, although the use of distributed leadership can indicate "that school leadership involves multiple leaders" (p. 144).

School improvement in such areas as supervision and curricular development is the shared responsibility of the principal and teachers working together toward quality of teaching and learning. Hoy and Hoy (2003) noted that it makes sense because teachers work in close proximity with students and are experts in curriculum as well as teaching. Thus, they see the importance of the principal developing a partnership with teachers that focuses on teaching and learning.

Marks and Printy (2003) maintained that this model positively influences organization and climate of instruction. They even proposed merging transformational and instructional leadership for a greater effect on student achievement. They reasoned that transformational leadership is essential for reforming schools in need of improvement: "it is insufficient to achieve high-quality teaching and learning" (p. 377). Therefore, to improve teaching and learning, schools need to add shared instructional leadership, a model they called "integrated" (p. 373). In their study, Marks and Printy (2003) found that integration does not occur unless actively sought—although it most

likely starts with transformational leaders preparing the culture for shared leadership.

Schools with this type of integrated leadership benefit principals who are no longer carrying the sole responsibility of the school; teachers are more committed to the performance of the school which in turn causes students to learn at higher levels (Marks & Printy, 2003).

Empowering leadership

Traditionally, the concept of school leadership relies on the assumptions of directionality and influence: the school has a goal and there is a way to reach it, and the school personnel work toward that goal under the leadership and responsibility of the principal (Reitzug, 1994). Researchers have attempted to study school culture and how principals influence it; however, Reitzug (1994) pointed out that the line between empowering people and manipulating them to embrace those goals is not always discernable. They reported that, according to critical theorists, "the role of the leader as manager of the organization's culture is, in effect, simply a different form of control, one that is manipulative in its subtlety and, in essence, more pervasive than traditional bureaucratic forms of control because it attempts to impact thought as well as action" (Reitzug, 1994, p. 288). On the other hand, if leaders do not change the existing culture, they might be perceived as neglecting their leadership duty. Empowering leaders give teachers a voice to participate in the evaluation of what in the school culture needs to change. Similarly, in examining teaching practices, empowerment entails the facilitation of teachers' decision making instead of the leader telling the follower what to do (Reitzug, 1994). However, the dimension of improving practice must be present

otherwise involving teachers in decision making alone can degenerate to a power struggle to control the school (Reitzug, 1994).

In his study, Reitzug (1994) described the three main empowering behaviors to deal with epistemological issues. Principals provide *support* to teachers in promoting a supportive environment. Support is fairly passive compared to *facilitation* which is more proactive because it requires the principal to act in order to facilitate a critical approach of professional practices. Finally, principals create *possibility* that consists in allowing teachers to change their teaching behaviors.

Although very similar, the main distinction between shared leadership and empowering leadership is context. In the former, teachers have a voice from the beginning while in the latter the principal wants to move from a hierarchical model to a distribution of power by increasing teacher involvement. Empowering leadership is a process in which "the principal's role shifts from prescribing substance to facilitating processes" (Reitzug, 1994, p. 304).

Situational leadership

Situational leadership has a basic tenet that leaders adapt their behavior to the level of motivation and ability of the followers. In the absence of willingness and skills, the leader is directive with them (telling); when the followers have motivation and ability, the leader then delegates the task (delegating). When only one condition is present, the leader will either be *participating* to address the lack of skills or be *selling* to increase motivation. Another way to look at this distinction is to reason in terms of relationship, high or low in presence or absence of motivation, and task oriented when participants have skills: *low task*, otherwise *high task* (Marzano et al., 2005).

New Direction for Educational Leadership

Sergiovanni (1998) observed that change in school is usually brought about by using one or more of the following strategies: bureaucratic, visionary, or entrepreneurial leadership. *Bureaucratic leadership* emphasizes objectives to achieve and outcomes to meet. Supervision, evaluation, and incentives are the preferred tools for management. *Visionary leadership* emphasizes motivation and inspiration through powerful words that foster a sense of purpose. *Entrepreneurial leadership* is based on market principles to emphasize competition and incentives for success. He suggested that widespread utilizations of those leadership models have not achieved the expected results. Sergiovanni (1998) argued that, unless a fundamental change occurs, results for students will not get any better. He speculated that *pedagogical leadership* could be the answer to the lack of improvement because its primary focus is capacity building through the development of social and academic capital for students and through intellectual and professional capital for teachers. He defined capital as being "the value of something that when properly invested produces more of that thing which then increases overall value" (p. 38). Therefore, capital development is the essential variable that pedagogical leadership produces to effect school results. He conceded that some students are still able to learn successfully in any school as long as they have the capital needed coming from sources outside the school; but in rapidly changing society, those sources such as families and neighborhood are no longer available as they once were. Now school leaders have to develop capital in community building. Other entities and individuals have long recognized community building as critical in the learning process for a long time (see Gibbs, 1976). Nevertheless, many students do not find the support they need and turn to

norms, behaviors, and groups that are at odd with schools and learning. Leaders who want to develop academic capital must promote a deep culture of teaching and learning that is at the basis of all school decisions with the commitment to the principle that function precedes form. Academic work is rigorous; teachers are concerned in person about student success, and that students will do their best.

The study of educational administration has been largely confined in the positivist tradition that looked at the effective behavior of effective principals. Erätuuli and Leino (1996) lamented that there are few studies that considered the role of beliefs, values, and moral choices of the principal. They called for "interpretive studies of meanings and also other practical knowledge of the actual conditions of educational leadership" (p. 84).

Role of the Principal

The school principal wears many hats during a typical school day, the two major ones being the administrator or manager who runs the school and the leader who is in charge of the academic dimension of the program. Phillips (n.d.) acknowledged that until the early 1990s, most principals focused on the administrative tasks before making a shift to focus on academic areas such as teaching and learning because of research findings that emphasized the role of instructional leaders in student success (Donaldson, 2006; Harris, 2005; ISLLC, 2008). However, balancing the administration of the daily operation of the school and leading instruction is very difficult because of the time needed to perform the former. Walker (2010) asserted that there is a discrepancy between what leaders want to do and what they actually have time to do. Clearly, the lack of time is a major issue. Donaldson (2006) called this phenomenon the "conspiracy of busyness" (p. 13).

Krueger (2001) asserted that the role of the principal is to promote improvement

of teaching and learning in the school, which also includes teacher learning. Therefore, to

be effective, a principal must facilitate collaboration rather than leave teachers to work in

isolation. Hoy and Hoy (2003) concurred believing that "the principal … should forge a

partnership with teachers with the primary goal of the improvement of teaching and

learning" (p. 2). Donaldson (2006) advocated that leaders seek to relate to teachers in a

manner that is free of coercion and consensual, otherwise it is the bureaucratic model

based on authoritarianism, "characterized by mutual openness, trust, and affirmation" (p.

48). After relating to teachers, leaders can effectively communicate the vision and goals

that teachers, parents, and students will embrace and support. If the principal is able to

link the work stakeholders accomplish with the advancement of the goals, then their

sense of efficacy will increase their commitment to the school. Lastly, building on

relationship and commitment, school personnel are ready to work together to achieve

those goals. Here the leader's role as team builder is essential to promote the value and

the benefits of working together to be able to achieve more than working alone

(Donaldson, 2006).

From a teacher's standpoint, principals who are effective instructional leaders are

resource providers both in terms of school resources and instructional resources; effective

communicators both in setting goals and modeling expectations; and visible and

accessible (Krueger, 2001). Erätuuli and Leino (1996) noted that for schools to become

better learning organizations, principals who want to step out of the traditional model

based on management of the school through scheduling and conflict avoidance must take

on pedagogical tasks such as curriculum development or teacher training.

Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership is a component of school leadership "because principals and other leaders are moral agents responsible for the welfare and development of students" (ISLLC, p. xiv). Moreover, Beckner (2004) noted that ethical questions are at the origin of the various responsibilities—including increasing student achievement—of educational leaders, but school leaders often fail to recognize that dimension and make quick judgments resulting in bad choices. Instead of relying on experience or personal opinion, he advocated the use of a consistent framework of values to guide all educational decisions. Beckner (2004) went on to write that, "Good leadership and good ethical practice … become much more than the consistent application of rules and regulations or the efficient accomplishment for a particular task" (p. 149) because leaders must be able to see the big picture but at the same time consider the individual needs and dreams. Then, the outcome must comprise a moral and ethical dimension while taking into account intents and consequences along with the existing rules and duties including political factors unique to the context (Beckner, 2004).

Johnson (2009) described ethical leadership as "a two-part process involving personal moral behavior and moral influence" (p. xix) in which a leader is responsible for his or her own behavior as well as for the behavior of their followers. He admonished that leaders carry ethical burdens that are specific to their function that can potentially harm people around them, for instance by abusing their power or privileges, thus placing the emphasis on leaders' character. Leaders, by their role, become what Johnson (2009) called the "ethics officers for their organizations, exercising influence through the process of social learning and by building positive ethical climates" (p. 265). Consequently,

principals have a crucial role to play in the organizational culture of the school through their own behavior (Johnson, 2009).

School Climate and Culture

Researchers in educational leadership such as Hoy and Hoy (2003) wrote that factors such as classroom management and instruction have a more direct influence on learning than factors deemed to be indirect like district policy. One notable exception is school culture that "does seem to make an important difference by providing a school context that reinforces important teaching and learning practices (p. 3). Hallinger and Heck (1998) discussed the difference between school climate and school culture. For them, school climate represents the daily work conditions and school operations while school culture has to do with the more profound and lasting values and norms that are agreed upon in the school. As a result, school climate is susceptible to change more quickly than the school culture.

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Immersion Education

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Brief Historical Background

Since Greek and then Latin became dominant languages in Antiquity, bilingual education throughout centuries has been the norm rather than the exception all over the world. During the 20th century, the rise of nationalism following major socio-political events changed the educational landscape especially in the U.S. where German schools were once widespread but disappeared after World War I. Dicker (2003) wrote that bilingualism was stifled at the time because it was perceived as un-American and is still not widely accepted for other reasons. For instance, Native American languages were thought for a long time to cause cognitive impairments that resulted in children being

placed in all-English boarding schools among other reasons. However, Cherokee people who resettled to Oklahoma designed an educative system in both Cherokee and English that produced "a higher literacy rate than the English-speaking populations in neighboring Texas and Arkansas" (Dicker, 2003, p. 20). This system ended in the 1880s with the displacement of children away from the reservations to force them to assimilate into the main culture. Crawford (2000) estimated that only about half of all indigenous languages are still currently surviving, while just 20 out of those 175 remaining languages are taught in schools. The disappearance of Native American languages theoretically ended with the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 that had a provision for remedial education for English-language learners, then provided grants in 1989 to preserve and promote students' native language. In 2003, the Cherokee people in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, opened a Cherokee immersion school to preserve their language. In 2010, the school included students from Pre-K–5th grade with an enrollment of about 100 students. Google even added in March 2011 an interface in Cherokee which can be used as a default language for searches on their website (Schelmetic, 2011).

Today, bilingualism is often linked to immigration status and deemed temporary, especially for Spanish considered being of a lower standing than French for instance (Dicker, 2003). Dicker (2003) bemoaned the double-standard: on the one hand there is recognition of Americans trying to learn a second language while effort of immigrants trying to use their native language is deemed to be "counterproductive to their adaptation to American society" (p. 145). Moreover, since the 1980s, many parts of the country are under pressure from English-only proponents to pass laws that forbid the use of other languages in conducting public affairs. Crawford (2000) reported that the most stringent

law was voted in 1980 in Dade County, Florida. As a result, even the Dade Metrozoo had to remove signs that had the scientific names of the different species in Latin below the English (Crawford, 2000).

Modern Immersion

In 1965, the first foreign language immersion program aimed at providing functional bilingual skills started in Montreal, Canada (Safty, 1991). English-speaking parents living in the province of Quebec feared that their children would not be able to compete with French-native speakers on the job market. As a result, a number of parents lobbied their school board to improve the teaching of French. They started a partnership with scholars in bilingualism at the McGill University in Montreal that led to the beginning of a new language program labeled *immersion program*, where children from the first day of Kindergarten on would be taught entirely in French with English instruction starting only in grade two (Swain & Johnson, 1997). This program quickly spread in other Canadian cities in English-speaking provinces.

Following its success and the spread of immersion programs throughout Canada, a similar program was introduced in the U.S. in 1971 (Lenker & Rhodes, 2007). Culver City, California, started an immersion program in Spanish; then, in 1974, three other schools opened in Cincinnati, Ohio and in Montgomery County, Maryland (Krueger, 2001). Then in 1977, two more schools opened in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and in San Diego, California (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010). Throughout an immersion program at least half of the class time is taught using a foreign language to cover the state-mandated curriculum. In the early grades there is almost no English which is formally introduced in

most programs between second and third grade for one period increasing to no more than 50% to be deemed full immersion (Fortune & Tedick, 2003).

The target language must remain the main language of instruction. There are cases where a program used consistently the target language but for different reasons moved away from the true immersion model. Bostwick (2004) observed, "Many programs that claim to be immersion would be more accurately referred to as either: 'content-enriched foreign language classes' or … 'content-based foreign language class' if they do not reach this 50% threshold" (par. 5). Students who have completed a language immersion program "not only become bilingual but also master the subject content of the regular elementary school curriculum" (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010, p. 309).

Types of Programs

One-way programs

Immersion programs can have different purposes and structures but the common feature is "the basic assumption that a new language is best learned not as the object of instruction, but rather as the medium of instruction, through a content-based curriculum" (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010, p. 313). The original model in Quebec was designed for English-minority students in a French-speaking province and is considered to be one-way because each student was learning the same new language (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010). In the U.S. it is designed for English majority students learning a foreign language, but follows the same design of all students learning the same new language.

Immersion programs can be either full immersion or partial immersion. *Full immersion* programs are typically taught in the second language the whole day for two or three years, with English being introduced progressively later but no more than 50% of

English. Some programs do not start English until grades 4 or even 5 (Curtain &

Dahlberg, 2010). *Partial immersion* programs have a ratio of second language lower than

50% that habitually stays the same throughout the program. Immersion programs can be

either early immersion or late immersion, the former being more common than the latter

especially in the U.S. *Early immersion* starts in kindergarten or first grade, but sometime

in prekindergarten while *late immersion* starts in middle school or sometime in fifth

grade (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010).

Table 2

Early-Immersion Programs

Types of programs	Ratio L2/L1	L1 of students
One-way immersion	Partial immersion <50%	Mostly English
One-way immersion	Full immersion >50%	Mostly English
Two-way immersion	50% / 50%	Half English-half Spanish

Note. One-way immersion programs can also be late-immersion programs.

Two-way programs

In addition to full immersion programs, the other structure for immersion

programs is called two-way or dual immersion. Instead of having students who start with

limited knowledge of the target language, in dual immersion ideally half the students of

the class are fluent in one language while the other half are fluent in the other language

with some variations of the ratio. The instruction occurs 50% of the time in one language

and 50% in the other language, typically Spanish but other languages as well. Students

learn the second language as enrichment instead of remedial for English learners (Curtain

& Dahlberg, 2010). Two-way programs have been very successful for both language

majority and minority students in the sense that both groups have developed language skills in both English and Spanish as well as an understanding and appreciation for both cultures.

Indigenous programs

The purpose of some language immersion programs is to revive indigenous languages. Those programs are either one-way immersion or two-way programs. The main difference with other language programs is a greater emphasis on the cultural aspect (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010). A typical example is the Hawaiian Language Immersion program that started in 1987 following an injunction from the state legislature to start offering schooling in the Hawaiian language. Slaughter (1997) pointed out that this program expanded in 1994 to include secondary education following a growing enrollment and popularity among parents with either Hawaiian or non-Hawaiian roots. Both the Canadian and the Hawaiian programs have intra-national goals while programs featuring languages not usually spoken in that country aim at boosting students' proficiency for academic purposes (Swain & Johnson, 1997).

Prevalence in the U.S.

According to Rhodes and Pufahl (2009) who conducted a survey of the foreign language instruction for the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in 2008, foreign language instruction at the elementary and middle school level in the U.S. "decreased significantly from 1997 to 2008: from 31% to 25% of all elementary schools … and from 75% to 58% of all middle schools" (p. 1). They pointed out that access to foreign language programs is very much dependent on the location and the affluence of the students. Rural areas and students with lower socioeconomic background have limited

access while private schools are more likely to offer these programs: 51% of private

elementary schools and only 15% of public elementary schools. Then, only 14% of all

elementary public schools with foreign language instruction have an immersion program

(2% for private schools).

The newer edition of the directory of foreign language immersion schools in the

US (CAL, 2011) showed an increase in the number of programs. The directory listed 337

elementary schools located in 38 different states, Utah having the most with 56

elementary schools, followed by Minnesota with 32, Louisiana and California with 23

each, North Carolina 17, Hawaii 15, Oregon 14 and Virginia 13. The total number can be

further broken down into 239 programs in Spanish (45%), 114 in French (22%), 71 in

Mandarin (13%), and 34 in Hawaiian (6%) for a total of 22 different languages (CAL,

2011).

Program Features

Swain and Johnson (1997) described what they deemed to be the "core features of

prototypical immersion programs" (p. 6). The first is the use of the target language (L2)

as the medium of instruction, unlike in foreign language classes where the language is the

subject and the instruction is based on teaching grammar and vocabulary rather than

language input and output based on communication. The next feature is that the

curriculum taught through L2 parallels the local curriculum taught in other schools, such

as learning objectives in mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts. There is

overt support for the native language of students (L1), usually as a dominant language in

the community. The classroom culture is also that of the local community and student's

exposure to L2 is primarily limited to the classroom where teachers and sometimes other

staff members are bilingual. Finally, students enter the program with a similar, very limited knowledge of L2, but graduate from the program with a high level of proficiency in both languages, which is deemed to be additive bilingualism (Swain & Johnson, 1997).

Swain and Johnson (1997) also identified what they call variable features because they vary from one program to the other. This encompasses the grade level in which the immersion curriculum starts, either early, when students start their schooling; mid, in grade 4 or 5; or even late for the middle school student. The extent of immersion can also vary from full to partial with less than 50% of the instructional time in the target language throughout the program. The ratio English-target language can vary at a different stage of a full immersion program from 100% at the beginning decreasing to reach 50% at the end, with other programs starting with one subject, and then increasing to more.

The articulation within the educational system beyond elementary years, the support for students who start the program with limited proficiency in the target language, the availability of educational resources in L2, and the commitment of all the stakeholders vary greatly from one program to the other, which in turn can make the program sustainability difficult. Finally, the attitude toward the culture and the status of the target language can change from one program to the other, whether proficiency in the language is perceived to affect cultural identity or open doors for economic or academic advantages. All these reasons contribute to make the success of an immersion program different according to its context. For instance, limited language competences might be deemed failure in Canada because of the job requirements where it might be success in the U.S. because language norms and needs are not expected to be as high (Swain & Johnson, 1997).

Immersion education has generated a robust literature for the past 50 years. However, there are still some questions that need to be addressed (Swain & Johnson, 1997). For example, Swain and Johnson (1997) cited the issue of students' selection whether it is justifiable that students go through a selection process or not. Although, as previously noted , parents have to sign up for this type of program, most schools do not have a selection process to enroll; students either represent the makeup of the student body in the district by a formula or go through a drawing. They noted that the effect of having native student speakers in the program or the effect of the degree of relatedness between L1 and L2 would need more studies. Among those issues there is also the need to know what happened to students' L2 once they leave the immersion programs. One important issue is the principal' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions and how they affect the school leadership (Fortune, 2009).

Swain and Johnson (1997) noted that the big difference from other bilingual programs is the notion of choice that is associated with immersion education. Parents have to apply for such programs, often located in so-called magnet schools, unlike bilingual programs designed for recent immigrants of Spanish-speaking countries to learn English where students are assigned to the program.

Immersion programs sometimes share a building with an English school (called dual track school in Canada), often at the start of a new school until the program grows large enough to move to another location, sometimes permanently as a program within the school. Some schools have only one language in the building while others have two or more languages within their walls. The presence of those features can add even more to the formidable task of being a successful educational leader.

Second-Language Acquisition

How elementary students learn the target language is different from how adults would learn it. Krashen (2009) has written extensively on the topic and use the term of language acquisition to describe the way children pick up the language. The most essential element is the amount of input that the student can fully comprehend in the new language, plus a few new words. Curtain and Dahlberg (2010) explained that in immersion schools, students start the morning by receiving instruction in the target language. They still use English while talking to the teacher or other students, but they soon develop comprehension skills in the new language. They are quickly able to say a few words, but it is usually after a year that students start speaking the language consistently. There is little frustration because teachers use meaningful contexts to convey grade-level appropriate messages. Curtain and Dahlberg (2010) recommended that teachers spend time planning to find strategies that facilitate the comprehension of the language. They also noted that the *input hypothesis* is a powerful rationale for using almost exclusively the target language during instruction, although adaptations are needed such as speaking at a slower rate and with a distinct pronunciation (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010).

Curtain and Dahlberg (2010) stated that learning how to read occurs first through the target language and parents are advised that, although "they should feel free to encourage any natural interest in reading … they should not try to formally teach English reading at home" (p. 317). In second or third grade, depending on the program, English reading is introduced and students transfer their skills from the target language to reach within a year or so a similar proficiency to students in English-only schools.

Benefits for Students

This type of school has numerous benefits for students. Fortune and Tedick (2007) highlighted the most common from decades of research on immersion programs. They cited academic and educational, especially on standardized tests, cognitive benefits in terms of cognitive flexibility and divergent thinking, and sociocultural benefits regarding appreciation of cultural diversity. Cummins (2000) reviewed research data on benefits of additive bilingualism concluding, "There is also some evidence that there may be threshold levels of bilingual proficiency that act as intervening variables in mediating the consequences of bilingualism and cognitive and linguistic growth" (p. 198).

Leadership in Immersion Schools

For immersion programs to thrive, administrators must fully support the model. This insures that the school climate will promote language learning and value its cultural aspect (Met & Lorenz, 1997). Unfortunately, Met and Lorenz (1997) noted that it is not always the case, which can seriously undermine the program. They also point out that most principals in the U.S. do not know the language of instruction, but this usually increases their motivation when they see how students learn and reach a proficiency that they do not have. However, there are benefits for a principal who is fluent in the target language in the areas of instructional leadership and teacher evaluation. As instructional leaders, they can provide valuable advice, in particular with novice teachers, and improve instruction by their leadership (Met & Lorenz, 1997). In the area of teacher evaluation, Met and Lorenz (1997) asserted that it is still possible to conduct an effective evaluation of teacher performance by looking at on-task behavior or affective climate; nevertheless an understanding of the language greatly enhances the process. They have observed that

some districts and administrators have devised strategies to remediate the lack of knowledge in the language by either securing the help of a professional such as a language coordinator or by recording the observation that is later reviewed jointly by the teacher and the administrator (Met & Lorenz, 1997).

Issues for Leaders in Immersion Schools

Gilzow (2002), after reviewing seven model early immersion programs, concluded that a common feature of those programs is that "They have strong leaders with a vision of foreign language teaching and learning who know how to inspire others and organize the people and resources necessary to build an effective program" (p. 2). Lindholm-Leary (2001) similarly found, "Research on effective bilingual, immersion and non-language-education programs has provided consistent results that demonstrate the significance of outstanding leadership" (p. 57). She identified the three major tasks as (1) being a spokesperson for the program, (2) oversight of the model, and (3) support teacher training and professional development (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). Coffman (1992) noted a consensus on the importance of the principal in a traditional school for its effectiveness while pointing out that the same role in an immersion school takes a new dimension, "The immersion school's principal role is even more vital, requiring additional talents, skills, and qualifications" (p. 155). In particular, he stated that principals should be familiar with the specific goals of the program and have some knowledge of second language acquisition (Coffman, 1992). Yet, in practice, there is little evidence that those elements, such as having basic knowledge of the second language, are taken into account when hiring a new principal for an immersion school.

Not all immersion schools are deemed to be effective. Safty (1992) argued that school effectiveness cannot be measured only in terms of language acquisition and development, first L1 and second L2, but also should take into account "[the] school organization and level of integration (defined as the cohesiveness of the school culture in pursuit of common goals), teachers' behavior, and principals' leadership" (p. 24). This emphasizes the close connection between the principal and school effectiveness based on school culture. Richard and Catano (2008) asserted that without a positive school culture, success is possible only in the short term. To promote such a climate, "the effective school leader must consistently model honesty, credibility, and trustworthiness to inspire the commitment of others" (p. 32). They also pointed out the importance creating a culture of support to attract and retain a new generation of teachers (Richard & Catano, 2008).

The issue of a positive school culture is especially important in immersion schools because qualified teachers are even harder to find than in regular schools. "More qualified teachers are needed in the commonly taught languages at all grade levels" (Lenker & Rhodes, 2007, p. 4). According to the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA, 2010), there is only one immersion certificate program in the nation; that program is offered at the University of Minnesota. Walker and Tedick (2000) studied the issue of immersion teacher preparation and noted that because of the lack of specific immersion training and certification, language skills have precedence over the teacher preparation in the hiring process. This results in having teachers apply their own philosophy on both the content and the language (Walker & Tedick, 2000).

Summary

This chapter started by looking at leadership in public schools over the centuries. At the beginning leadership focused on the instructional aspect before shifting to become managerial in nature, and then emphasized teaching and learning. This return to teaching and learning was part of the "Effective School Movement." However, within that latest trend, the concept of a dominant principal generated some skepticism that caused instructional leadership to put forward the motivational aspect with the rise of transformational leadership, then shared leadership, and now to leadership for learning. Finally, the consensus is that leadership is clearly very important for the success of a school in terms of student outcomes both directly and indirectly as well as the set of variables identified by researchers called the Effective School Correlates that are present in effective schools.

In immersion schools, leadership takes on a new dimension because of the specificity of the program. Early immersion education is a complex domain at the crossroad of elementary education and language instruction. It requires of an effective principal special qualities and a vision to promote a language and its culture, while mobilizing people and resources. Although language immersion schools have clear benefits, there also incur specific challenges such as staffing and professional development. Communication is crucial not only with faculty members but also with parents who are in need of clear information regarding the program and their child's progress. Consequently, it will be beneficial for the field to find out whether there are underlying beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions shared by the principals participating in this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on effective immersion school leadership. The assumption was that those beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions directly influence their school's achievement of the distinctive goals of immersion programs in terms of the students' learning and the teachers' practices. For 40 years, foreign language immersion schools have existed in the United States generating a robust body of literature to understand the benefits and challenges of children learning the school curriculum through the medium of a foreign language. Several researchers (Hallinger, 2010; Heck & Hallinger, 2005; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006; Leithwood & Massey, 2010; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Richard & Catano, 2008) have established the pivotal role of the principal for school effectiveness. Other researchers (Coffman, 1992; Met & Lorenz, 1997) stated that immersion school principals have a more complex role than principals in main stream schools. Therefore, the importance of the principal in a language immersion setting underscores the need to understand the beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions of immersion school principals toward immersion education leadership to

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inform professionals in the field of educational leadership. The results of this study serve two purposes: prospective immersion leaders will be more knowledgeable of the requirements for immersion leadership, and preparation programs are able to provide essential and appropriate information for aspiring immersion leaders. This chapter addresses the following areas in this order: selection of the research methodology and its rationale, selection of participants, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations, trustworthiness, limitations of the study, and a chapter summary.

Research Methodology

This research follows an exploratory qualitative research design for descriptive case studies. This study was well suited for an exploratory qualitative inquiry because research questions deal with beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions that immersion school principals hold and will be the basis for further inquiry. Yin (2009) pointed out, "Even though each method has its distinctive characteristics, there are large overlaps among them" (p. 8). This exploratory research has a strong descriptive component using a case-study design. Within the qualitative tradition, I conducted a case study for two reasons based on Yin's (2009) rationale: the issue investigated is a phenomenon representative of the field and the study is revelatory in the sense that the researcher uses description to answer the topic of inquiry.

Stake (2006) emphasized the experiential dimension of case studies that he defined as "both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry" (p. 8). For him epistemology requires researchers to experience the case in its context because "The situation is expected to shape the activity, as well as the experiencing and the interpretation of the activity" (p. 2). As a result, researchers should be able to see the

case as a picture to recreate for others to see (Stake, 2006). Yin (2009) refuted arguments

of critics who believe case studies lack rigor and generalization and are lengthy by

declaring that it is up to the researchers to present evidence fairly and eloquently. He

added that generalization is not expected with any design that does not conduct multiple

experiments in a variety of context.

This research is a multiple-case design because I studied four elementary school

principals in immersion education. Spanish and French are the languages more often used

by far than other languages in immersion programs (CAL, 2011). I conducted the study in

both Spanish and French immersion programs because they have similar features and can

be viewed as different types of the same group. I followed the logic of literal replication

because each case study is a case in itself with a distinct report not just two samples in

one study (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) proposed that using at least two case studies increases

the odds of having valuable data and of benefiting from the analysis. It also reduces the

uniqueness of the study because of the replication logic and results in a stronger effect.

Stake (2006) admonished that researchers conducting multiple case studies must consider

the study as a whole and each case study individually because they compete for attention

as the understanding progresses: "I call this tension the 'case-quintain dilemma'" (p. 1).

Ultimately, the researcher has to decide on epistemological grounds what is worth

knowing and to what extent.

Yin (2009) warned that conducting a case study is more complex than it may look

like, especially to a novice researcher. Unlike survey research for instance, the process of

collecting data is not streamlined. Not only does the researcher need to ask good

questions but also needs to be able to analyze answers on the fly to generate more

questions to gain a deeper understanding of the problem. Yin (2009) emphasized: "One insight into asking good questions is to understand that research is about questions and not necessarily about answers" (p. 70). Being a good listener is at least as important as asking questions because collecting data in a case study requires absorbing a quantity of information without bias as well as being able to read between the lines to understand the message conveyed but not verbalized. These elements can lead the researcher to adapt the original plan better to reflect new information or opportunities, whether in a minor or major way. Nevertheless, the researcher must stay true to the purpose of the study and having a solid understanding of the topic is crucial.

Yin (2009) used the analogy of a detective who must be able to infer from the evidence on the scene to a wider context that involves other types of evidence such as witness accounts. He also cautioned against any preconceived ideas about the findings. Yin (2009) warned that it is paramount for the researcher to stay open-minded throughout the process because unbiased collection and analysis could reveal contrary findings. He added that case study investigators are particularly subject to document preconceived conclusions because of the high level of understanding of the issue required before proceeding to data collection during the fieldwork phase.

In this research the unit of analysis is the principal of the immersion school in terms of his or her beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on effective immersion leadership. The main questions sought to understand what those beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions are and how their influence their school's achievement of the distinctive goals of immersion programs with regards to students' learning and teachers' practices. The use

of a case study design within a qualitative inquiry provided a thick description of the observations and the data.

Selections of Participants

For this study, the principals were experienced immersion leaders who are successful in terms of student achievement and best practices. The selection process consisted in asking recommendations from the office of language immersion and research of the Center for Advanced Research in Language Acquisition (CARLA) for names of principals who would fit into the profile of the study. Those administrators needed to be recognized as being successful immersion school principals with at least two years of leadership experience. Once potential participants were identified, I contacted them by email to obtain their consent to participate in the study and requested full access to their schools. Full access means not only the willingness of the principal to be part in the interview at the beginning of the day and to be shadowed for the rest of the day, but also the ability to observe classes and to examine school documents written by the principal, such as teacher bulletins and newsletters to parents. Once on site for the field research, I asked all principals to sign the consent forms (Appendix A) before taking part in the interview. The schools were located in the same region to minimize traveling between the schools and possible cultural differences that might come into play between schools from different geographical areas.

Data Collection

My stance as a researcher primarily was one of a neutral outsider. Stake (2006) warned that ideally, in conducting observations researchers need to strike a balance between being too open minded and straying from the research questions or being so

focused on them they miss new issues. He recommended having a plan to conduct observations while "good hard thinking about the relative importance of research questions will increase the relevance of observations" (p. 13).

Prior to my coming to the school, I gathered data about the school demographics, setting, program history, and school characteristics off their website. Stake (2003) estimated that for every hour in the field, researchers need six more hours for other related activities such as planning and writing. He also recommended reviewing similar cases to develop meaning, even when there is no comparison possible.

Interviews

Data collection on site started with the individual interview of the principal for whom I had obtained a signed consent form (Appendix A) to participate. In each school, I began by conducting an individual interview with the school administrator at the start of the school day. The interview occurred in one sitting whenever possible, although it happened only once out of the four. I used the main interview protocol (Appendix B) based on the research questions, but there was room for expansion according to respondent answers. This interview gave me a good sense of the principal's philosophy before shadowing him or her for the rest of the day.

Ribbins (2007) warned that although the purpose of the interview is to discover what someone thinks, there is a risk of being untruthful by selecting parts of a text to misrepresent the actual meaning. Therefore, he insisted that not only do interviewers have to quote the exact words; they also have to provide the context. He also added that interviewers must use critical judgment to make sense of what the person is saying and to evaluate the meaning with other parts of the interview (Ribbins, 2007). Miller and

Crabtree (2004) conceptualized the interview not just as an exchange of information but as, "a special type of partnership and communicative performance or event" (p. 187).

There are several ways to conduct interviews. Ribbins (2007) classified them in four main types. The first one is verbal questionnaires, also called structured interviews, which consists in providing a scaffold that helps respondents verbalizing their thoughts. He noted that this type of interview is easy to analyze, but answers can be influenced by the interviewer who unconsciously pressures the other person in an effort to find out more. The second one is the traditional interview or semi-structured interview during which the respondent has some freedom to answer while the interviewer controls only broadly the process and the agenda, which in turn reduces the risk of interviewer bias and facilitates the analysis (Ribbins, 2007). There is then the discussion that is even more flexible and open than the structured or semi-structured interviews, sometimes called a guided interview, which can be very useful in the early stage of a research to help identify key concepts. However, because this type is less formal, it might be more difficult to draw parallels among a series of discussions. Lastly, the chat is a fortuitous conversation, which is not recorded because unplanned, but can be informative because the respondent might be more open to answer due the lack of formality (Ribbins, 2007). For this research, I used a questionnaire, the interview protocol (Appendix B), to conduct structured interviews with each principal. During the shadowing part of the study, I used a less formal type such as the discussion format to ask for clarification or to obtain more details.

Interviews can take several forms such as face-to-face, by phone, through email, or in writing. The advantage of meeting face-to-face is the availability of nonverbal cues,

but can be more difficult to organize than telephone or email conversations (Ribbins, 2007). Ribbins (2007) also advised against trying to cover too many themes, the list of questions has to be revised to make sure it includes only the ones that must be asked out of the first draft of questions. He also specified that in qualitative research, open questions that can generate a broad range of answers are the most useful. Yin (2009) wrote that there are five levels of questions, but for a case study, questioning should be primarily at the first and second level. He suggested that questions at level 1 are questions about the person whereas level 2 questions are about the case. The difficulty is to ask level 1 questions (verbal inquiry) while thinking at level 2 (mental inquiry). Finally, Stake (2006) concluded, "Asking questions in a way that teases out subtle meanings is a gift that grows with experience and mentoring" (p. 22).

I recorded the interviews using the free version of the iTalk application (Griffin Technology, 2011a) for iPhone 4. This free application is very reliable, shows the status of the recording, has a great capacity, and produces recordings of good quality. I then transferred the audio files wirelessly to my laptop computer using iTalk Sync (Griffin Technology, 2011b) through a Bluetooth connection. Ribbins (2007) pointed out that simultaneously conducting an interview and taking notes can be very demanding and much less reliable than taping. Nevertheless, I had a note pad to jot down keywords and quick notes with indications such as incidental event, hesitations, and body language. As anticipated, the principals were forthcoming about providing information because of the interest in their work due to the nature of this study.

Observations

The second set of data came from shadowing principals. Stake (2006) noted that observations provide data in the most meaningful way. Yin (2009) commented that case studies habitually create opportunities for observing participants in the natural setting. I conducted informal observations of the school setting and various classrooms as we visited the building for the rest of the school day. During those observations, I took field notes on a note pad of events and conversations related to my inquiries and observed both formal and informal interaction between the principal and staff members. As anticipated, I observed each principal in meaningful practices while shadowing.

Moyles (2007) recognized that although shadowing is not always considered as observational research, it clearly is one. One important condition is for the participant to be completely at ease with the constant presence of the researcher. This can be alleviated by spending some time with the person without shadowing, in engaging in small talk for instance, to minimize the formal aspect of the meeting.

Documents

The third set of data came from both archival and current records, for which I obtained copies during the fieldwork phase or retrieved from the school website. Reitzug (1994) indicated that useful documents were "teacher bulletins, the goals/objectives/ mission statement, copies of articles and research summaries distributed to the staff, and correspondence that was distributed to teachers or sent to parents during the observation and interview period" (p. 288). Yin (2009) noted that documents are valuable for conducting a case study. They can corroborate or contradict data obtained through other sources; the latter would warrant further inquiry to explain discrepancies. Official

documents can provide spelling or exact title of people mentioned in interviews (Yin, 2009).

At the conclusion of the observation, I finished the visit by asking the administrator any follow-up questions deemed pertinent to the case. I stayed in touch with the principals to ask clarification questions during the data analysis phase. I also emailed thank-you notes and proposed to send them a copy of the study once completed.

Data Analysis

Principal interviews generated narratives of their beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions about effective leadership in immersion schools. Moyles (2007) pointed out that an important challenge for educators who conduct research is to stay objective by having an interpretation that comes directly from the data collected. The reason is that it is very difficult to separate one's opinion from what is observed "or what we expect to occur" (p. 238). Miller and Crabtree (2004) even suggested that "Interpretation and analysis are occurring during the interview itself" (p. 189). Moyles (2007) considered that the first field observation and the concepts found in the literature can be the start of the analysis.

Once the data collection completed, I transcribed the interviews verbatim. I performed the analysis of data, except for the visual type, with the help of the data analysis software NVivo 10 (QSR International, 2012). Yin (2009) explained that computer-assisted data analysis software is helpful because it allows coding and classifying vast amount of data from different sources. This is not an analytical tool that generates results; it is nevertheless useful to study outputs for meaningful patterns that will produce conclusions.

Bassey (2007) cautioned that case studies generate an abundance of data that requires a skillful analysis to produce a report that makes sense. He recommended going back to the data until the researcher is confident that the resulting statements are trustworthy which will take several rounds of inquiry. Yin (2009) also warned that he saw case studies analysis stalled because researchers did not have a precise analytical approach and became overwhelmed, not knowing what to do next. He added that, unlike statistical analysis, there is no single formula on how to proceed and "much depends on an investigator's own style of rigorous empirical thinking, along with the sufficient presentation of evidence and careful consideration of alternative interpretations" (p. 127).

My data analysis was a two-step process. Because there is little research in the area, I first used an open coding design which means gaining insight by immersion into the data (Warren & Karner, 2010). Creswell (2009) described coding as the process of organizing the information by themes, either in predetermined themes or looking for themes emerging from the data. Berg (2009) recommended that coding be systematic and organized to facilitate making sense of the data. Because the focus of this study is immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on immersion schools, I looked for trends and patterns that suggested beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions that promote the effectiveness of immersion programs in terms of the program's unique goals. Berg (2009) warned that "Although interpretations, questions, and even possible answers may seem to emerge as researchers code, it is important to hold these as tentative at best" (p. 353). After having coded the data according to the typology of beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions expressed, I looked for meaning within the data through themes and patterns (Hatch, 2002).

Computer-assisted analysis can be helpful. It allows for coding and analyzing of large amount of data (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) suggested to start with a small question and to repeat the procedure with larger question until the main research questions have been answered. Although the bulk of the analysis was accomplished electronically with NVivo (QSR International, 2012), I nevertheless read the data several times to see whether other themes or domains emerge. Hatch (2002) encouraged researchers to try different strategies "…using a combination of the strategies … should lead you to a fairly well developed sense of what your data mean, how they relate across domains, and how the parts fit the whole" (p. 176).

Second, I used Hallinger's model to make sense of the data collected through interviews, field notes, and document analysis. Creswell (2009) declared that the theoretical framework can help make sense of the relation among the patterns observed following the placement of data into themes or categories by providing metaphors or analogies as the end point using an inductive logic. I looked at Hallinger's (2010) model to understand the immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions and to inform me of the underlying philosophy of the administrators that guide their running of their school and provide field-based examples of leadership in immersion schools. For that purpose, I used the main elements of Hallinger's (2010) model as typology.

In addition to using the theoretical framework, Yin (2009) offered to consider rival explanations that contrast with the researcher's perspective based on participants' answers. Hatch (2002) stated that "It is not an exaggeration to say that no qualitative analysis is ever complete (p. 149). He cautioned, however, that the data analysis is not thorough until all the research questions have been answered (Hatch, 2002).

Ethical Considerations

As required, I completed the mandatory modules about Responsible Conduct of Research and Human Subject Research. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) proposal qualified for an expedited review because there were no vulnerable groups involved in this research, such as students that would require parental consent, or any covert or deceptive practices. Participant concerns of privacy were minimal because the study is about patterns and broad themes regarding beliefs and values. Nevertheless, the consent form (Appendix A) clearly stated that privacy and confidentiality were guaranteed by using pseudonyms for the schools and the participants. I checked published documents to avoid identification of cities, sites, and people. Any school names and letterhead were covered. None of the audio files of the interviews were published. All the documents and files were stored in a safe place and archived upon the completion of the study. The Responsible Conduct of Research guidelines, such as honesty and objectivity, has been closely followed.

Thorne (2004) cautioned that there might be cases when it is hard to distinguish between informed and uninformed consent outside of extreme cases. She added that "fieldworkers are rarely as honest and forthcoming with information as they could be" (p. 162) because they want to gain access to the field rather than making sure participants understand the goal of their study. She even suggested that informed consent may have to be renewed for studies that entail spending time in the field for "reminding those one is studying about the research purpose, if it seems to have slipped from awareness" (Thorne, 2004, p. 167).

Ribbins (2007) cautioned that the use of informal discussions or chats could be problematic when it comes to informed consent. Careful considerations need to be given to the use of such interviews; therefore, no data will be used without consent. Participants were offered the possibility to review a copy of the transcript of their interview once fully transcribed. Ribbins (2007) suggested that most participants do not want to revise their interviews. To protect participants' anonymity, I used no names but pseudonyms instead. I kept data either at the researcher's home or in a locked up drawer.

Warren and Karner (2010) argued that because data in qualitative research relies heavily on interaction with people, "qualitative researchers cannot promise respondents anonymity, but they can provide confidentiality" (p. 38), which includes the certainty that information provided will not allow identification of the participants.

Trustworthiness

Reliability and validity are primarily used in positivistic research and are inappropriate for qualitative inquiries (Reitzug, 1994). Denzing and Lincoln (2005) declared that "Terms such as *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability* replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity" (p. 24). Similarly, Warren and Karner (2010) stated that validity in qualitative research is replaced by a narrative and an analysis that uses thick description that convinces the reader of the validity in terms of whether it is believable of not. As a result, they proposed that reliability comes from the consistency that is demonstrated in the research process. To insure *credibility*, all the data were triangulated in the collection process and the method. Stake (2006) defined triangulation as, "an effort to assure that the right information and interpretation have been obtained" (p. 35). He added that

triangulation applies within a case study and across case studies. Yin (2009) argued that "a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence" (p. 114), compared to experiments or surveys for instance that look at only one source of evidence. In this research, trustworthiness was established by comparing data from the interviews, the observations, and the documentary evidence; discrepancies were further reviewed. The repetition of themes across the data added to the findings' credibility.

Merriam et al. (2002) suggested that internal validity in qualitative studies can be achieved through peer review. For that purpose, my dissertation advisor and my committee members assessed the validity of my analysis. The *dependability* was assured by performing member checks for the individual interviews, and by using the analysis software. Yin (2009) recommended maintaining a chain of evidence "to follow the derivation of any evidence from initial research questions to ultimate case study conclusions" (p. 122). To achieve that goal, the data collection process must be sufficiently tight to assure that the study report comes from the data collected on site. This means that the report must have a sufficient number of quotes and under which circumstances data have been collected, which are in turn consistent with the protocol that relates to the main study questions. *Transferability* is expected to be limited due to the uniqueness of the programs, but can increase by using several sites and by providing thick and rich descriptions of the data.

Limitations

I foresaw at least two limitations to this study: inexperience and limited cooperation. Yin (2009) claimed that researcher experience is crucial at the data analysis

stage because there are no recipes to follow for a novice researcher. This was my first

qualitative study and my inexperience definitely was a handicap, especially for collecting

data in the field. However, I was able to count on the support of my committee, in

particular of my advisor, who helped me stay on the right track by her thoughtful

comments. I gained some experience during my doctoral studies by conducting

interviews for class projects, which were very helpful.

Limited cooperation could also have been a problem; participants might have

been reluctant to be forthcoming in disclosing information. Good interview skills are

important in asking follow-up questions to obtain as much information as possible. On

the other hand, Lindholm-Leary (2001) identified one important task of the immersion

principal as being a "spokesperson for the program with the local school administration,

local Board of Education, the parents, and the community" (p. 61). Therefore, this latter

risk was low but still needed to be attended to. Fortunately, the cooperation was very

good; all the participants were eager to participate.

Summary

In this chapter I presented the rationale and the methodology for this study. I use a

case study research design to have a clear understanding of their beliefs, attitudes, and

disposition of the participants. The CARLA Institute of the University of Minnesota in

Minneapolis recommended principals who were deemed effective immersion school

leaders. Each participant had to sign the consent forms (Appendix A) before conducting

the interviews and the field observations. I also examined other sources of data such as

school newsletters and staff bulletins. After finishing the transcription of the interviews, I

analyzed the data using the software NVivo 10 (QSR International, 2012) to organize

data and findings. I conducted the analysis first using open coding and then using the theoretical framework. The IRB application qualified for expedited review because the study does not involve children. I closely followed the Responsible Conduct of Research and Human Subject Research guidelines. Trustworthiness will be increased by triangulating findings and providing thick descriptions of the cases. I anticipated two limitations: my inexperience in qualitative research and a potential lack of cooperation of the participants that did not occur.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE CASES

Introduction

Based on the premise that good leadership is essential to quality language

immersion programs, I investigated the beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions of four

immersion principals in relation with their leadership practices making their school

successful in meeting language immersion specific challenges. Understanding what

elements contribute to effective leadership in foreign language immersion schools could

inform prospective immersion leaders about the requirements and current leaders about

their practice. Results from this qualitative study could inform other immersion programs

about beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions in leadership and help district leaders make

sound decisions in hiring immersion school principals. This study sheds some light on the

unique qualities and characteristics that are significant in effective leadership of modern

language immersion schools.

This chapter provided a description of the profile and responses of four effective

immersion school principals on beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions about immersion

education leadership, their role in leading the school, and their stance in decision making.

Data were collected primarily through structured interviews that lasted from 44 minutes

for the shortest to 91 minutes for the longest, through observations of their practice at their school during the rest of their workday, and through scrutiny of documentary evidence such as newsletter and school websites. I first used open coding to analyze the data to find out what constitutes their beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions to leadership practices and success with regard to leadership, immersion education, and important challenges specific to immersion programs. In the subsequent chapter, I present a cross-case analysis of the data and the results through the lens of Hallinger's (2010) model of instructional leadership, and end with a summary of the findings.

Table 3

Profile of the Principals

Names	Ruby Maredsous	Matilda Chimay	Stella Pelforth	Killian Kriek
Teaching background	Immersion	Secondary	Immersion	ESL
Years of experience[a]	6	9	7	2
Type of schools	Public charter school	Public school	Public school	Public school
Type of programs	One-way full immersion	One-way full immersion	One-way full immersion	Two-way immersion

Note. [a] Years of experience as a principal at the time of the field observations.

Profile of the Four Principals and Their Schools

The four principals were selected based on the recommendation of the office of language immersion and research of the Center for Advanced Research in Language

Acquisition (CARLA) as being effective immersion leaders who lead schools successful in terms of best teaching practices and student achievement. Each participant needed to have at least two years of administrative experience in an immersion setting. I received a list of six names, but one principal had already retired and another did not answer any of my numerous contact attempts. The other four principals were eager to fully participate despite their tight schedules. All were particularly helpful and cooperative. In each school, I felt welcome and got the overall impression they would be nice schools to work in.

I conducted the field work in two sessions. I visited the first two schools in May 2011 and the last two in February 2013. The original plan was to visit the latter in the fall of 2011, but different events and conflicting schedules postponed my visits. One issue was to avoid conducting the field work during testing periods or special activity weeks. The case studies are presented in the chronological order of the visits.

The four schools are located in separate school districts in a large metropolitan area. The number of students ranged from 256 to 665. The principals in the French programs both work in public schools with one-way, full immersion models unlike the principals in the Spanish programs. One works in a two-way (or dual) immersion program in a public school and the other in a one-way, full immersion public charter school.

Every building showed an international mindedness with different murals and cultural displays by the office and in the hallways as well as artifacts from cultures related to the language of instruction and posters in the target language (L2). Flags of

countries in relation to the language of instruction hung on the walls. The signage was either in the target language or in both languages.

All the schools were very busy places, even before students came in. The phones rang on a regular basis. Teachers, staff members, volunteers or parents wearing visitor's tags, moved back and forth in the hallways. Each school had a pleasant atmosphere, students were enthusiastic about using the target language to greet the principals who often were in the hallways, and they frequently engaged in small talk in the target language with other adults as well. Each principal had at least one meeting to attend the day of my visit, except in one school where the scheduled meeting was canceled because the other person attended a training off-site.

Among the participants were three females and one male. Their ages at the time of the field work ranged from late 30s to late 50s. The four principals came from different walks of life but were very eager to share their expertise and experience. They all showed interest in research in immersion programs in general and in my research in particular. I had very good contact with all of them and enjoyed spending time with them while visiting their schools. I felt I could have worked in their schools as a teacher as well.

The principals participating in this exploratory study had between four to nine years of experience as immersion leaders at the time of the field research in their schools. At the time of the study, three of them had only worked as a principal in the very school I visited and they helped found. Two of them previously worked as immersion teachers prior to becoming administrators, one in a French and one in a Spanish school; however, the other two had not. One was a Spanish language teacher, and the other taught in a school in English.

Ruby Maredsous

Background

Ruby Maredsous also was the first principal of this school that she helped start with four other teachers as a charter school several years ago for two main reasons: they knew many people whose children could not get in an immersion school for lack of space available and they saw the possibility to do immersion better than other schools. She had been an immersion teacher for almost two decades and even taught abroad a year. After studying elementary education, she continued with a graduate degree in second language and culture acquisition. She had served in an administrative capacity in other immersion programs for three years before becoming a principal. She has an excellent command of the language of instruction albeit not a native speaker. I conducted the interview in two sittings separated by 30 minutes because she had to go in the hallway check on students leaving for a camp and it lasted a total of 82 minutes.

Leadership

Ruby described her leadership style as being,

A teacher leader because I've been an immersion teacher, I have a lot of resources, a lot of ideas, a lot of research that I've read and studied over the years, so I try very hard to lead based on my experience.

She quickly pointed out that not all immersion principals have such experience, "In my previous schools, most all of my principals did not have any language or any immersion experience." For her that teaching experience in immersion is essential to be an effective leader because she has the ability to think and reflect on the language acquisition process in students. She can then prioritize the multiple parameters of the program to make it the

best model possible. She also believes that her prior experience gives her a definite advantage compared to principals who do not have immersion experience, "Because I've been an immersion teacher, I think I lead this school as an immersion school perhaps somewhat differently than those schools that are run by individuals who are not bilingual and who do not have the immersion experience."

Ruby acknowledged that, in some big school districts, central office people sometimes appoint principals who have not applied to work in an immersion setting. Furthermore, she has "seen models where the principal is actually kind of resentful of having been placed in the school." She warned that knowledge and understanding of language acquisition is essential to inform parents of students with learning difficulties who seek help, "So, if a child is struggling in school and the school leader doesn't know how to explain or doesn't know why the child is struggling or doesn't understand, I think that's detrimental to the education of that child." In her opinion parents should trust the school leader "to know what they are doing and if their child is not succeeding, they need some good input on the whole process." She added, "I can't imagine what it's like for someone who just was randomly placed in a school and has no background, I think that would be hard and not entirely fair to the families." Having immersion experience is an important quality for an immersion leader; she mentioned that another one is flexibility to make adjustments to address the specific priorities of the program "because sometimes the way we structure the day might be best for language acquisition, who we hire, our curriculum, many, many components go into creating the best language model."

Ruby underscored that a positive learning environment is very important to insure "the curriculum [is] the best it can be in both languages." Because she experienced

negative relationships among staff members in previous schools, she purposely established from the start "an environment where the teachers collaborate very deliberately in both languages and they never are afraid to say [to a native speaker], 'Can you look at this?' and correct any errors." She emphasized, "that's been a big piece of who I am as an immersion, specifically an immersion leader."

Regarding second language use, Ruby declared that what she expects from her teachers is, "You do your best, and we learn from each other but I know you are not going to be perfect." She also believes in modeling this collaboration and the use of the target language, which is the school policy, in front of the students to provide them with the best model possible. However she let teachers speak the language of their choosing in the lounge or during staff meetings to avoid having someone criticizing somebody else's language skills either in English or L2. In her previous schools she observed "it does tend to be a little bit of an issue in immersion schools where there is the native versus nonnative … little bit of tension."

Ruby stated that one of her roles is to protect teachers from parents' "unrealistic expectations of what their child should know in the second language and what the teacher should know in the second language" because "many of the parents are not bilingual so they don't understand how much it takes to learn a second language and how long it takes and that you're not going to know everything." As an example she wrote in the August 2012 school newsletter addressing results from the spring state testing in English, "It is expected that students in an immersion program will lag behind their English-only peers for a short period of time."

As an instructional leader she asserted that her function first consists in curriculum purchasing, joking that "it doesn't mean that the teachers like everything I choose" especially in math. However, she believes in using authentic materials in teaching and is dedicated at finding such resources, "I am always looking for good, authentic literature for teachers to use in their units of inquiry, their thematic units that they teach as well as to use for reads-aloud and certainly for us to have in the library." She noted, "I'm the kind of principal who will be looking online for authentic [target language] literature … and I know in my previous jobs, I never had a principal who was interested in or would do that."

Next, Ruby is very active in professional development and training. She declared it is important for an immersion principal to stay informed by looking at research or attending workshops. She considers that professional development geared toward immersion is vital for teachers in her school, "As an immersion principal specifically, I work very hard to ensure our teachers have a lot of staff development that is specifically designed around what we know in terms of best practices in immersion and what research tells us." For instance, Ruby learned as a teacher that eliciting feedback was key, so she looked at providing "staff development opportunities to learn how to respond to students to elicit the best feedback." She warned that principals not always use topics covered in professional development session for the long run, therefore she makes sure

> We recycle what we learn, so teachers hear about some of the same research over, over, and over. We talk about corrective feedback every year because what I found when I was teaching was that often times we would have an in service and we would get great ideas, but we would never talk about it again.

Following a workshop on immersion that the whole staff attended for the main event and half of them attended the whole conference, she wrote in the school newsletter of November 2012, "I am very grateful for a dedicated staff that will work throughout a weekend to learn more about their profession and implement all they learn already the following week! This is extraordinary!"

Conducting both formative and summative teacher observations is another important role she accomplishes. She uses a teacher evaluation form that lists specific immersion items. She also relies on her previous teaching experience. She commented:

> I can tell them [teachers] … these are the kind of things you need to be doing in your classroom to ensure that students are acquiring language at a high level and I am able to ask those kinds of questions to see what the teachers are doing and then give advice based on my own experience.

Immersion education

Ruby declared that "immersion education is the single best way to acquire a second language level of fluency." Although she has seen students in upper grades struggling with complex topics in science and social studies in the second language, she firmly believes that the way to "address that issue of limited vocabulary and limited grammar by upper elementary [is] to give them a more profound and a more intense language experience." Therefore, she is adamant about using the target language not only in the classroom, but also all around the school, "We [want] students to walk into the building and leave their English environment and English home behind." The use of L2 includes pull-out programs and extracurricular activities provided after school to increase student vocabulary, because:

I believe that if students have that exposure to technical language … that will help them when they are reading; it will help them when they are doing other higher level thinking skills in [the target language] and it also just gives them that much more language. They're exposed to language all day when they are at our school and many immersion programs are not able to do that.

She always tries to hire bilingual staff in every area of the school to give students more ways to hear the target language. To show case the high level of proficiency in L2 students reach at the end of their studies, Ruby wrote in the school newsletter of April 2013 that students in 6th grade must "use all they have learned … to research a topic of their choice in depth. Students synthesize their research findings into a polished presentation using the … [L2] skills they have acquired over seven years of immersion education."

Ruby summarized her constant leadership involvement in the immersion program when she declared:

As an immersion leader, I am very protective of the classroom environment, I am very protective of the language, and I am a mission driven leader, very fiercely mission driven… So that to me is the single most important thing as an immersion leader is to protect that immersion model and to live out our mission and our mission is very focused on immersion… I am very protective of the immersion model and that to me is what might be different in terms of my leadership style.

Therefore, she takes every opportunity during the day to use the target language, for instance to make announcements or presentations. The mission statement of the school is prominently displayed in two languages on the school website homepage and is explained

in detail on one of the subpages. There is also on that page a paragraph that states that full immersion programs are effective ways to develop foreign language skills.

Ruby bemoaned that other immersion principals do the opposite regarding the immersion model, "I see administrators trying to put more English in the classroom because, well they're really not gonna get it if it's in the second language" when in fact she considers that students need more of the target language; "that's why they can't learn high-level content in fifth and sixth grade because we haven't prepared them for it." She compares adding English in an immersion program to the achievement gap in education caused by disparities in students' socio-economical background.

> What I feel is that why would we create that gap in immersion, why would we not give them all of the vocabulary and background knowledge we possibly can in the second language to prepare them for learning in the second language high-content area … because if we don't do that, then we are creating the exact same scenario.

Ruby strongly believes that the target language needs to dominant at school without having to worry about students picking up English, this in turn will put all the students on an equal footing for learning the target language and will allow them to reach a better mastery of the language.

> So in my view it should be the opposite, they are going to get English, they have English everywhere around them, we do teach English but if we start squeezing English in every little opportunity because we're afraid then we're not been true to the immersion model. That's where I say if school leaders don't have passion about immersion, they should not be leading the school because they'll start to do

those things and it diminishes the language and it diminishes the students' ability to understand the content at the level they should understand it.

Even for the state mandated assessments in English, she replied,

I believe that if we give them [the students] a stronger base in the second language, which is the language of instruction, their English will do better; but if we keep putting more English into their day, well then what you have is you're teaching science and math in a second language and that language isn't strong enough for the high content that happens in fifth and sixth grade. If we do a good job of giving them a strong base in the second language, then they're are able to do higher level work that is addressing the standards in fifth and sixth grade and consequently of they'll do better on those assessments.

In some cases she sees a possible benefit of using some English: "without interfering with our [target language] environment … [teachers] might introduce some vocabulary during English time through spelling or something like math vocabulary or they send it home and ask the parents to reinforce that."

Another important task for the leader to promote this immersion model is to visit classrooms on a regular basis and to interact with students in the hallway or by the bus stop, because she thinks "It's very important that they all see me every day." Contact and visibility are important to model the use of the target language, "I want them to know that their school leaders are bilingual, and we are interacting in the language and it's not only just the classroom teacher that interacts with them in the language." Ruby contended it is important for developing student language skills that they hear a variety of people using the target language "And that's good for them to hear that early on and even expressions

we use and certain vocabulary words we use can vary and they learn that just by interacting with us."

Ruby also finds it is very important for students to associate the target language with their classroom teacher. In order to achieve that goal, students have English instruction with a different teacher than the homeroom teacher. She explained, "I would love to have an English specialist, but the next best thing is to have them switch classes for English." She strives to have teachers from various countries because "native speakers from the different parts of the world all sound different and that's good for [students] to hear that early on." The school has an internship program to bring in for a year student teachers from other countries speaking the target language. Having interns from other nations is very beneficial; students not only get to hear the language, but also learn about the culture of that country. "They'll do activities in the classroom related to their country and they teach the kids a little bit about their culture." Extracurricular cultural activities are announced in the school newsletter on a regular basis. For instance, in the releases of October and November 2012, and December 2013, the school newsletters publicized either a visual art exhibit, a musical performance, or a cultural event.

Challenges

Among other challenges Ruby faces, aside from using the target language in school as much as possible, she reported that "hiring quality teachers is huge" because of the crucial role they play in the school. She recognizes "there is a lot that is expected from an immersion teacher"; they have to be proficient in the second language and "also have the expertise in elementary education and also be able to deal with parents and have

that cultural component." To be qualified, teachers have to pass a licensing test that can be difficult for nonnative speakers of English because "there are some cultural biases, and then it's just a… it's a language issue." They can be hired on a provisional license, but "might only be here for a year [although] they are excellent teachers." Ruby lamented, "In the minds of many legislators the best teacher is the one who can pass that test, that's going to make them a better teacher and it's just not."

Although her school does not have the same financial incentive as surrounding district, she noted it has other advantages: "What we find is we are attracting teachers who really like our model" and "we have a lot of diversity in our staff in terms of [L2] native speakers and English … so those candidates who are native speakers of [L2] feel very comfortable here because there's a good balance of both." However, she claimed that the competition to hire bilingual personnel becomes tougher because there are an increasing number of immersion programs in the area. For all these reasons, she declared that hiring the best qualified teacher "is perhaps the single biggest challenge."

In closing, she stated that passion is what makes the difference between a good school and a great one:

> I think to be really effective you have to be passionate about immersion
> education. You can have a program that has a teacher or a principal who is not
> passionate about it and it will be successful but it won't be great. I think it'll be
> great if the leader is really passionate about it.

Matilda Chimay

Background

Matilda has always been the principal of the full immersion program. After being an assistant principal in a non-immersion school for a year, she was assigned to the immersion program when it became a school of its own after being on the verge of shutting down. Under her leadership, the program regained vitality with two classes at each grade level and is still expanding.

From a very young age, Matilda has been interested in studying languages, saying, "I had this love for languages." During the course of her studies, she had opportunities to travel and study in different countries, completing an undergraduate degree and then a graduate degree in linguistics. After working at the college level, she discovered through volunteer work that she enjoyed teaching younger students and related well with them, developing a passion for education. So, she decided to switch to education and to pursue studies in educational policies and administration.

After getting a teaching license, she worked as a classroom teacher in a non-immersion setting. She was noticed for her good classroom management skills with struggling students, prior to being offered an administrative position. After a year as an assistant principal, Matilda was assigned to this immersion school because she could speak the target language and was licensed. She has an excellent command of the language of instruction, albeit not as a native speaker. This is the only interview I conducted in one sitting, it lasted 78 minutes.

Leadership

Matilda describes her leadership style as being distributed leadership. "I try to be a distributive leader," a leader who facilitates the work of the teachers. Distributed or shared leadership is similar to empowering leadership as described by Reitzug (1994) because the leader is in the process of supporting, facilitating, and creating possibilities for teachers. "My practice is for the most part: I ask a lot of questions and I try to provide the resources as much as I can, and I let the teachers figure out the answers." At times she is also a resource herself because teachers need help with teaching strategies. She is "like a consultant." She thinks this approach is very positive for the school "because people believe that they have buy-in in the decisions that are being made." It is also important they feel they are being heard regardless of the outcome, "they know at least they are being consulted and the principal is not dictatorian." In the document *End of the Year Meeting/Planning for Tenured Teachers 2011*, she asked teachers to "Please give me three suggestions for next year in terms of student achievement, school climate and promoting a Professional Learning Community (PLC)."

During a meeting with the head custodian and the lead secretary that took place while I visited the school, she let them do most of the talking while she was listening and taking notes. During another meeting with a 6th grade teacher, Matilda attentively listened, nodded, probed, coached, helped, encouraged, provided support, smiled, had open communication, used a calm voice, had a professional demeanor, allowed the teacher to vent about parents, was positive, and reinforced rules and procedures. The teacher left the meeting happy. Later she had a meeting with four 2nd grade teachers and

entrust them about curricular issues by explaining her rationale but leaving it to them to proceed.

Matilda sees the role of the principal as the instructional leader providing guidance and leadership, "You have to know the system, you also have to know … I'll say *the nuances and the control* of your teachers, because the teachers make it happen," and the principal cannot be in every classroom all the time. To achieve this, "You have to set the purpose, and you have to set the direction, and then the rest you leave it to the people" but not tell them how to do it because

> People come to us with different skills, experiences and background. And some of
>
> them can move from point A to B in a straight line, some need a zigzagging line
>
> to get there. Some need to go there in circles. If you have all these people, [and]
>
> you tell them to go on a straight line, you will be missing out on a very big
>
> opportunity for your students to learn.

Similarly, she observed that professional development must be differentiated in order to accommodate the different teacher styles: "So you have to understand your teachers, the way you differentiate instruction in the classroom for your students, you have to differentiate professional development also for the teachers." Teachers have several opportunities during the year to attend professional development training for immersion educators. They also meet twice a week on the principle of PLC to discuss student learning. During the visit, she also repeated that staff development is very important in immersion programs.

Matilda advised that a principal has to be aware of what is going on inside and outside the school:

So, in order to be effective really, you have to listen to the pulse of your building, you have to know what is going on in the classroom, you have to know who is going around the classroom, you have to know what is going on in the playground, and also sometimes, knowing what is going on outside of the school building.

This requires for Matilda to be involved in the community and "to be the greatest cheerleader for your school." For her it is important to collaborate with parents. She said to a parent that "working together will help the child succeed." With another parent she was very open to the parent questions and eager to answer. Within the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) of the school, there is even a Communication Committee that, according to the minutes of the September 12, 2013, monthly meeting is "working on internal Public Relations communications and adding content to the [school] Website [with the] goal to get positive attention in the community and to spotlight the school."

Matilda proposed that other important characteristics in order to be an effective leader are, "You have to understand instruction; you have to understand the curriculum; you have to understand assessment and how to use data… to form your instruction and planning." In a meeting with four 2nd grade teachers, she was knowledgeable about math and the curriculum in general.

She stated that the difference between a regular school and an immersion program is "You have to know where your resources are and how to tap them. What are in a regular school resources are right there. People are coming to you with the resources, whereas I have to go look for." Resources include people or material. Each year, this school has an intern program that consists in employing for a year student teachers from

other countries who are native speakers of the target language as teacher aides in the classrooms. This program requires a lot of resources to pay the organization that selects them and to find two host families per intern, one for each semester. This school also has an exchange program with an elementary school from a country with native speakers of the target language. Fifth grade students have the opportunity to visit that country and host a student from that country.

Matilda declared the school mission is very important: "We keep it as our core guidance; it's our guidepost for whatever we do. We want our kids to succeed in a multilingual, global community, and we make sure that whatever we do, we are looking at that." The school mission is prominently displayed on the school website, although not on the homepage but on the *About* page with a full explanation along with the vision and the goals. It clearly states that the target language enriches the curriculum. The goals include not only mastering the curriculum, achieving competencies in the target language and gaining an understanding and appreciation for other cultures, but also enhancing critical thinking and English skills.

Matilda believes in promoting a positive school climate by focusing on the positive instead of the negative:

> By acknowledging what people are doing; we do not dwell on the negative. They are a lot of things I don't like but instead of saying I don't like this, I don't like this, I talk about what I like, the things that are working.

She demonstrated this during a meeting with the head custodian and the lead secretary when she acknowledged the custodian for connecting with kids which is "important to learning." At another time, she complimented the secretary for the way she

handled the school pictures. Matilda also mentioned that people who love their job are being more involved. At the end of that meeting, she made sure that everyone was on the same page.

During lunch hours, she had a meeting with parents to help their child improve. Matilda showed interest in the parents' concerns and made sure that "we work together" to help the child succeed. During another meeting with a 5th grade teacher, she started with something positive. She also was frank and supportive. At one point she even stopped in the nurse's office to check on a student who was feeling sick.

In her welcome address posted on the school website, Matilda emphasized the importance of the positive environment writing that, "We are committed to offering a relevant educational experience for your child in a warm, safe, and welcoming environment."

Immersion education

Matilda expressed that immersion is important because the world is becoming flat, according to Friedman, and knowing other languages is a necessity. "As Friedman said in his book … there is more need now for global understanding, and the 21st century educational model does not give you a lot if you do not communicate in more than one language." In her opinion immersion education is "a great way to educate students" because "they are constantly focusing, they are thinking, they are absorbing, they are comparing and contrasting, those are higher-order thinking skills."

She also contended that immersion education fosters "global understanding and appreciation for own culture," especially for students coming from bilingual homes who are enrolled in a language immersion program where they learn a third language. "Those

who have gone through this program appreciate their own language, they are proud to promote it, and they also have a heightened sense of self-consciousness and social justice." On the school website Matilda wrote that with the immersion curriculum, students are prepared for "an increasingly competitive and evolving global economy, but we are giving them the tools to better understand the world and live in harmony with their fellow human beings."

According to her, another benefit of attending an immersion school is information processing ability:

> It gives you better avenues to process information; … the most important thing is making sure those students know how to think and process information … that's how we are getting them ready for the 21st century and immersion does a very good job at doing that. … What this does it expands their horizon in thinking; they don't think in one language anymore, they are thinking in multiple languages.

Matilda offered that language immersion can help students with Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity (ADHD) because "they have to focus harder," which is what she declared to the parents of a student diagnosed with this disorder. Parents can also benefit from learning the target language by attending language classes for parents twice a week.

She urged it is important for the leader of an immersion school to know the target language (L2) for several reasons, first to be an instructional leader rather than just a manager:

Make sure that you are an instructional leader if you speak the language of the instruction because somebody was telling me, "we have people who run immersion schools who don't speak the language," I say: "They manage immersion schools; they do not *lead* the immersion school because how can you be an instructional leader if you don't speak the language of instruction?"

Second, to be able to use the target language throughout the school to model it to students:

When they come to your office they should hear it, when they go to lunch they should hear it. And you can do that better if you as the principal speak the language also. Everything is expressed and that's what the kids can see and be modeled.

Throughout the day at her school, Matilda continually used the target language to talk to students and teachers. She recognized this is a constant challenge to teach the content in the target language because it would be easier to use English. However, doing so would be detrimental to students learning the second language because they would eventually wait until they get the explanations in English instead of making the effort to understand the language of instruction. Moreover, this effort in turn increases their critical thinking skills:

Sometimes they [the nonnative teachers] want to revert back [*sic*] to their language [English], to make it easier on the kids. A child is troubled and not getting the content, you want to just explain it. But then when you do that, the student will wait and will not work harder.

Third, speaking the language helps in hiring teachers, which is also a challenge in an immersion school, because candidates must be both good teachers and able to teach in the target language.

> Sometimes you get somebody who really speaks the language but doesn't understand the system and the pedagogy is not there. And sometimes you get somebody who really understands the system, is trained in the system, knows the pedagogy but the language is their limitation.

To find teachers, she is constantly reaching out in the community or looking on the internet.

Challenges

In addition to hiring teachers, Matilda explained that managing resources is another challenge in an immersion setting because not only, "kids don't qualify for free and reduced lunch for the most part, so immersion schools do not get a lot of money" but also "books cost like almost three times the same title in English," concluding, "with limited resources it is like a double whammy."

Matilda noted that parents with children in immersion schools are usually very educated; therefore, as a principal, "you have to also know the latest and greatest in education" to be able to answer questions they may have. Parents are becoming increasingly demanding regarding school programs, which she compares to running a high school. This is something she did not expect to find when starting this job—what she sums up to "you meet the demands of your clientele, and the demands are increasing forever."

Matilda remarked that it takes a lot to lead an immersion school, but her attitude is to stay positive and open. "And people ask me, 'How do you do it?' I say, you know, I just take every day as a new learning experience.'" She gave the example of a colleague of hers who ran a traditional school for several years before being placed in charge of an immersion school that she left after at the end of the first year.

Other challenges include understanding all the possible consequences of decisions made for all the stakeholders:

> You have to be politically savvy also to run an immersion school like this, and you have to know the law, you have to know the law because things will come at you when you least expect that. So you have to understand all of the ramifications of the decisions that you make, you can't just make a decision of the heart.

Reflecting about her job, Matilda said, "As much [as] it is challenging, it is very, very rewarding cause you are adding on to something that is very unique." Nonetheless it has to be something that the person really enjoys. She insisted:

> Leadership in immersion schools is more than a job. It has to be a mission, it has to be a desire of the person to believe in it. You cannot just lip-sync it, you cannot just talk about it, you have to be involved, you have to be passionate about it.

Stella Pelforth

Background

Stella Pelforth has worked as a principal in other immersion schools before being offered the position in the immersion program I visited. She is not a native speaker, but had exposure to the target language (L2) at a young age and travelled abroad several times either to study or for leisure; as a result, she has an excellent command of the

language of instruction. She also has some knowledge of at least two other foreign languages. As a teenager she enjoyed learning languages in an immersion setting rather than a traditional one, "I was interested in languages but I wasn't necessarily excited about the traditional foreign language approach." Nevertheless, she first started working in education as a foreign language teacher before becoming an immersion teacher for several years. Then, she worked in school administration at the secondary level before being hired as an immersion principal and serving in several elementary immersion schools. I conducted the interview in two sittings due to her participation in a conference, the first one occurred at the beginning of the day and the second one during lunch break. It lasted a total of 91 minutes, which is the longest interview of this study.

Leadership

Stella's leadership style is very collaborative, "The key things for me would be collaboration, transparency, what you see is what you get." Moreover, she noted "I never enjoyed working in a top down environment and so I really try my best to not institute one." She stated it is very important for the environment that people sense "there is more trust, there is more collaboration" among them and with the principal. "I truly believe that we have to work together" especially when "the budgets get tighter and tighter, the demands become greater and greater, we have more standards, we have power standards, we have, more high stakes testing." She believes there needs to be "a lot of collaboration … to create a vibrant learning environment where everybody feels valued but also with high expectations to become better." In the school newsletter of September 13, 2013, she wrote:

My vision as your principal is nothing less than to create the best immersion

school program in the country. To bring that vision to life, I will start by

collaborating with teachers, staff, and students to define our strengths as well as

the most important opportunities for growth.

Stella also declared, "The other piece for me that's really important is to

collaborate with the community so that we're not such a mystery, so that I need to be

visible out in the community so that people … understand … what's going on." On

September 6, 2013, she wrote in the school newsletter:

I am committed to improving my communication with the community because I

believe in open dialogue and the pursuit of the … mission - All for All - in

partnership with you. I promise to give you my all and will ask for your help.

On October 4, 2013, she wrote, "The key to becoming the best immersion school possible

is harnessing the great spirit of our community." Stella underscores that an effective

principal cannot stay in a distance to lead the school; on the contrary,

You have to be present, you have to be willing to be in the group, you have to be

no matter what your own personality is they have to see you being a participant,

you have to be out there, be present.

Collaboration also means for her working with other principals in non-immersion

schools:

We work very closely together as a team, and what we figured out is this: that if

we collaborate quite honestly modeling the professional learning community …

we work more efficiently and we are able to sustain each other; being a principal

is a very lonely job, it's not fun to be working all by yourself.

I had the opportunity to witness that collaboration during a district conference at her school where she met with two other principals, including one from a Middle School.

Stella acknowledged that collaboration with the district office personnel is necessary but takes another dimension, "They know I'm a collaborative person but they also know that my job is advocating for immersion". When the district proposes a new initiative or program, she often asks, "Now tell me, how's this gonna play out in immersion?" Overall, she said, "An immersion leader first of all has to advocate for the whole process, you advocate and you educate." On October 21, 2013, she made a speech on the value of immersion education at the school board meeting.

Stella believes that the school mission "needs to be very clear to all, everybody in the school, so we're all working towards the same end because otherwise you have people going off on their own because they believe one thing or the other." In immersion programs, some decisions can raise philosophical discussions "where we go back to the mission: Is our mission to be the best immersion school we can possibly be? And we know full well there is an element of culture that goes there." She observed this element can be significant in regard to L2 proficiency. "We'll all agree on what seems like minute details, but they are very important to us as far as elevating the level of language and education that the kids come out with." The mission statement of the school can be found on one of the subpages along with the beliefs and student goals. There is no mention of the name of the target language in the statement, but it is associated with the school name on each page. There is also a full page of explanation on language immersion with links to resources.

Stella believes that professional development is so important that "we've also decided that staff meeting should be professional development opportunities." For instance, she wrote in the school newsletter on September 6, 2013, that "[the school] is a professional learning community [PLC] and all the grade levels will meet as collaborative teams to learn from each other, to review data, to monitor student progress and share instructional strategies." One of her strategies to provide quality professional development is to send teachers observe classrooms in other immersion schools with a different L2 because "when immersion teachers go and observe another language being taught, they put themselves in the place of the immersion learner." She added that professional development is a careful balance between what teachers requested and what they do not know they need.

> Professional development is best delivered when all of the staff is afforded the opportunity to say this is what I need and at the same time they might identify things that they didn't know they needed; but if you introduce it to them, they are grateful they were exposed to it, but it has to be interactive.

Stella tries to send teachers in teams to immersion conferences because she noticed it is "a powerful experience to have a common experience because what I find is staff development is this: that the more common the experiences the more the more power we get out of it." On October 31, 2012, she reported in the school newsletter that she attended an immersion conference with a group of teachers to share their common experience, "Last week I joined a team of six teachers -- one representative from each grade level -- in [another country to attend their] Immersion Teachers conference."

Stella conceded that an immersion school is not very different from a non-immersion school. "There is just one other little layer; I don't think that's much different, no I don't." She explained, "The ultimate responsibility that the administrator has is to make sure that every child comes to a safe environment to learn every single day and that we're doing our best to meet student needs."

Stella believes she has an important role to play in modeling desired behaviors. She observed that as "administrators …we have to be responsible for setting the tone for the building, setting the standards, being encouraging and also for … if we want teachers to follow through, then we have to be the model that follows through. If we want teachers to communicate well, then we have to communicate well." She remarked that being a good communicator is helpful, especially on a short notice, "It helps if you are a strong writer and a strong speaker because at the drop of a pin you'll be asked to do both at any times and you have to feel comfortable doing that."

Stella commented that one of her daily tasks is anticipation of the events punctuating the school life along with time management, "you try stay ahead of things, you try to communicate ahead of time." The other important task is visibility by being in the hallways on a regular basis because "part of my presence in the building is keeping that level of quality high. I have to be visible in the hallways happy about being in the immersion experience."

Immersion education

Stella believes that immersion is important. "When you choose immersion, you simply are choosing to activate more of your brain then is activated when you are monolingual." She stated that as a result, "Children become extremely adept at problem

solving and construing comprehension." She added that "the other reason that it's very important in my mind is the rest of the world is bilingual or trilingual now ..., we want all of our children to be adequately prepared … and speaking multiple languages." The main reason for her is that children can learn other languages easily in immersion: "It's a natural learning process and why not take advantage of it?" She asserted that it is crucial to understand the potential of immersion to lead competently an immersion program, "You have to be a believer in how incredibly powerful the immersion learning experiences is."

Stella offered that, "the main piece for an administrator in an immersion school is to be able to go into the classroom and remember what it's like to engage children in the learning process in a second language." She believes that prior teaching experience in an immersion setting is necessary: "It's extremely important for the immersion leader to have a lot of recent hands-on experience and to be able to go into the classroom and experience exactly what it's like to keep those kids with you." She reported that children in immersion learn to decode words quickly but may not understand what they just read. Because she has teaching experience in immersion, Stella even goes into classrooms as a substitute teacher, which is very helpful when there is nobody available to fill in. She suggested that substituting is

> an incredibly effective and efficient way to do some teacher evaluation because a) you see the culture of the class first hand; you have experience on how they prepare their lessons; you get a lot of insight when you're able to go in and actually be a substitute in the classroom.

Moreover, Stella advised that knowledge of the L2 is essential, "I personally feel that it's important for the administrator to speak the target language." Her reasoning is, "As the administrator you have to set the model, in other words if I know that clearly I should be speaking with my teachers in the school entirely in [the target language] all the time." Even when English-speaking parents are in the hallway, she underscored it is important to model the use of the target language in front of the students, justifying her attitude by saying:

> If they [the parents] want to speak to me about something where we need to speak in English then I motion them to come to my office and come away from the hallway because those conversations need to be confidential and there's no need for the kids to have that additional English going on in the hallway.

Stella wrote in the September 6, 2012, school newsletter, "Everyone is making a concerted effort to speak [the target language] all the time to provide students a nurturing learning environment." In the same newsletter she also announced "our new school anthem" in the target language written by one of the teachers on a piece composed by the music teacher. With her mastery of the target language, she reported "I've been able to do is being more actively involved in curriculum development and to be more actively involved in seeing how we can put the pieces of the puzzle together to better support an immersion environment because … I understand what it's like to be in the classrooms … and I speak the language."

The cultural piece is important for Stella because it is closely associated with the language component. She observed, "They have to go together." This school also have a large number of interns from countries speaking the target language who stay at the

school for one year. They work in the classrooms as teacher assistants, but they also conduct different activities related to the language or the culture. Stella sees internship program as "a huge benefit as far as infusing… infusing the culture of many different areas into instruction." For instance, she wrote in the school newsletter of January 30, 2013, that "Interns [at our school] deepen immersion" to highlight to parents who help pay for the interns the importance of those interns' contribution to the cultural experience in the program. The school organizes several cultural presentations in the target language during the year and advertises events for children related to the target language in the school newsletter and on the website.

Stella believes that the first quality of an effective immersion principal is "to understand how powerful it is to be a very good listener," not only with teachers to know where they are coming from, because "in an immersion environment people are coming from a multiple number of directions," but also with parents as well because "immersion parents are high maintenance, I don't know anything different." Those parents want to participate in their child education and the life of the school, "they need to be involved so you have to be patient and you have to understand that." Some parents can be critical about the leadership of the school:

> You have to be willing to hear criticism and understand that it's not personal, they're expressing a concern that they have for their child so you have to be a good listener, you also have to be open minded … and the flipside of that is you also have to be a decision-maker.

She cautioned that making decisions can have unexpected consequences, "You have to be willing to make mistakes and understand that you have to own those mistakes."

Stella commented that an effective immersion leader has "to become very very good at assessing how do parents like to be informed without eroding the immersion environment" so they can understand the learning process of a foreign language, especially when a child is struggling and parents get discouraged. In this case the principal has:

To be able to help them understand the role that learning in a second language plays … [because] even if you just strip away the layer of the second language it doesn't mean that the learning process is going to be any easier for a child who is having difficulty.

For that the principal has "to have a keen love for kids and the tenacity to be incredibly patient and willing to never give up on any child for any reason, never give up on any child and sometimes that's hard."

Challenges

Stella stated, "I think the most enormous challenge that we have as immersion administrators is making sure we have the highest quality staff that remains motivated and willing to improve their craft" as years go by. To achieve that goal, the immersion principal must "be able to manage the environment with transparency, trust, [and] compassionate guidance." She believes that advocating and educating again are very important for the school and for teachers because "it makes a difference in teachers coming to work and being inspired and knowing that they are valued and coming to work with: 'I love what I do' versus 'I have to do this job'."

Another challenge for Stella is to "parse out your time as an instructional leader" because of the demand of the position, "You can be tied up 24/7 responding to the urgent

needs that come across your desk." She cautioned that an effective principal has "to delegate more …; you can't do it all and to believe you can do in all is disastrous: you can't." Therefore, "one of the most critical things for me to operate at a very high level is having the secretary or the administrative assistant be extremely gifted and understand immersion." Leaving administrative tasks to that person frees time from the office, thus "allow[ing] you to be more predominantly the instructional leader."

Stella emphasized that getting teaching materials in the target language is another challenge, so "if you're a good immersion administrator, you figure out how to manage your budget and go get them." However she stressed that quality is more desirable than quantity,

> In immersion my theory has always been to tell the teachers "It's not how much you do but it's the quality of the work that you do with the material." And so I frequently will say to them, "In immersion we need to be able to make sure that rather than just covering content that we're intentionally building language skills through content so it's a question of not doing more but doing less and doing it better."

She indicated that teachers have to be mindful of the way their address cultural differences. There is a pitfall that is important to avoid: "In an immersion environment we have to be careful of is to not promote stereotypes," so when they compare and contrast different countries with their state "so that they understand that there is a more global aspect."

In closing, Stella warned being a principal in an immersion school is very demanding. "You can get overwhelmed by the job. You have to remember to celebrate

'cause there is a series of small successes that are happening all the time and sometimes we forget to acknowledge those successes and celebrate those successes." She continued saying, "You have to take care of yourself so you have enough energy to do that, it takes a lot of energy … and you have to stay true to what you believe. … You have to love your job and above all—I should have mentioned this first—above all you have to believe that you can make this really a wonderful way of learning for kids."

She maintained her job, although very challenging, has nevertheless a positive side, "It's an extremely stimulating community to live in because there's so much learning going on at so many levels and despite all of the challenges that we have in delivering immersion education, really, really wonderful things are happening." She concluded by noting, "Everybody that I ever known that's the leader of an immersion school has benefited greatly from the experience … [and] are true believers and passionate about the impact that we have on students' lives."

Killian Krieg

Background

Killian Kriek started working in immersion as an administrator when the district launched the dual-language program a few years ago. As a student, he had an interest in international relations, but switched to education after having done volunteer work in some schools. He worked first as a foreign language teacher in middle school and high school becoming "very fascinated with the idea of the whole process of how do you successfully facilitate second-language acquisition." Then he taught English as a Second Language at the elementary level. Finally, he participated in the process of launching the

new immersion school as a grant coordinator before becoming the school principal, his first position as a principal. He is fully bilingual.

I conducted the interview with Killian in three sittings over two hours because he attended a district meeting held in the central office and then he had urgent work to finish. This interview took place predominantly in his office, with the exception of the second part that I administrated in his car while he was driving. This interview lasted a total of 44 minutes, the shortest interview of this study.

Leadership

Killian declared he has a shared leadership model in which he sees himself as the principal "but the leader of the school is the vision that we've set as a school … is what, really in times of difficult decisions drives our decisions as a school in terms of the direction that we go." To promote his shared leadership philosophy, "I believe very much in working at developing leadership across the staff and creating capacity for leadership, as much as possible." He explained, "One of the ways we do that is the idea of responding to the needs of others and really working collaboratively." To establish that collaboration there needs to be respect and caring among teachers because language immersion is "a very difficult model to deliver at a high level … for us to do our best work it needs to be done in a collaborative environment." This requires from teachers to have

> Very open relationships with colleagues, to be able to have conversations focused
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> on student achievement, and being willing to be uncomfortable at times, to be
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> willing to have respect for difference of opinion, and find a way to build
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> consensus, and to work collaboratively, is really my belief that we need.

As a principal he can facilitate this process by "protect[ing] time and resources for that collaboration work to happen." Killian also remarked that it is important to have a good administrative team and then spread the collaboration to teachers. Collaborative team meetings are scheduled weekly along with other team meetings.

In his opinion,

All principals engage basically in the same work of trying to articulate a vision to their staff and to empower staff members and to get everyone to see their role, in the large organization. The big difference with immersion is that the vision is different. Our angle is bilingualism and biliteracy and cultural competence so the roadmap that we get to that goal needs to be different in some ways from a traditional school.

Killian suggested that "probably what differentiates immersion leadership from traditional leadership in schools, maybe more so than anything else, is the need for continually—the words that we use are educating and advocating." Therefore, as an immersion school principal,

You are continually educating, kind of all of your community regarding what this, what this immersion experience is like and why it makes a difference and why it's important, and how help them understand what that process looks like as kids move through the programs.

Educating the community is necessary because very few people have been through an immersion school. Because of their lack of background knowledge, they cannot relate easily to this type of programs:

I think that's one of the biggest challenges is trying to articulate a vision for

something that frequently people in the United States had not that educational

experience so they are not working with the same background information that

you are working with, so being able to communicate to all the stakeholders groups

is probably one of the largest responsibilities of an immersion administrator that

would distinguish you from a traditional administrator.

He warned, "There are many misperceptions that can emerge around immersion

programs … and it just is extremely important to be communicating that it's a program

that serves all kids."

Killian added that another characteristic of an effective immersion leader, besides

"that ability to educate and advocate on an ongoing basis," is

the ability to privilege the use of immersion language in your building, and create

clear parameters and policies that support development and improvement of the

immersion language cause what we find is that, in the United State anyhow, any

language that is up against English has kind of its work cut out for it.

He pointed out that modeling the use of the target language is critical because "one of the

most important things that drives the student ability to grow in the language is being very

disciplined about modeling the language." Throughout the visit, he constantly spoke the

target language with students and staff members. On the use of the target language, he

insisted that "our overall success of immersion program is really contingent on our ability

to privilege, the term used is privilege, the partner language and the immersion language

in the school environment." In this school, the office personnel speak the target language.

Killian believes he needs to stay up-to-date with research on language acquisition "to bring as recent information as possible to our staff and make instructional adjustments to our instructional model based on what the emerging research is telling us" and educating parents about the phases of language acquisition and what to expect is key. His primary roles are "to create again the conditions for our teachers to do their best work … [and] keeping everyone's focus on that language acquisition piece."

To promote a positive learning environment, Killian implemented the Responsive Classroom Approach that "focuses on cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy and self-control." He stressed the need to be proactive by having the adults consistently demonstrating the desired behaviors expected of the students. He also argued that one of his main responsibilities as a principal to foster a climate conducive to learning is "to be a learner and to be engaged in the learning process alongside our staff to really be creating a culture of learning and modeling." In the school bulletins, he regularly posted quotes about teaching and learning while addressing immersion best practices. For example on February 5, 2011, he wrote that cooperative learning is "the number one strategy that comes up time and time again in the literature of schools that are successful in producing high achievement for diverse learner groups …. It is also considered a foundational pedagogical practice for immersion education as well." On May 6, 2011, he wrote about an article "by the immersion guru Myriam 'Mimi' Met … [that] speaks [in the fifth paragraph] to the importance of providing frequent and varied opportunities for students to articulate their knowledge in the immersion languages to not only the teacher but their peers as well" (for the complete article see http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/acie/vol6/Nov2002_LangGrowth.html).

Killian posited that another important role of the immersion principal is to be an instructional leader, and "as an instructional leader I find it necessary for me to be in the classrooms, observing what's happening, providing feedback to the staff members, and identifying the needs that are emerging in the building." In particular, when he does classroom observations he said, "I am not observing necessarily their classroom practice … I am looking for patterns that emerge from across the school."

For Killian the school mission is crucially important in "helping people understand that our purpose is … to create these bilingual, bicultural, biliterate, multicultural, I should say, children." He explained,

> I think it helps us all understand how all of our work fits together, and the importance of coordinating our efforts cause it's certainly, as you know, language learning takes time and it's—each grade level, each staff member plays a really important role in getting us to where we need to be so helping folks kind of understand how their efforts are connected—it's critical.

He concluded by repeating, "I would say that the mission is incredibly important." The school mission is displayed on the school webpage as a subpage; the vision and goals are written in English and in the target language.

Killian claimed that the other big piece is linguistic and cultural equity that "needs to be pervasive, pervasive and systematic through your school for the school to truly serve all of the students and families." He declared that they started a yearlong conversation around that theme to implement equitable classroom practices. He believes that the way to achieve it is to

Continually being critical and looking at things through that [equity] lens, and saying: is it a practice that's going to benefit all our students or is it gonna to privilege certain students, and adversely affect other groups of students that aren't as privileged?

Immersion education

Killian believes that language immersion programs are important "for American students to be competitive … with respect to multilingual, multilingualism and bilingualism and cultural competence." This goal is made possible because "from a very young age, [students] are learning a very deep appreciation for cultures and the ability to discern between different cultural practices and reflect on their own culture practices." He explained that to facilitate that process, "We want to be able to teach as much as possible our core curriculum within the context of an authentic discovery of what the cultures are of the countries represented by the language." Killian wrote in the school newsletters of April 2011, "One of the central goals of our school and every immersion program is developing an appreciation of diverse cultures." In regard to the organization of a fair held at the school, he added, "The main objectives of our fair is to create awareness and appreciation of cultural traditions that include those of the [target language]-speaking world but that also include cultures from around the globe."

Regarding learning a second language at a young age in an immersion program, he also commented,

From the perspective of what we know about the brain and, and the brain's capacity to learn languages, I just feel that we are doing kids a disservice if we are not at least providing them the opportunity to develop more than one language

cause we know that students can absolutely be multilingual-- that their brains are not monolingual brains. So just from that perspective, I philosophically believe in immersion education.

He has seen students who attended language immersion programs obtain positive academic results. He expects to see cognitive benefits through academic achievement for students "who continued to be schooled through two languages or more, through the course of their education or for a period of time."

Challenges

Killian believes,

The challenge of an immersion administrator is looking at any district initiatives and understanding [that] priorities at the district level need to be our priorities; however, we first and foremost really need to be successful as an immersion school … and for our school to be effective we need to do immersion well, so really prioritizing professional development initiatives, curriculum decisions, materials, all of that within the context of what an immersion school is.

He observed that professional development, especially for new teachers, is "frequently underappreciated … that's hard to do and particularly in trying financial times" knowing that it needs to relate to their teaching position and to the nature of their work. He commented that in immersion, professional development has to address immersion classroom practice and language acquisition. "Our philosophy is that the best kind of professional development is what's called job embedded and ongoing" using the PLC model and "as an immersion administrator, you're always trying to find ways to build in the pieces around language acquisition."

Killian admitted that state tests are an issue because the assessment is not in the language of instruction, so "for immersion programs, we need to have ways to collect data about our program in more than one language so that you can show the whole picture of what's actually happening with bilingual development for students." To attempt to solve this issue, the school is developing a framework for program evaluation that includes both languages.

When reflecting on his job, Killian shared, "My experience's been very positive, I really can't say too many negatives in my personal experience." He nevertheless acknowledged that being an immersion school principal is challenging. "There is a lot of long hours; there is a big need for taking care of yourself and making sure that your needs are met, and you are protecting yourself in terms of time and energy", but at the same time his job is also very rewarding, "when you are able to see entire classes of kids become bilingual is, is pretty amazing." He concluded by noting, "I can't stress enough how rewarding it is … to see the process unfold, the magic that is an immersion classroom of kids becoming bilingual and multicultural altogether a, a classroom at the time is a very powerful experience."

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on effective immersion school leadership. The assumption was that those beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions directly influence their school's achievement of the distinctive goals of immersion programs in terms of the students' learning and the teachers' practices. Grounded on the principle that good leadership is essential to quality language immersion programs, this study sheds some light on specific elements that are influential to effective leadership in foreign language immersion schools. The results could help individuals understand the unique qualities and characteristics of effective language immersion school principals.

This chapter provides a cross-case analysis to highlight common elements among principals in their beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on leadership in language immersion programs. The results are then examined through the lens of Hallinger's (2010) model of instructional leadership. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

Cross-Case Analysis

Leadership

Despite differences in their backgrounds, program features, and work environments, the four principals in this case study share many beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions. They have different leadership styles, i.e., distributed or shared leadership for Matilda and Killian, teacher-leader for Ruby, and collaborative leadership for Stella. They nevertheless all hold the belief that they will be more successful if they involve teachers. As Matilda declared, "The teachers make it happen."

All the principals in this study recognized the need for educating and advocating, either verbatim or by using other words. Stella summarized by saying, "An immersion leader first of all has to advocate for the whole process; you advocate and you educate." Killian acknowledged this is a substantial challenge because "frequently people in the United States had not that educational experience." Matilda and Stella said it is important to be involved in the community "so that we're not such a mystery." For Ruby, communicating about language acquisition in immersion is essential for parents of students who are struggling. Those principals clearly expressed the need to promote their program among the public.

For each one of the four immersion principals, the school mission is crucial for keeping the program on the right track. As Killian stated, "the leader of the school is the vision that we've set as a school" and this vision ensures "we're all working towards the same end." They all said that modeling the use of the target language (L2) is an important role of their job while Ruby and Stella talked specifically about both being knowledgeable of language acquisition and prior teaching experience in immersion. The

school climate is another important domain for them to consider. Ruby and Stella use collaboration to promote a positive climate; Killian implemented the responsive classroom approach; and Matilda sets the focus on the positive happening in the school.

Killian and Stella reported that leading an immersion school is very similar to leading a non-immersion one, except for the language and culture piece. Matilda and Ruby believe being an immersion leader is more difficult and requires prior experience in learning a language or teaching in L2 or knowing where immersion resources are.

Immersion Education

All the principals have a keen interest, if not a passion, in immersion education or second language acquisition. Matilda elaborated, "You cannot just lip-sinc it, you cannot just talk about it, you have to be involved, you have to be passionate about it." Incidentally, they all have learned a second language that they taught in traditional language classrooms or immersion programs except for Matilda who comes from a multilingual environment but has never taught either one. The principals in the French immersion programs know at least a third language, while those in the Spanish programs know only Spanish.

The principals in the study all believe that learning another language in an immersion education is beneficial for several reasons. Matilda, Killian, and Stella observed students must learn other languages because, as Matilda explained, "There is more need now for global understanding, and the 21st century educational model does not give you a lot if you do not communicate in more than one language." Those three principals also think immersion education improves the development of the brain of the children, Stella affirmed:

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When you choose immersion, you simply are choosing to activate more of your

brain then is activated when you are monolingual. And brain researchers will tell

you when you speak multiple languages you develop multiple pathways in your

brain to actually manipulate information.

On the other hand, Ruby declared that the main advantage of immersion programs is to

reach a high proficiency level in a second language. "Immersion education is the single

best way to acquire a second language level of fluency." For Matilda a common

misconception about language immersion is to believe "that immersion is just about

learning a second language; it is not, because we teach content in a different language."

Unlike in traditional language classes, "you are understanding in science, you are

understanding in math, you have all these terms that people who are learning the new

language do not have."

Matilda and Killian offered that another reason immersion education is important

is students who have gone through immersion become more appreciative of their own

language and culture as well. Matilda noted, "Those who have gone through this program

appreciate their own language, they are proud to promote it, and they also have a

heightened sense of self-consciousness and social justice." Kilian suggested, "They

appreciate their own culture as well as other people's culture." Other benefits of

immersion education for Matilda, Killian, and Stella include cognitive skills and high

academic achievements. Stella explained, "Children become extremely adept at problem

solving and construing comprehension."

The four principals all underscored they must model the use of the target language

and make sure students hear the L2 the whole day. Matilda argued, "The kids also need

constant contact with the language." Killian described his role as "to really create an environment that is conducive to a higher level of language learning for the students in the program" while Ruby declared, "I also fiercely protect the language."

Challenges

All these principals alleged that professional development for immersion teachers is crucial emphasizing, for Matilda "you cannot afford to lose any professional development opportunity" or for Killian "prioritizing professional development initiatives" or for Ruby "we do a lot of recycling of our professional development" and for Stella "we've also decided that staff meeting should be professional development opportunities."

They all deemed that hiring teachers is difficult because teaching in an immersion classroom requires for teachers not only to be bilingual both in the target language and in English but also to be able to teach elementary students. This is more difficult than it looks: even experienced teachers who worked in other countries might have a hard time adjusting to American schools. There are also some problems with teacher certification because, as Ruby put it, "In the minds of many legislators the best teacher is the one who can pass that test." For candidates who are native speakers of L2, language issues can prevent them from passing even when experienced in their country of origin.

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Theoretical Framework Analysis

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In chapter one, I presented Hallinger's model (2010) of instructional leadership that he conceptualized in three dimensions: (1) defining the school mission, delineated into the functions of framing clear goals and communicating those goals; (2) managing the instructional programs, delineated into the functions of supervising and evaluating

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instruction, coordinating curriculum, and monitoring student progress; (3) promoting a positive school climate, delineated into the functions of protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentive for teachers, and providing incentive for learning (p. 65). For this analysis, I used NVivo (QSR International, 2012) to code the data; then I follow the same order to report it in the following section.

Dimension 1: Defining the school mission

The functions delineated in this dimension are framing and communicating clear school goals. Hallinger (2010) presented this dimension as concerning "the principal's role in determining the central purposes of the school" (p. 65). Regarding the function of framing clear goals for their immersion programs, Matilda said that one of the goals is to maximize the exposure of students to L2: "The kids … need constant contact with the language. In immersion, everything is covered. When they come to your office they should hear it, when they go to lunch they should hear it."

Killian recognized that this is an important element of the work of any principal, "I think all principals engage basically in the same work of trying to articulate a vision to their staff and to empower staff members and to get everyone to see their role, in the large organization."

For Ruby, the school mission is the heart of her work. She described herself as, "I am a mission driven leader, very fiercely mission driven." She added,

> Sometimes they will be parents who have an idea and they really think this is a great idea but it's not what our school is. We could bring in lots of wonderful art curriculum and different experiences to our students, and we do through various

experiences but we are not an arts school, we are an immersion … so everything we do has to follow our mission. So that to me is the single most important thing as an immersion leader is to protect that immersion model and to live out our mission and our mission is very focused on immersion.

Regarding the function of communicating those goals, Killian and Stella used the word "educate" to describe the way they communicate the school goals. For instance, Killian declared, "So you are continually educating, kind of all of your community regarding what this, what this immersion experience is like and why it makes a difference and why it's important." He underscored that communicating those goals is even more for an immersion program than for other schools, "I think probably what differentiates immersion leadership from traditional leadership in schools, maybe more so than anything else, is the need for continually, the words that we use are educating and advocating," and observed, "While immersion schools are similar to many schools in a lot of ways, there are different in important ways."

He noted, "There are many misperceptions that can emerge around immersion programs and who they serve and who they don't serve … and it just is extremely important to be communicating that it's a program that serves all kids." In his case, communicating the school's goals, as he stated, is "helping people understand that our purpose is to create these bilingual, bicultural, biliterate, multicultural I should say, children is everything." He emphasized that it is not easy: "I think that's one of the biggest challenges is trying to articulate a vision for something that frequently people in the United States had not that educational experience."

Along the same line, Stella said, "Again, it's a huge, it's a piece of communication, it's a piece of education … so that people understand it's not a mystery but what what's going on." because one time someone commented to her "I understand that you are in that *subversion* school." For her the communication starts within the school. "The mission of the school needs to be very clear to all, everybody in the school… [to avoid] people going off on their own because they believe one thing or the other" about the program. For Matilda, it is very important to communicate the goals to the teachers and staff members, "to tell them where you wanna [sic] go," but they need to have some freedom regarding how to achieve those goals.

> When you want to tell them … how to get there, then you get in trouble; because, you know what, people come to us with different skills, experiences and background. And some of them can move from point A to B in a straight line, some need a zigzagging line to get there. Some need to go there in circles. If you have all these people, you tell them to go on a straight line; you will be missing out on a very big opportunity for your students to learn.

The four schools have very similar websites. They include a short presentation of the school, a message from the principal, information about immersion, and resources for parents. However, the schools in the study displayed their mission statements on different pages. Matilda's school website has it on the *About* page, Killian's school website on a subpage under *General Information*, Ruby's school website on the *Homepage*. I was not able to find the school mission on Stella's school website despite several checks during the course of this study.

The review of PTO minutes showed that Matilda's school has a communications committee that works on internal public relations communications and adding content to their PTO website. Otherwise, all the schools have a monthly newsletter, Ruby's school features the mission and vision statement on each one of them. Stella regularly writes in these newsletters that the vision she has for her school is "to be the best immersion school" adding sometime "in the country" with "good communication" as a key element for its success.

Dimension 2: Managing the instructional program

The functions delineated in this dimension are supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, and monitoring student progress. Hallinger (2010) observed that this domain "requires the principal to be deeply engaged in these functions [that] demand that the principal have expertise in teaching and learning, as well as a commitment to the school's improvement" (p. 66-67). According to Hallinger (2010), this second dimension was the most criticized because his critics alleged that most principals would not have the time nor the expertise to do it. Matilda on the other hand concurred with Hallinger's assertion that a principal must be knowledgeable in the areas of teaching and learning when she said "to be effective you [the principal] really need to know the subject matter… You have to understand instruction, you have to understand the curriculum, you have to understand assessment and how to use data; data is very critical," emphasizing "not only knowing the data but using it, because you have to use it to form your instruction and planning."

Regarding the functions of supervising and evaluating instruction, Stella illustrated this commitment when she declared that in order to "identify good instruction

… being in the classroom was very, very important for me." Killian confirmed the importance of being in the classroom:

> During most of the year, my goal is to be in the classrooms every Tuesday and every Thursday; as an instructional leader, I find it necessary for me to be in the classrooms … supporting the classroom teachers and observing and providing feedback.

> Matilda argued that in order to supervise and evaluate instruction efficiently, a

principal had to speak the target language. "You are an instructional leader if you speak the language of the instruction … how can you be an instructional leader if you don't speak the language of instruction?" She added,

> You can adequately say this person [teacher] is great, you might go and see a class where students are engaged, but what is the content, immersion is about content, and for each of these you need to have people who evaluate teachers, who hold them accountable, knowing what it is all about.

Ruby relies on her previous teaching experience to conduct teacher observations, declaring, "I do teachers observations and so when I meet with them, I feel like I'm wearing my teacher hat so I'll go in and do an observation." She continued,

> I can tell them, these are the kind of things you need to be doing in your classroom to ensure that students are acquiring language at a high level and I am able to ask those kinds of questions to see what the teachers are doing and then give advice based on my own experience.

Stella also believes in the importance of having teaching experience in an immersion setting to supervise and evaluate instruction:

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I think it's extremely important for the immersion leader to have a lot of recent

hands-on experience and to be able to go into the classroom and experience,

exactly what it's like to keep those kids with you and to keep playing with it and

to understand.

Moreover, she goes in a classroom as a substitute teacher:

I'm frequently the substitute, and I go in and I substitute in the class … And that's

an incredibly effective and efficient way to do some teacher evaluation because a)

you see the culture of the class first hand, you have experience on how they

prepare their lessons, you get a lot of insight when you're able to go in and

actually be a substitute in the classroom.

Ruby warned that meeting language objectives could result in not meeting the

content objectives, "…and you don't want that in an immersion program, you want the

content to be just as important as it is in a first language program." To reach that goal, she

wants students to be "exposed to language all day when they are at our school," noting

that "many immersion programs are not able to do that."

Similarly, Killian underscored that in an immersion school the principal must

insure that both content and language objectives are taught:

There needs to be a very strong instructional leadership focus on second language

acquisition. When principals are in the classroom, they need to be able to see

that—not only that the content objectives are being worked towards, but also

language objectives.

Killian also mentioned, along with the functions of supervising and evaluating

instruction, it is very important for a school leader

to be a learner and to be engaged in the learning process alongside our staff to

really be creating a culture of learning and modeling that through myself being a

part of that, those experiences with our staff whenever possible.

Stella explained that she is spending a lot of time conducting teacher evaluations:

We're always doing teacher evaluations and so I'm in the classroom doing

observations, I'm doing preobservation meetings, postobservation meetings, and

what I've learned is this, that if I don't write those evaluations up very shortly after

being in the class, I'm not able to write up the same kind of evaluation, the little

nuances and the little detail even though I scripted the whole thing, I lose them,

they become mixed up with the rest of the day.

Stella also hires a second person, a native speaker of the target language, to conduct her

own observation to provide a second feedback:

With the target language, I've done two different things: one of the things that I

do is I have engaged a retired principal who is … a native [L2] speaker and … we

have a curriculum person who is a native [L2] speaker so I, whenever we're doing

evaluations of teacher performance, I make sure that they get feedback from a

native speaker as well as from me. So that way there is also some objectivity,

which is nice when you get feedback.

Her role of supervising instruction entails correcting misconceptions which requires a

tactful approach, for instance, to address the purpose of homework:

That's a very delicate conversation to have with teachers, and I will admit to you

it's not so easily done because most teachers quite honestly they don't evaluate the

purpose of homework. They give homework just to keep kids busy, and so they

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can't keep up with the correction. So my role in that as an administrator is say, "If you don't have the time to correct it yourself, don't give it to the kids or you figure out a way to manage it. But the way to manage it cannot be to have the intern correcting it." Now do they know that that's my feeling? Yes, they do. Do some of them go ahead and have the interns correct it? Yes, they do. So then that's my job as an administrator to learn how to hold the teachers accountable. That's an ongoing process. You have to get better and better at doing that.

During my field observations, I had the opportunity to witness informal and formal feedback from classroom visits. For instance I watched Matilda talking to several teachers about what the students were doing while visiting their classroom. Killian conducted a formal evaluation for a first-year teacher working in first grade the day of my visit. During the meeting, he was supportive of the teacher work observed earlier, yet he required that teacher to make some adjustments while proposing ideas and asking for clarifications.

Killian wrote on the staff bulletin, "What makes our staff … exceptional is the high degree of skill I see in our classrooms for differentiating effectively for our diversity of student groups." He expressed his determination that teachers in his school reflect on their practice to use

Equitable educational practices … continually being critical … and saying …: is it a practice that's going to benefit all our students or is it gonna to privilege certain students, and adversely affect other groups of students that aren't as privileged.

Cultural equity is a district effort conducted in both Killian's and Stella's school districts. During my visit, Stella attended a series of meeting on the topic of equity in schools.

Regarding the function of coordinating the curriculum, Matilda talked in a meeting with a 5th grade teacher about vertically aligning the curriculum. She commented on the process by saying, "This year we tried something with the vertical alignment instead of the horizontal. Teachers did not really like it because of the difficulty." She also had another meeting with four second grade teachers to address the math curriculum for the following year, repeating at times important pieces of information to make sure the teachers understood and were empowered.

Once a month, Stella meets with the leadership team to discuss different classroom issues and needs. "Everything we talk about relates to what happens in the classroom." Killian also works with his leadership team on the curriculum "that leadership team does a lot of vertical articulation work in terms of between the grade levels, articulating the curriculum". Ruby declared she is "very involved in curriculum purchasing … [because] that's convenient for me. It doesn't mean that the teachers like everything I chose (laughed). They've actually been talking about looking at something else for math, which is fine." She also brought some change to the science curriculum a couple of years ago, "We call it STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics] type activities … So I do wear that teacher hat, and I always have one foot in that curriculum door." Stella observed, "One of the things that I've been able to do is being more actively involved in curriculum development" compared to the previous principal, who did not speak the language.

Regarding the function of monitoring student progress, Matilda asked the teams to record student progress on logs across grade levels.

They all talked about the before, the during, and the after. It's been difficult and next year we are going to fine tune it because I think that is, because when they gave me the logs of observation with some of them, these are the best logs I have ever seen, very comprehensive. I see the same students that I saw last year, how they have evolved and improved. And then, those who are coming up, I see the plan on how to get them. Because the teachers are talking, they are not just talking with their peers, they are talking with people across grade levels. That has really helped us.

Killian revealed, that "We've created a program evaluation… framework that includes both English and [L2] evaluations … to show the overall picture of how students are performing overall." At the end of the day during my field observations, he met with the literacy coach to prepare for paired assessments in the target language: "We've pulled twelve pairs of kindergartners and twelve pairs of second graders, and twelve pairs of fifth graders eventually … so that's the way, one way that we formally assess … language proficiency on a yearly basis." The coach conducts and records the students with a flip camera. Then, she meets with the principal to discuss the results until they are in agreement with the rating. The students are part of a representative sample that allows comparison from one year to the next.

Despite having worked on assessment, Ruby conceded that it is still an area that needs improvement although her teachers have developed a tool that could be useful for other immersion schools:

I'll use my leadership to kind of steer things in that direction [assessment in L2] but if that's an area that we could improve on. We did have Tara Fortune from the CARLA [Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition] Institute come out and work with us on performance assessments and in [the target language] and so the teachers of all created two of those. What we ideally would like is to have one with each unit of inquiry, they are six units of inquiry throughout the school year and I have asked teachers for the results of those assessments and then we use that as sort of an end of the year measurements for how students are progressing in language. But it's not a perfect tool, that's an area that I think all schools can probably use.

Stella uses running records to monitor student progress, which she found very beneficial because of the growth pattern that results. At a team meeting, she discussed student results following the state tests in English, although she wished there was a better way to track student progress, especially in the target language. She declared, "There're immersion schools all over the world that would be very, very happy to have especially oral language assessments that were appropriate for immersion elementary." The lack of an instrument makes it very difficult to assess this area, she explained,

Written assessment I think we have a pretty good handle on because we use the same rubrics or the same standards that we would have in English language arts and you can come up with written but, I think, and reading as well, it's the speaking… it's the speaking measuring tool that if you use an OPI [Oral Proficiency Instrument] or something like that it's very labor intensive. And then it doesn't get given individually often enough to be able to demonstrate progress

and I'm not so sure that we've totally figured out what the indicators are going to

be for progress from one level to the other.

Ruby conceded during the visit that third grade is where most remediation takes

place. When a student is struggling, she firmly believes that the principal must be

knowledgeable about learning issues: "So, if a child is struggling in school and the school

leader doesn't know how to explain or doesn't know why the child is struggling or doesn't

understand, I think that's detrimental to… the education of that child." She closely

follows students with learning difficulties and discusses their case on a regular basis.

I also meet a lot with our Special Ed[ucation] teacher who is also a school

psychologist … we meet every Monday, but she comes in quite a lot anyway so

we're always talking about students who are either having struggles with behavior

or with academics.

Dimension 3: Creating a positive school climate

The functions delineated in this dimension are protecting instructional time,

promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for

teachers, and providing incentives for learning. Hallinger (2010) noted, "This dimension

is broader in scope and purpose than the other two" (p. 67). He explained that when the

principal demonstrates by his attitude valued principles and procedures, it produces an

atmosphere that stimulates the ongoing advancement of teaching and learning in the

building (Hallinger, 2010).

Regarding the function of protecting instructional time, Ruby acknowledged, "If

there is something urgent we may make announcements, but I don't like to interrupt the

class." Stella wanted to maximize class time and introduced in "grades 3-5 … a new

teaming schedule to increase the amount of instruction time and reduce student transitions during the day" as announced to parents in the school newsletter of September 6, 2012.

Promoting professional development was very important to each principal. They all have a number of days built in their school district calendar for professional development. They conduct on the job training using the professional learning communities and underscore the importance of having professional development geared toward immersion pedagogy.

Matilda described professional development as follows:

We have what we call the professional learning communities [PLC]. We started the PLCs, we started with the grade level, take baby steps, whether they confer, they will look at research, they'll have a book club, "oh we did that with PLC." And then at the end of every Monday, they just give me a log of what they are doing and how they are meeting the needs of the struggling students (bell rings in the hallway) and those who have mastered it.

In the PTO Newsletter of September 12, 2013, the writer indicated "Teachers meet twice a week in PLCs … to support student learning." The teachers also have meetings designed for immersion. Matilda explained that she attended the spring session for both teachers and administrators with her teachers. Some year they have a fall meeting as well. There are meetings at the district level for language schools, "We have a [dual-language] cadre of administrators; we meet like every second Friday of the month, and then the head of the ELL (English Language Learner) in the district—the director—she is the one

who facilitates." She lamented that the position of teacher on assignment was cut last year due to budget restrictions:

> Last year, we had a liaison, a teacher on special assignment who would be linking with all of us. She can find in research what is the latest and best out there and share with us. And when we meet we talk about assessment, we talk about things that really help us to become more proficient in language in functionally bilingual.

Matilda underscored during the visit that "staff development is very important in immersion." She stressed the necessity of tailoring the sessions to the need of the teachers the way teachers differentiate instruction for the students, "You have to understand your teachers; the way you differentiate instruction in the classroom for your students, you have to differentiate professional development also for the teachers." In the past, teachers even used to go to immersion teacher conferences outside the country that were in the target language:

> Our teachers went every year until two years ago when we stopped going because we didn't have the money … because you pay for the substitutes while they are gone, you also pay for the trip, you also pay for the registration: so it's *expensive*. At first we had three and then we had two going, and then one go to primary and intermediate. And one is becoming (speaker announcements) more and more an antenna. So I am hoping that next year we will revive it.

However, Matilda cautioned that restarting will not be easy.

> And I'd like to send at least two, so that's one of the goals I have. I thought I was able to do it next year but when I got the budget, it was very, very bad. Because I

was short of teachers and that's a priority so. But we are hoping that we will probably find a way to get grants. People are telling us they are some grants that might pertain to professional development which is sad because they don't do international.

Killian pointed out that professional development for teachers who are new to immersion is an area that is commonly underestimated and difficult to organize: that professional development needs to address the demand of their position and the type of work they are performing. He concluded, "And that's hard to do and particularly in trying financial times."

Killian even tied professional development to the school effectiveness, "for our school to be effective we need to do immersion well, so really prioritizing professional development initiatives." He described his practice of professional development as follow:

Our philosophy is that the best kind of professional development is what's called job embedded and ongoing. So as much as we can we try to focus our professional development on the professional learning community model, which is all about teachers working with student data, focusing conversation on student achievement, working with a strong emphasis on inquiry and professional [development], and formative assessment, and that cycle of inquiry where they are working with colleagues in implementing instructional strategies and seeing assessment data to see if the instruction made a difference and coming back and planning instruction together. So that's really the core of our professional development.

Nonetheless, for Killian, having quality professional development is a constant challenge because of the limited amount of money available and the time needed. He must also take into account the district priorities to apply them in the immersion context, which is another challenge. The staff bulletin of January 29, 2010, listed a staff development day scheduled for the following Monday. There also were collaborative team meetings every Tuesday of the spring semester, 2010, continuing the following year in the bulletins of 2011 up to May 6, 2011. There were occasionally other meetings such as best practices in ESL (English as a Second Language), sheltered instruction, and math meeting.

Ruby put a lot of effort into professional development linked to theory and practice. "As an immersion principal specifically, I work very hard to ensure our teachers have a lot of staff development that is specifically designed around what we know in terms of best practices in immersion and what research tells us." She emphasized one area: "We use a lot of that research, a lot of corrective feedback," adding, "Teachers have had a lot of staff development opportunities to learn how to respond to students to elicit the best feedback." For her it is key to cover one subject in depth over a period of time, what she called "recycling."

> I try to always make we recycle what we learn, so teachers hear about some of the same research over, over, and over. We talk about corrective feedback every year because what I found when I was teaching was that often times we would have an in service and we would get great ideas but we would never talk about it again.

Ruby alleged that not all immersion principals are eager to learn about or to use effective research in immersion:

So corrective feedback for example, Roy Lister brought that research out more than 15 years ago and yet there are immersion colleagues of mine that still aren't consistently using it, and it's a wonderful tool and very simple, it's a simple way you can get students to self-correct rather than just feeding them answers and allowing them to continue to make errors. So we do a lot of recycling of our professional development.

She makes sure that teachers have professional development opportunities. "I am very active in planning staff development along with teachers and the other administrators, but I also meet regularly with teachers." She has PLCs to help teachers improve, especially when she conducts classroom observations and she sees recurrent issues. Then she will ask teachers to discuss the topic during a PLC meeting.

During the visit, Ruby mentioned that "there are weekly collaboration meetings and once a month a late start." She wrote in the school newsletter of November 2012 that she was ecstatic with the effort the teachers at her school put into attending an immersion workshop and into implementing what they just learned immediately. She concluded: "This is extraordinary!"

Stella conceded that it was difficult to find qualified immersion teachers who are serious about professional development:

I think the most enormous challenge that we have as immersion administrators is making sure we have the highest quality staff that remains motivated and willing to improve their craft. You cannot just keep doing what you did 20 years ago. That's a challenge—that's a challenge!

For Stella seeking improvement is the trademark of a good teacher, "most really, really good teachers are always pursuing those opportunities: 'How can I do this better? Which will make my job easier? Which would allow me to do a better job?'" She commented that time needed to be set aside for professional development. For instance, "We've also decided that staff meeting should be professional development opportunities. We with technology, we no longer need to all gather together in one big room and talk about the calendar." She has worked with the CARLA Institute to provide professional development at her school, "We've brought Tara Fortune here several times," while sending teachers to immersion conferences, as reported in the school newsletter of October 31, 2012: "Teachers attended and presented at the [immersion] conference organized by the Center for Advanced Research [on] Language Acquisition … The 2.5 day conference affirmed that we are certainly on the right track in our immersion instructional practice."

For Stella, the best professional development is interactive and responds to a need of the teachers:

> It has to be interactive. I think professional development is best delivered when all of the staff is afforded the opportunity to say this is what I need. And at the same time they might identify things that they didn't know they needed, but if you introduce it to them, they are grateful they were exposed to it. But it has to be interactive, it has to be.

Stella believes it is important for teachers to observe each other and then to provide feedback. Therefore, she requires that all of her teachers "go observe… another immersion teacher at least twice per year, once in the first semester and once in the

second semester and that's part of our professional development schedule." Teachers can choose the peer they want to work with.

She also offered her teachers to go and observe another immersion school with a different target language:

> Frequently, what I do now is I send teachers from this immersion environment to go observe those [other language] immersion teachers because there is always something to be learned from observing somebody else and you see when immersion teachers go and observe another language being taught, they put themselves in the place of the immersion learner so that's helpful.

Stella made sure every staff member went to a conference for immersion teachers, "I sent everybody to the CARLA conference [over the summer], everybody in the whole staff … that was something that I asked them if they wanted to do." She believes a common experience is a powerful way to conduct professional development:

> Now it worked well for the year, now next year what we need to evaluate then is was that a powerful experience to have a common experience because what I find is staff development is this that the more common the experience is the more the more power we get out of it. When it's one and two people going off to a conference there is always the leader teaches everybody else, that model, but very rarely do they get to come back from the conference and really share something that excited them. So we'll see how's that one, but this year I went with spending the dollars on everybody having a common experience.

She even sent a few teachers abroad for an immersion conference in the target language. In order to cover the cost, Stella decided to use the money to send teachers instead of dividing the amount among small projects.

> So what I decided to do this year is I decided to take some of our staff development money and I would send a representative from every single grade K through 5 to the conference so that they could all meet together and talk about what they got because it's all immersion teachers [at the conference].

She enthusiastically communicated the experience in the school newsletter of October 31, 2012.

> Last week, I joined a team of six teachers -- one representative from each grade level -- … for the … Immersion Teachers conference. Each of us attended three different workshops, and I participated in a round table discussion with a group of immersion administrators and networked with book publishers. The immersion experience … is rewarding on multiple levels, and we were stimulated by speakers and introductions to new instructional materials and strategies. By contrast, we felt confident and proud of our accomplishments upon witnessing how far ahead of the curve we are compared to some immersion schools ... I will make a concerted effort to motivate … staff to submit proposals in order to be considered to present at conferences. Our teachers have a lot of expertise to offer! … Many thanks for all you do to support all of our professional development opportunities.

Stella accentuated collaboration in the school. She meets regularly with team leaders and attends grade level meetings. "I've instituted team leaders so that I can meet

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with team leaders, the team leaders go back to their grade level teams and they have

discussions and so we can have smaller format type of discussions that's easier." At the

end of the day of my visit, she stopped by three classrooms where different team

meetings were held to provide information and answer teachers' questions.

Stella contended that not only teachers but also principals need to collaborate at

their level with each other in order to do their job more effectively and to get support.

Well, the other thing that I've learned how to do which's been very valuable to

me: there's six elementary schools in this district and I collaborate very closely

with the other five principals. That we work very closely together as a team. And

what we figured out is this that if we collaborate quite honestly modeling the

professional learning community, the PLC [professional learning community]

model, we work more efficiently and we are able to sustain each other.

Regarding the function of maintaining high visibility, it was common practice in

each one of the schools. Matilda commented, "Even though you may be in the classroom

all the time, you are not in every single class at every single minute, so you have to

understand what is going on." During my visit, she greeted students by names in the

hallway. She talked to cafeteria workers and went to the nurse's office to check on a

student who was not feeling well. While visiting the classrooms, she spoke with teachers

in the target language.

Killian set up a schedule to visit the classrooms on a regular basis. "During most

of the year, my goal is to be in the classrooms every Tuesday and every Thursday; as an

instructional leader I find it necessary for me to be in the classrooms." He found out, "It

also helps tremendously with relationships with the students, for them to see me, not only

for a discipline issue but also in the classroom excited about what they are learning." The day of my visit, Killian went to different classrooms to take care of different issues. At the end of the day he was standing outside by the bus stop to make sure that a student who had to take a taxi got it.

Ruby believes it is important visible in the hallways and classes, all over the school every day:

> I always greet the students in the morning and I'm always out bussing in the afternoon and I try to get into the lunch room so that they see me every day. It's very important that they all see me every day.

She added, "So I will definitely be out there and made available to kids." The day of the visit she went in the hallway as well as to the cafeteria several times to take care of different matters. At the end of the day, she was in the hallway watching students leaving.

Stella underscored the necessity to show her presence often in the hallways throughout the day to connect with the students.

> I have to be visible in the hallways happy about being in the immersion experience, which I am I don't have to fake that, but so that they see that she's really here with us, she's not just off in the principal's office.

During my visit, I saw her go in the hallway at the beginning of the day to quiet down a group of students. She also walked to the lost and found area with students to help them. A little later she talked to four boys who were getting into an argument and accompanied them to their classroom.

Regarding the function of providing incentives for teachers, Matilda believes it is important to include them in the decision-making process.

I think the action is affecting the school positively because people believe that

they have buy in for the decisions that are being made. People believe that they

are being heard, even if sometimes everything doesn't come their way, they know

at least they are being consulted and the principal is not dictatorian. He'll say this

is the way you do it and it has to be that way.

She explained that recognizing people working at the school is important to

motivate them:

So we have a very, very conscious way of recognizing people… I nominate that

person and that person … gets a certificate and a gift certificate; and then a

special parking lot, a spot, because parking could be a challenge here. And then,

after that, the recipient, the current recipient nominates the next person and so on

and so forth.

She noticed that this type of recognition provides a very good incentive, "And it has been

a very positive thing, people just start to do things, they go above and beyond the call of

duty."

Killian granted that he has a vital role to play in the area of teacher satisfaction, "I

would say my roles are to create again the conditions for our teachers to do their best

work." He wants to encourage collaboration among teachers. "It means that I, from a

scheduling perspective and from a resource perspective, need to protect time and

resources for that collaboration work to happen." One important resource he provides to

teachers is the literacy coach. "I should mention that we have a literacy coach in our

building who also is bilingual and works with our teachers on bilingualism, biliteracy and

instructional coaching, so that's another wonderful resource that we have."

In Ruby's school, teachers receive help with their students, "We have education assistants, nonlicensed employees who work, they do the push in within the classroom and they do pull out depending on the need."

For Stella, teachers are more motivated to do their job and to improve when there is a positive working climate that involves collaboration:

> You collaborate with teachers and you advocate also for them, becoming the best possible instructional leaders that they can be. So there is a lot of advocacy, a lot of education, and I think also a lot of collaboration because when you're able to create a vibrant learning environment where everybody feels valued but also with high expectations to become better.

She accentuated collaboration as being an essential motivation for teachers to enjoy coming to school:

> It makes a difference in teachers coming to work and being inspired and know… and knowing that they are valued and coming to work with "I love what I do" versus "I have to do this job, I have to do this job" and he—in education we truly truly do not want anyone to come into the classroom and work with children that that feels so overwhelmed and burdened by the expectations that it's just a job.

When Stella was hired in that school, she reported that was not the case. Teachers were discouraged and felt abandoned. She commented, "that's easy to happen in an environment where the budgets get tighter and tighter, the demands become greater and greater … [but now] there is more trust, there is more collaboration, I'm still working on that."

Stella also noticed that teachers in immersion programs appreciate getting new books in the target language, so she traveled abroad to buy them because she prefers looking at the pages of books rather than buying them from a catalog. She explained that teachers enjoy this incentive.

> Immersion teachers are always burdened by the fact that they have to create the curriculum, they have to create their materials and because there's some curriculum created … they have no sex appeal. They usually have no color, they are not nearly as friendly… child friendly because it's so expensive to get material but those materials are out there. And if you're and if you're a good immersion administrator, you figure out how to manage your budget and go get them.

Stella insisted that every teacher should be treated the same way for motivation purposes. "The key things for me would be collaboration, transparency, what you see is what you get and I'm very very upfront. There are there are no side deals, there are no special deals." She believes it is important to trust that teachers are making the right decisions:

> Frequently what I say when somebody comes to me and asks for, they make a request, I've learned that my best, one of my best responses given certain circumstances is to simply say to my staff, "I trust you to make the right decision," and when you tell them that you trust them to make the right decision, they frequently do.

She described one of her role as empowering teachers, "I empower the teachers to be the best they can be, and my role is to provide them with the resources, to be a resource to be available to help them to be the most [they can be]. One way Stella helps her teachers make progress is:

I try to position myself … in the culture of the school as also being a learner…

and I also intentionally model what positive communication looks like and I

provide, I try to provide, feedback with a positive orientation, not what did you do

wrong but what could you do, how could you do, how could you make it better.

Regarding the function of providing incentives for learning, Matilda recognized

that, "it is hard work to keep your students motivated because it is their parents' choice

not the child's choice, the kids want to go to school where they can speak their language"

so she has different way to recognize students: "We have what they call … the wise owl,

and if you look at it, it is a symbol, it is an owl with glasses, with an academic gown, very

smart looking, and teachers have added all kind of things when they have it." She set up a

reward to recognize students speaking who are making efforts to speak the target

language, "They give students each time they catch them speaking [the target language]

and even if they don't speak it correctly. A lot of that is with the primary grades."

Killian noted that being often in the hallway "helps tremendously with

relationships with the students, for them to see me, not only for a discipline issue but also

in the classroom excited about what they are learning."

Ruby believes that to help students learn more vocabulary and grammar in the

target language is to expose them to more language, "the way in which I felt that we

could really address that issue of limited vocabulary and limited grammar by upper

elementary was to give them a more profound and a more intense language experience."

Stella wants to empower students to motivate them; for instance for discipline

issues she posited, "I empowered the students to make the changes themselves so that

they know that I believe that they're able to do it."

Summary of the Findings

Ruby Maredsous

Ruby Maredsous has helped founded this public charter school where she is now the principal after having taught in other immersion programs. The motivation was to develop opportunities for parents who could not find a spot for their child and to have a program that more closely follows sound immersion principles. Although not a native speaker, she speaks the target language fluently.

She said that she leads the school as a "teacher leader" because she relies on her long experience as an immersion classroom teacher. Immersion experience is not what she has seen in administrators where she worked, although she believes it is crucial for an immersion leader to have had that experience to be able to reflect on the language acquisition process. For her, an immersion leader must also be flexible enough to make adjustment to get closer to the program goals. She met principals who were not happy to lead an immersion program but were still placed there by the central office. Moreover, in her opinion, having a principal who has no previous immersion experience is not equitable for student families of struggling learners because that person is probably not knowledgeable enough about the process of language acquisition to be able to explain it.

To have the best program possible, Ruby believes it is crucial to have a positive learning environment. She saw in previous schools issues arising between native speakers and English speakers, so she intentionally works to foster a positive climate between the two groups. Regarding second language use, she emphasized the importance of modeling that language and of trying to speak it at the best of one's ability. Sometimes parents have

idealistic views of their child learning a second language, but she sees her roles as keeping them informed of what that process really is.

As the instructional leader, Ruby purchases curriculum material for the teachers, always looking for authentic literature. She tries to stay up-to-date with research and attends immersion workshops on a regular basis. However, she found that great ideas are not utilized enough, so she makes sure teachers constantly hear them. Another of her role is conducting formal and informal teacher evaluation.

Ruby believes that second-language fluency is best achieved through immersion programs, but students must constantly use the target language to develop grammar and vocabulary, especially in the upper grades. She underlined her desire to protect the school environment from the unnecessary use of English to stay true to the full immersion model. She is critical of immersion leaders who resolve to use English when they think students will not understand or will not be ready for state tests in English. Moreover, for her, the solution is to use more target language to avoid creating the same gap that exists in the first language due to socio-economic differences. This way, all students have the same opportunities to learn the target language in school, which in turn, she suggested, will help them in English as well.

One way Ruby promotes the immersion language is through interaction with students outside the classroom. She also evoked that students benefit from hearing different people speak the target language. She wants students to associate L2 with the classroom teacher so she has designed the program in a way that allows a teacher from a different class to teach English because she does not have the funds to hire someone to teach English only to all classes.

Ruby stated that limiting the use of English is a challenge as well as hiring teachers who are qualified for immersion. Not only do they need to be fluent in both languages, but also pass the licensure examination. Fortunately for her, teachers are attracted to her program because they like the way the target language is emphasized. On the other hand, Ruby finds challenging the view of some politicians who rely exclusively on the licensure test to assess the qualification of a teacher aspiring to teach in an immersion program. Finally, in her opinion, the passion of the leader makes the difference between a successful immersion program and a great one. "You can have a program that has … a principal who is not passionate about it and it will be successful but it won't be great. I think it'll be great if the leader is really passionate about it."

Matilda Chimay

Matilda Chimay has been the only principal of that immersion program which started out as her program within a mainstream school before she took the reins and move to its own building. It has strived since to having two classes per grade level. She always had a "love for languages" and is fluent in the target language.

She thinks of herself as being "a distributive leader," she empowers the teachers at her school by asking questions to make teachers think about the challenge ahead and by providing resources necessary. She wants teachers to have "buy-in in the decisions." To be an effective instructional leader, she relies on her knowledge of people that have different personalities and teaching styles to reach the school instructional goals, but she sees that as an asset. She also tailors professional development, which is very important in her opinion, according to those differences. She mentioned that a principal should know all what is going on inside and outside the school "to be really effective". She

added that also means she has to be involved in the community and to collaborate with parents. Moreover, to be effective in her opinion, a principal has to be familiar with the curriculum and how to teach it as well as to comprehend assessment and the use of data.

Matilda stated that a major difference between an immersion school and a mainstream school is the access to resources that are limited in an immersion school. Therefore, she has to constantly find ways to get to those resources, which encompasses both materials and human capital. The school mission is very important for her because by learning another language, students develop not only critical thinking but also English skills. She deems it very important to foster a positive school climate by dealing quickly with the negative to emphasize the positive.

Matilda believes immersion education is imperative because, as Friedman wrote, "the world is becoming flat". Therefore, knowing languages and understanding other cultures becomes a necessity. In her opinion, immersion education provides not only those benefits but also higher thinking skills and appreciation of the student's own culture, particularly for minority students. She even thinks that students with ADHD can benefit from attending an immersion program because "they have to focus harder."

For Matilda, an immersion leader has to speak the target language otherwise the person will only manage the school but not lead. A second reason is that the leader who speaks the language can model its use to students. One problem she noted was that some teachers reverted to English instead of continuously using the target language to make it easier, but she maintained it is a disservice to the students who then just wait for the instructions in English instead of using their thinking skills. She can also directly hire teachers because she can assess herself their level of target language.

Matilda recognized that her big challenges are managing resources because she receives little money from free and reduced lunch programs and books in the target language cost "almost three times" more than the same book in English comparing it to a "double whammy." Dealing with parents can be another challenge because they tend to be more demanding on school programs than other parents. Nevertheless, she tries to stay positive and open by "taking every day as a new learning experience" while seeking to be "politically savvy" when she has to make a decision. She concluded by saying that her job is very challenging but at the same time very rewarding, she is passionate about it.

Stella Pelforth

Stella Pelforth has been a principal in three different immersion schools. Prior to that, she was an immersion teacher, then worked in an administrative capacity at the secondary level. She described her leadership style as being very "collaborative," which makes the working conditions very favorable for teachers and builds trust between the teachers and the leadership. Collaboration also includes working with the community and the other principals in the district. She sees her main role as advocating for the program and educating people outside the school about what immersion is. The school mission must be well defined to all the stakeholders so everyone is aiming at the same goal.

Stella believes that professional development is vital; therefore, teachers have many opportunities, including staff meetings and observation of immersion teachers working in another school. She also sends groups of teachers to attend conferences inside and outside the US to give them a common experience. Overall, she asserted that the role of an administrator in an immersion setting is very similar to the work in a regular school with the addition of the target language. She ascertains that one of her tasks is

establishing the climate of the whole school by setting the example for teachers to follow. Being good at writing and public speaking greatly helps in her position, too. During the course of the day, she tries to anticipate upcoming events to be able to communicate in advance and to manage her schedule. She also has to be frequently in the hallways to maintain the degree of excellence of the program.

Stella believes that children in immersion education use more parts of their brain than otherwise, which is beneficial for problem solving and for understanding. Immersion also help students train to work in multilingual environment like the rest of the world. She pointed out that the schools and the parents should profit from this process that spontaneously occurs to develop it. For her, believing in the power of the learning in immersion settings is important for the administrator.

Stella maintained that an immersion principal should have recently experienced what it takes to teach in a foreign language and remember what it is like. She uses her experience to function as a substitute teacher whenever there is a need in her school. She finds useful to evaluate the work of the teachers by knowing how they set up their teaching and what the class atmosphere is like. With her knowledge of L2, she also can fully participate in curriculum development and model the language use with the teachers to stimulate the immersion setting. She considers the cultural aspect of the language as being very important. The interns in the school organize cultural activities along with cultural programs during the school year.

Stella declared that the first quality of an immersion leader is being "a very good listener" to understand teachers who typically come from various horizons and deal with parents who are very demanding regarding school matters. For her, an effective principal

has to identify the best way to communicate with them while preserving the immersion experience, especially when parents get dismayed because their child struggles in class. She recommended that the principal has love and patience for every student.

Stella acknowledged her biggest challenge is hiring "the highest quality staff" and keep them determined to progress. She recognized the need to advocate and educate to inspire and value teachers in their work. She warned that time management is critical to avoid having to deal with one emergency after the other. She stressed that being able to delegate and to rely on the office personnel allows her to remain an instructional leader. She mentioned that acquiring resources for immersion with a limited budget can be difficult. Nevertheless, Stella finds there are always little achievements to acknowledge that help being overtaken by the demanding task of leading an immersion program. She concluded by saying this job requires much energy and the principal has to believe in immersion. She enjoys very much working in such a dynamic environment that affects very positively the students in the program.

Killian Kriek

Killian Kriek also has been the only principal in his immersion school. As a foreign language teacher, he became "very fascinated with the idea of the whole process of how do you successfully facilitate second-language acquisition." He has a shared leadership model that consists of developing leadership capacities in others by responding to their needs and by working in close collaboration. He conceded that his work is similar to what non-immersion principals are doing in sharing the vision with teachers and in having them working to that end. However, the big difference is the necessity for immersion leaders to educate other people about immersion education and

advocate for the program because most people are not familiar with this type of education and tend to develop misperceptions about what it really is.

Killian believes that an effective immersion leader must "privilege" the use of the target language in the school setting rules to create good conditions to develop its learning to protect it from the prevalence of English. He also emphasized the necessity to model its use with teachers and students. At the same time, he insisted it is important to look at research on language acquisition to make adjustments in the school so teachers can do a good job. To keep a positive environment, he implemented the Responsive Classroom Approach while modeling expected behavior and the desire to learn.

Regarding instructional leadership, Killian stressed that he needs to visit classrooms on a regular basis. For him, the mission is crucial to promote the purpose of the school. He also believe in the importance of linguistic and cultural equity in every classroom by engaging with the staff in a continuous conversation on the topic. He stated that language immersion can play an important role in developing young students' knowledge and appreciation for another language and culture as well as for their own. He believes that learning multiple languages develops cognitive benefits to the brain.

Challenges Killian faces include making his school district initiatives fit into the immersion program, particularly in the areas of professional development, curriculum, and material resources. For him, professional development for new teachers is particularly important but is not easy to put into place due to financial constraints. He lamented that state mandated testing assess students only in English instead of both languages. Therefore, he started the process to create a basis for evaluating students in the target language as well. Overall, Killian is very satisfied about his job as an immersion

school principal. He recognized it can be challenging but there are many rewards as well. He is constantly amazed to see how whole classes acquire the target language like magic.

Theoretical Framework

Dimension 1: The school mission

The four schools have very clear mission statements. The principals in this study believe the school mission is very important and needs to be clearly communicated.

Dimension 2: Managing the instructional programs

Three of the principals have experience in teaching foreign languages, either in a traditional setting or in immersion. Matilda has not, but she holds a degree in linguistics. They all speak the target language fluently and stated that visiting classrooms on a regular basis is essential to evaluate and supervise instruction. They coordinate the curriculum at their school, sometimes with a leadership team to align the curriculum. They monitor student progress; however they reported that one challenge is assessing students in L2 because standardized assessments is not available, especially in French. Matilda implemented logs across grade levels to monitor student progress. Killian conducts pair assessments throughout grade levels on a student sample. Ruby has set up workshops organized by the CARLA Institute to improve performance assessment. Stella uses the English rubrics to assess writing, but needs a good tool for oral proficiency.

Dimension 3: Creating a positive school climate

Ruby and Stella specifically mentioned protecting instructional time by minimizing interruptions during the day or by rearranging the schedule. All the principals underscore the need for professional development geared toward immersion. They also have set up PLCs in their schools. Each principal maintains high visibility by often being

in the hallways or the classrooms. To provide incentives for teachers, Matilda makes sure she involves the teachers in the process of making decisions for the school. Killian has a literacy coach who helps teachers, which in turn increases teachers' job satisfaction, along with good conditions and collaboration. Ruby also provides her teachers with assistants who are available to help out. Stella underscored that widespread collaboration and trust help teachers stay motivated. For providing incentive for learning to students, Matilda recognized it is difficult. She uses different rewards and awards to help students stay motivated. Killian develops relationships with students during his classroom observations. Ruby believes that using more L2 in the school help students with the "issue of limited vocabulary and limited grammar." Stella tries to empower students to change themselves.

Summary

This chapter started with an introduction restating the research purpose and the content of the chapter. It continued with a cross-case analysis that looks at similarities and differences among the principals. Then, the data were compared to the theoretical framework consisting in Hallinger's (2010) model of instructional leadership conceptualized in three dimensions: (1) defining the school mission, delineated into the functions of framing clear goals and communicating those goals; (2) managing the instructional programs, delineated into the functions of supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating curriculum, and monitoring student progress; (3) promoting a positive school climate, delineated into the functions of protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentive for teachers, and providing incentive for learning (p. 65). The data were coded using the

software NVivo (QSR International, 2012) and reported in the order listed following the

order used in the theoretical framework. The chapter ended with a summary of the

findings for both analysis

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

Introduction

The first language immersion programs started in the USA in 1971. Since that time, numerous programs have followed, engendering a solid body of literature to identify the benefits and challenges of such programs. Gilzow (2002) examined seven successful models of early immersion programs and reported a common attribute: "They have strong leaders with a vision of foreign language teaching and learning who know how to inspire others and organize the people and resources necessary to build an effective program" (p. 2). Nevertheless, there is little knowledge about what elements contribute to effective language immersion school leadership because researchers have looked either at language immersion program characteristics or at leadership in mainstream programs.

The purpose of this study was to examine immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on effective immersion school leadership. The assumption was that those beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions directly influence their school's achievement of the distinctive goals of immersion programs in terms of the students' learning and the teachers' practices.

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For that reason, I selected four principals deemed effective in immersion education based on recommendations of the office of language immersion and research of the Center for Advanced Research in Language Acquisition (CARLA). I collected data primarily through structured interviews using a protocol (Appendix B); I took field notes while shadowing each principal during an entire day and gathered archival records at the school or off the school website. After the transcription of the content of the interviews, I performed the analysis with the software NVivo (QSR International, 2012) in two steps to uncover patterns, first by using open coding, then using Hallinger's (2010) model of instructional leadership.

The previous chapter provided a description of data analyzed by open coding in the form of case studies followed by a cross-cases analysis. The chapter concluded with the classification of the information according to the theoretical framework and a summary of the data. In this chapter, I restate the research questions before presenting the findings by looking at the beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions of four effective language immersion school principals' case by case, concluding with a summary. The discussion of the findings in connection with the theoretical framework follows; I present recommendations for future research and for practice; finally, the chapter concludes with the researcher comments.

Findings on Beliefs, Attitudes, and Dispositions

The following questions guided the study:

- How do the principal's beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions influence the school mission?

- How do the principal's beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions influence immersion programming?

- How do the principal's beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions influence the school climate?

- What characteristics exemplify an effective immersion school principal?

Case Study #1 Ruby Maredsous

Ruby had a disposition toward foreign languages in high school, and she became a foreign language teacher following her graduation in elementary education. She believes that immersion is the best approach to learn another language, although grammar can be an area of weakness in some schools. She recognized the level of language in immersion is still more advanced than in traditional high school programs. Her goal is to create within the school an environment that intentionally limits interferences caused by the predominance of English, especially in the extracurricular activities that are all taught in the target language by native speakers. Character education is important in immersion to teach citizenship skills and global education rather than just language skills and education.

Ruby's attitude toward school leadership is to rely on her previous experience as an immersion teacher to be a teacher leader. That was not the case of the principals she worked under who had no previous experience in immersion. For her professional development must incorporate recent research on language acquisition, such as corrective feedback, and best practices in immersion. She even changed her mind about mixing English and the target language following conclusions of studies on combining language,

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although she firmly believes in protecting the classrooms and the target language to closely follow the school mission.

Ruby acknowledged that hiring good teachers is a tremendous challenge because of either state licensing issues or candidate insufficient target language level. She nevertheless recognized that the people at the State Department are willing to help, although they have limited power to change the legislation dealing with teaching licenses. For her, it is extremely important to have specialists who speak the target language to expose students to more vocabulary. She underscored the need to promote good working relationships between native and non-native speakers to avoid conflicts like in her previous schools.

Ruby asserted that an immersion principal must be flexible because most workdays rarely go as planned. Flexibility also applies to thinking how to facilitate language acquisition in the school. She tries to create the best model possible to foster language growth in students, which is why she cannot imagine leading without having any language teaching expertise or without having any passion for immersion. Moreover, an immersion principal must be knowledgeable enough about the language acquisition process to explain that process to parents who have a child struggling in school, who otherwise would be disenchanted and feel helpless.

Ruby strives to visit classrooms on a regular basis to promote bilingualism among students by interacting with them in the second language and by being visible across the school. During evaluations, she verifies that teachers are providing students with a high level of language. Teachers need to use authentic literature for teaching reading in a second language. She also participates in curriculum planning and purchasing. As an

example, she recently brought in more engineering in the science curriculum. Her school brings in student teachers who work as interns for a year, they assist teachers providing a language and cultural element.

Ruby uses the state standardized tests in English, but asked the CARLA Institute to conduct a workshop on site to help teachers create assessment tools for objectives in L2. To improve test scores, she firmly believes that students need to have more instruction in the target language to improve in English, unlike other principals she knows who resorted to add more English instead to prepare students for standardized tests in English. She is convinced that more instruction in the target language will prevent creating a gap in vocabulary that already exists in English because some students grow up in an enriched environment while others do not.

Case Study #2 Matilda Chimay

The data show that, from an early age, Matilda developed a disposition to learn other languages; later she studied linguistics, in which she holds a graduate degree, before going into education. She stated there are benefits for students attending immersion programs not only because they learn a second language, but also because they learn the content in another language. The benefits she described encompass cognitive processes and high academic achievement. She added that students have a better understanding and appreciation of the English language and of their own culture as well as other cultures.

Matilda declared that her job as an immersion principal is the same as a non-immersion principal, but the instructional leadership part is more critical in immersion. Therefore, she believes an immersion principal needs to speak the L2. She argued that

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seeing students engaged is not enough; a principal has to know the content being taught. Another reason for speaking the language is to model its use with students and staff members, including the office personnel.

However, Matilda postulated that leading an immersion school is more demanding than a regular school because there are challenges specific to immersion programs. She mentioned hiring and supervising teachers. She emphasized that finding qualified immersion teachers and monitoring that they consistently use the target language for instruction requires a lot of her time and attention. She explained that another challenge unique to immersion is buying books and teaching material in L2 because they are more expensive than the ones in English. Moreover, her students rarely qualify for free and reduced lunch; therefore, she receives less money than other schools. She compared the high price of the material and the lower revenues to "a double whammy."

Another challenge for an immersion leader is dealing with parents. Matilda recognized that immersion parents are very savvy regarding education and very demanding regarding services provided by the school, including evening programs. She bemoaned that her elementary school is almost like a secondary school regarding programs. Consequently, she has to keep abreast with the latest in education and has to offer different activities after school and sometime programs in the evenings. She remarked that not all children are interested in attending school in a foreign language. Those parents enroll their child in immersion, but in some cases the child does not like the program. She acknowledged that some students lack motivation because of that resistance and are hard to keep interested in studying in a foreign language.

Matilda admitted that the added demands of her position compared to a traditional school make her job very strenuous. Her attitude is to overcome the stress is to "take every day as a new learning experience." Nonetheless, she observed that her work is very challenging but at the same time very rewarding. She also believes that being passionate about immersion and believing in the program greatly motivates her.

Matilda's attitude toward leadership is to see herself as a distributed leader (or shared leadership). Her practice is to ask a lot of questions to empower her teachers and to provide resources to facilitate their work. She also set up leadership teams and a teacher coach, although the teacher coach position no longer exists because of budget cuts. She consults with her staff members and involves them in decision making process; albeit she recognized that certain decisions are her prerogative, what she sums up as the "negotiable and nonnegotiable."

Matilda considers the school mission vital to keep the program on track, describing it as their "core guidance … [their] guidepost" for their students to be successful "in a multilingual, global community." She claimed that a leader must be "politically savvy" to measure all the consequences of decisions and to know the law to avoid unknowingly breaking it. She collaborates with the district office and the state department, especially in the hiring process, because she feels some support from the State regarding licensure issues for immersion teachers.

Matilda declared that an effective principal has to possess a good knowledge of immersion education and has to be able to use data because teachers rely on the principal for leadership. She underscored that in immersion scaffolding strategies are much more important than in a regular school; therefore, an immersion principal must have

scaffolding skills. She added that knowing how to work with the different approaches teachers have brings a diversity that is beneficial to students. For her, an effective principal must also know what is going on in the classrooms and in the building, sometimes outside too, and how to involve the community.

Matilda talked about professional development in two folds: for administrators and for teachers. She asserted that she constantly pursues professional development opportunities to renew herself and to stay up-to-date with research and technology. She would like her teachers to do the same. She has set up professional learning communities [PLCs] in the building to help teachers make progress. She encourages her teachers to attend immersion workshops in the area on a regular basis. Whenever possible, she even sends teachers to immersion conferences outside the country that she attends as well.

Matilda believes in the importance of establishing a positive learning climate. She promotes that climate by acknowledging everyone's achievements with different awards and recognitions throughout the school year, both for staff members and students. She insisted that each staff member be involved in the selection process of the recipients, including custodians. She is adamant about focusing on the positive rather than the negative in what is happening. She even set up a school climate committee to make suggestions to insure there is constantly a positive climate school wide.

Case Study #3 Stella Pelforth

Stella developed a disposition toward languages as a teenager when she attended summer camps that provided immersion settings in a foreign language. She spent over a year abroad before graduating and working as a foreign language teacher in an elementary school. She believes that immersion education is a natural process, used in the

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rest of the world, that activates the whole brain and develops problem solving and comprehension abilities in students.

Stella declared that the first role of an immersion leader is "to educate and to advocate," in particular to educate the school board about full immersion concepts and advocate on behalf of the teachers. An immersion leader who educates and advocates inspires teachers to come to school because teaching becomes more than a job but something they love doing. Her vision of leadership is to work collaboratively to foster a school climate that makes the staff feel appreciated while expecting to produce their best work. Collaboration entails transparency, consistency, and trust.

Stella recognized that teaching in immersion is difficult, so complex that "you have to be a believer in how incredibly powerful the immersion learning experiences is." To facilitate collaboration the leader must possess fresh, personal experience of what it takes to keep children motivated, particularly when there is little curriculum and material available in the target language. She is eager to substitute in the classroom when necessary, which she believes is convenient and valuable to conduct teacher evaluation by having a close look at the class culture and lesson preparation.

Stella models collaboration by working diligently with the other principals in the school district. This collaboration exemplifies the PLC model she has set up for teachers in her school. She also collaborates with the members of the community, which in turn helps clarify what the program is all about. Stella's attitude towards parents is to promote good communication to help them feel informed and involved, especially in case of difficulties with their child's progress. She thinks that parents tend to be a handful, explaining, "Immersion parents are high maintenance."

In the area of professional development, Stella makes the most of staff meeting by conducting professional development instead of doing administrative tasks that can be completed with the help of technology, such as setting up the calendar. She also started requiring teachers to observe other immersion classrooms in a different language twice a year to place them in the position of a student who learns a new language. She also finds important to send staff members together to immersion conferences in the US or abroad because common experiences are powerful. Over the years, she realized that professional development has to be interactive and meet a need teachers have. She hypothesized that effective teachers tend to seek on their own opportunities to improve their craft.

Stella declared she is a better instructional leader when she delegates the administrative tasks to the office staff, especially if they know immersion. In her opinion, a good principal has to be a good listener who allows people to communicate spontaneously to understand their point of view, particularly in immersion schools where people come from diverse backgrounds. Another quality is to keep an open mind even when facing criticisms, adding that being a good speaker and a good writer, being involved in the group, loving working in immersion, and being patient and tenacious with the students are other qualities.

On a regular day, Stella informs the staff of upcoming events, goes frequently in the hallways for visibility, and visits classrooms to perform teacher evaluations. For summative evaluations, she thinks it is important to have also the opinion of native speakers. She has secured the services of two people in the district with administrative experience to come observe her teachers. She considers that her task is comparable to the job of any principal in a regular school, except for the language element.

Regarding the school mission, Stella believes it needs to be understandable and communicated to all so everyone works toward the same objective. She fosters a positive learning climate by empowering students and teachers, providing resources, and modeling positive behaviors she wants to see in others as well as using the target language during the entire day. Language and culture are connected, but culture requires being mindful of stereotypes. At a personal level, she believes that immersion education provides a model for regular schools to follow. Despite all the difficulties, a leader passionate about language programs can receive great satisfaction because going through the program affects student lives in a very positive way.

Case Study #4 Killian Kriek

Killian had a disposition toward international relations and foreign languages by the time he started his university studies. He believes that immersion education is important for students to be on the same footing as other students around the world who are already multilingual and multicultural. He explained that immersion takes advantage of the brain capacity to learn languages at a very young age with the benefit of positive academic achievement later on.

Killian believes that leadership in a traditional school is very similar to the leadership of an immersion program. The big difference he sees is the constant necessity to advocate and to educate. Advocating and educating is extremely difficult because very few people in the community have gone through language immersion programs while in primary schools. As a result, parents need to learn to be realistic about the time needed to learn the second language.

Killian said he uses a shared (or distributed) leadership model to develop leadership in others in a very collaborative environment. He found that working together is necessary to attain the highest level possible of success in the program. He likes to say to his teachers that he is the principal "but the leader of the school is the vision that we've set as a school."

Killian considers his work very similar to the work of any principal who tries to empower his staff around a common vision so everyone can find their place, with the vision being focused on developing competences in two-languages. He underscored the need to engage and to monitor the systematic use of equitable educational practices to reach all the children and their parents. However, the major difference is that an effective immersion principal must be an instructional leader who promotes the target language throughout the school and fosters a higher level of language acquisition. One requirement is to apply to the immersion setting any new insight on how the brain best learn languages from research on language acquisition. Language is learned best when the curriculum is presented "within the context of an authentic discovery of what the cultures [of the language] are."

Killian tries to go at least twice a week into classrooms to observe teachers and to give them feedback. His comments are geared mostly toward trends across the building, not just individual issues. Another important reason for visiting classrooms is to develop relationships with students.

Killian has to deal with district requirements and state testing. His role as the principal is to understand how to prioritize district initiatives regarding curriculum and material choices or professional development opportunities within the context of a

successful immersion program. He tries to adapt those initiatives to his school without compromising the immersion model. Regarding state testing, he thinks data are more useful in both languages; therefore, he has implemented standardized evaluations in the target language. Otherwise, the collaboration with the state department is taking a positive turn, particularly about assessment practices, and that district policies concerning language proficiency to teach in the program are helpful.

Killian believes that professional development must be continuous and grounded in the daily practice. He has implemented PLCs to allow teachers to concentrate on student assessment and data to obtain the best results with different teaching strategies and planning consequently. Professional development for new teachers as very important but usually neglected in immersion schools. However, due to budget restriction professional development is often challenging to set up. Despite all the demands of his position, Killian finds very gratifying to observe the development of language skills in students and to collaborate with their families.

Summary of the Major Findings

Several commonalities exist in the experiences and beliefs of the four principals in this study. The follow is a compilation of those commonalities. All the principals,

- developed an interested in learning languages and have learned at least one additional language themselves; two have been immersion teachers and one a foreign language teacher; the fourth one has a degree in linguistics (disposition).

- believed in major benefits of immersion education, in particular for minority students. Those benefits include the development of English skills and their own culture (belief).

- recognized the need to work collaboratively, for instance by including teachers in the decision-making process, to promote a positive learning environment and work climate (attitude).

- demonstrated strong instructional leader skills, particularly in supervising and evaluating the instruction, and know immersion education and language acquisition well (disposition).

- claimed they need to know the target language to be effective leaders. Speaking the L2 also helped them in the challenge of hiring qualified immersion teachers and finding teaching material (belief/attitude).

- declared they protect the immersion environment by having policies promoting the use of the L2 in the school to stimulate the language acquisition process (belief).

- underscored the need for professional development geared toward immersion to learn about recent research in language acquisition (belief).

- stated they constantly educate and advocate or communicate with the different stakeholders because few people know about immersion programs (belief/attitude).

- noted they follow the school mission to make important decisions about the program (attitude).

- modeled the use of target language with teachers and students (attitude/disposition).

- conducted testing in the target language to have an accurate view of student learning, despite all the mandated assessment in English (disposition).

- described parents of immersion students as being usually demanding, even high maintenance (belief).

- expressed their passion or fascination for immersion education, which provides life changing experience for students (disposition).

Two principals suggested their job is very similar to being an administrator in a regular school except for the language component, while the two others saw major differences; they all recognized the job is very demanding (attitude).

Discussion of the Findings in Connection to the Theoretical Framework

The findings of this study highlight that being a principal in a foreign language immersion school is especially complex and demanding due to the use of a second language to teach the content of the program. Leaders in those schools must perform all the leadership tasks common to any elementary school with the added responsibility of administering the language component. Because the principals in this study are passionate about their jobs and know what it is like to learn another language, they get rewarded by the results and by the changes they see in student lives despite all the challenges and difficulties.

Although each principal mentioned a personal leadership style—distributed or shared leadership—(Matilda and Killian), teacher leader (Ruby), and collaborative leadership (Stella), they also are all strong instructional leaders, as defined by Hallinger

(2010) in his model. Matilda, Killian, and Stella recognized they are the instructional

leaders in their school. The nuance probably resides in the distinction they seem to make

between their overall style and the function of leadership. Nevertheless, they all

demonstrated the elements described in Hallinger's model (2010).

The dimensions of Hallinger's model (2010) of instructional leadership include

the following: (1) defining the school mission, outlining the functions of framing and

communicating clear goals; (2) managing the instructional programs, with functions of

supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating curriculum, and monitoring student

progress; (3) promoting a positive school climate with functions of protecting

instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility,

providing incentive for teachers, providing incentive for learning (p. 65). These three

domains relate to the first three research questions: (1) How do the principal's beliefs,

attitudes, and dispositions influence the school mission; (2) How do the principal's

beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions influence immersion programming; (3) How do the

principal's beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions influence the school climate. Therefore, I

discuss them together before addressing the last research question—what characteristics

exemplify an effective immersion school principal— at the end.

Dimension 1: Defining the School Mission, Outlining the Functions of Framing and Communicating Clear Goals.

The four immersion leaders have a school mission statement that is important to

them in terms of leading their school; Ruby and Killian even participated in the process

of writing their school mission. Consistent with this dimension of the model, all the

principals recognized the need to frame and communicate clear goals to all stakeholders

to achieve the mission of the school; they also identified the challenges related to that task. Ruby insisted that for her "the single most important thing as an immersion leader is to protect that immersion model and to live out our mission."

Although the importance of "a shared vision and mission" (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium [ISLLC], 2008, p. 14) is well known in school leadership, the mission of an immersion school is broader than a regular school because it encompasses the language and cultural elements. Killian and Stella used the words "educate and advocate" to describe their specific role to educate the stakeholders about the particularities of the program. Good communication is crucial because parents and community members usually have scarce information about immersion schools. Moreover, the principals describe most parents as well educated and high maintenance, they want to participate in their child's education. An effective principal must communicate well to provide them with reliable information. Coffman (1992) recognized that being the "main advocate" (p. 156) of the program is difficult and requires a solid preparation. In my experience, even new immersion teachers and school board members may only have a vague idea about all the components. It is a huge asset for an aspiring immersion leader to have at least a good understanding of immersion teaching and some knowledge of the language acquisition process to communicate effectively the school mission.

Gilzow (2002) identified advocating among the ten elements of successful immersion programs, citing the area of reaching to the community while being visible in the district and involving parents. Coffman (1992) ascertained, "There is the constant need for the principal to be a strong advocate for the immersion program" (p. 168). To

provide elements of answer to the first research question regarding the influence of beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on the school mission, I conclude that the more the principal has a disposition toward learning languages and believes in the value of immersion in terms of benefits at different level, the more he or she positively influences framing and communicating the school mission. The lack of school funding, curricular initiatives that take away time or resources, and difficulties to obtain teacher licensure are typical issues at that level because other leaders tend to overlook the specificities of language immersion schools.

Although immersion teachers and district officials can also be advocates, the principal must be the number one advocate of the program. Failure to do so can jeopardize the quality of the program because other influential people could promote their own idea of what the program should be. The principal is the person who can steer the program back on track if necessary. The ideal is to establish and maintain from the beginning of the program a clear understanding for all stakeholders, as reported in the findings.

Dimension 2: Managing the Instructional Programs, with Functions of Supervising and Evaluating Instruction, Coordinating Curriculum, and Monitoring Student Progress.

The four immersion principals were strong leaders in managing the instructional programs, although they mentioned another their leadership style. Moreover, a closer look at the way the four principals practice the leadership style they cited—shared or distributed leadership, being a teacher leader or a collaborative leader—suggest that these styles are similar, if not identical. They all expressed their determination to involve the

teachers in taking responsibilities in the program because they recognize they cannot do it alone. The difference may result from the perspective of the principal; shared or distributed leadership conveys the idea of sharing the decisions and the tasks with others whereas collaborative leadership focuses on sharing power and building teams. There is overlap for Killian, for instance, who said he practices "a shared leadership model" but described it as "developing leadership across the staff… and really working collaboratively." Ruby declared she is "a teacher leader" which emphasizes her experience as an immersion teacher in her leadership practice. This experience enables her to think like a teacher to establish collaborative working relationship with her teaching staff. Therefore, all the principals in this study are effective instructional leaders with an emphasis on collaboration with the other staff members.

The main advantage these principals have compared to most immersion principals is their ability to speak the target language. They can conduct the supervision and the evaluation of instruction without having to depend on someone else. As Matilda mentioned, knowing the language allows her to avoid the pitfall to rely only on observing student engagement to evaluate instruction instead of being able to assess the content as well, which is what monolingual principals have to do. As a result, they depend on another person to evaluate and supervise instruction without knowing firsthand what is going on in the classrooms. Effective immersion principals are also resources for teachers who have questions or meet difficulties in their classrooms. Matilda explained that teachers come to her with questions about classroom practice; she is "like a consultant." This is especially important for teachers new to immersion who possibly need more help than an experienced teacher. Even when teachers work in teams, they might not have the

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availability during school hours that an administrator has. Being a principal who can advise teachers about issues specific to the language of instruction is definitely an asset.

Coordinating the curriculum is crucial in immersion because the content must include language objectives and cultural elements, within a context of authentic discovery and material, if possible. Teachers from other countries establish the basis for the culture of the language by facilitating cultural discovery in the classroom. Coffman (1992) emphasized that "the language immersion program offers a perfect vehicle to exposing students to other cultures" (p. 165) which helps them value differences among themselves and ethnic diversity in the community as well. In addition to classroom activities, immersion schools I visited or worked in typically feature elaborated displays of the culture of the language and organize various cultural celebrations throughout the year.

To deepen the language and cultural experience, each school in this study also brings interns from countries speaking the language of instruction. These interns are student teachers in their country of study who come to work one year in an immersion schools in the US. They assist teachers and organize cultural activities for students. Having native speakers who are in education enhances opportunities for students to hear and learn the target language. Students also learn that the culture can take different forms within the same language. The principal must insure that teachers let those interns working with students, not correcting papers at a desk. Interns can also be resources for immersion teachers who are not native speakers, and who seek opportunities to refine their language skills. The schools with a French program send students on an exchange trip to France.

Principals monitor teacher plan lessons to verify the presence of language development objectives to build high level of language proficiency. Some students may give the impression they get confused or do not understand communications in the target language, tempting novice teachers to switch to English. But Matilda warned against that risk. "When you do that [switch to English], the student will wait [for the teacher to explain the content in English] and will not work harder." In other words, when teachers resort to translating in English, it defeats the purpose of immersion. An effective principal must maintain the integrity of the program by monitoring that teachers consistently use the target language. The principal will also to verify that students can comprehend the level of the vocabulary used in class, which is one key in language acquisition: "make the input comprehensible" (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010, p. 40).

Coffman (1992) noted that immersion teachers must have particularly good knowledge of teaching to young students' language arts and reading; however, developing literacy skills can become a challenge as well. Stella warned that students develop quickly good decoding skills and read beautifully in the target language but might lag in comprehension skills, which could go unnoticed to someone who does not speak the language. The principals in this study have tools to assess student progress, although assessing oral skills is more difficult, especially in French, because of the lack of standardized assessment. Therefore, careful attention must prevail when assessing reading skills to verify the student level of comprehension. This requires a school or class library that contains books in the target language written for different levels of reading abilities. Books in the L2 are more expensive than the English ones. Principals must find ways to raise funds and get books that are appropriate for the different reading levels.

Ruby noted that students can be fluent in the target language but not get to the higher content in the upper grades. The classroom teacher would know that students need more vocabulary, but might not seek to remediate to it. Unless the principal speaks the target language, it could easily go undetected.

While the principal's fluency in English is a given in a regular school, being able to use another language to accomplish the function of managing the instructional program shows the added complexity of leading a language immersion school. Ruby argued it is still possible to have a successful program led by a monolingual principal: "it will be successful but it won't be great." Matilda remarked that principals who do not speak the L2 "manage immersion schools; they do not *lead* the immersion school because how can you be an instructional leader if you don't speak the language of instruction." Although the practice shows that speaking the language is not the number one requirement compared to administrative experience in hiring an immersion principal, knowing the L2 or at least another language is clearly an advantage to lead a foreign language immersion school. Coffman (1992) wrote, "It is definitely important for the principal to have a working knowledge of the language" (p. 156). Immersion school principals who do not speak the target language of the school, unlike the principals in this study, must rely on another person in the school, such as a program coordinator or assistant principal, to accomplish the supervision and the evaluation of instruction.

Building the curriculum becomes very difficult if the leader cannot fully participate in the process because of language barrier. There is often the issue of how to design the instructional part in English starting in second grade. The principals in this study have established the principle of associating the classroom teacher with the target

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language, the classes are set up to have a specialist or another immersion teacher teach English lessons once they are implemented. In one school students go to a different classroom because the other possibilities are not available.

Monitoring student progress, on the other hand, seems easier to conduct without knowing the language than supervising and evaluating the instruction as well as coordinating the curriculum. However, assessment in English such as the state mandated testing is not representative of the student progress in the target language. Ruby reported that some principals tend to increase the amount of instructional time in English to improve the student standardized test scores. Unless the immersion leader is a firm believer in the principles of immersion, teaching content in the L2 and getting good results in tests in English appear counterintuitive to most people including educators. A principal such as Ruby, on the other hand, recognizes the need to increase the amount of target language to work at a higher level in L2, knowing that students will also get benefit in learning English.

When a child is struggling, the principal must be knowledgeable about those issues in order to make informed decisions, which may be more difficult when one has not been through the process of learning another language. However, Gaffney (1999) postulated that at-risk students can be successful in immersion, moreover "immersion may be their only chance for acquiring a second language" (p. 2) because the process of acquiring the language uses the natural ability of the brain, unlike rote memorization and decontextualized grammar in traditional language classes. Fortune and Tedick (2003) suggested that learning difficulties does not warrant a transfer. They wrote "In fact, many instructional techniques used in immersion are similar to techniques recommended for

struggling learners" (p. 2). Ruby proposed that only in the case of "an important auditory problem" or when "the child is not learning" that switching the program could be beneficial to a struggling learner.

Gilzow (2002) cited the areas of curriculum, teaching, and assessing students as important when describing successful programs. In this study, the principals were well aware of the importance of their role in supervising and evaluating, in coordinating the curriculum, and monitoring student progress. The second research question addresses the influence of beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on immersion programming; there is evidence that an effective immersion principal can make a big difference in this domain because programming is at the heart of the immersion model. A principal who believes in the benefits of learning a second language will find necessary to maximize the language and cultural experience of immersion students. He or she will be more effective in prioritizing the programming of different activities in the school promoting the L2. For instance, effective principals try to have special subjects taught in the target language to increase the exposure to the target language. I conclude that a principal with foreign language teaching experience possesses a deeper understanding and appreciation of the effort needed and the progress made by students learning the target language, especially when paired with his/her passion for languages.

Dimension 3: Promoting a Positive School Climate with Functions of Protecting Instructional Time, Promoting Professional Development, Maintaining High Visibility, Providing Incentive for Teachers, and Providing Incentive for Learning.

In immersion, the function of protecting instructional time becomes protecting the target language from the predominance of English. To reach the goal of language

proficiency and intercultural awareness, those principals enacted strict parameters and policies to protect and encourage the use of the target language during the school day and, in one case, during after school activities. They try to expose constantly students to the target language inside and outside the classroom by making it a priority to create an environment that favors the target language over English. For instance, they make the announcements in the L2 whenever possible, although in some schools announcements are in two languages usually because the office staff or the custodial staff are not bilingual. In some schools, the teachers and the principal do not talk to parents in English in the hallways in front of students, but take them to the office if necessary.

In an immersion school, the principals must constantly protect the instructional time from English because districts organize a number of special programs and activities that are conducted in English in all the schools. Ruby mentioned that even parents would like to propose other activities, such as arts presentation, but she is adamant about protecting instructional time in the target language and focusing on the immersion curriculum. She even managed to hire specialists who speak the L2, which is another way to promote the use of the target language.

All the principals in the study recognize the need to adapt professional development to the need specific to immersion programs to present best practices and recent studies. Within each school there are PLCs (Professional Learning Communities); however, an effective leader can also look at staff meetings to conduct professional development. There can bring a topic to meet a need teacher expressed or introduce a topic teachers do not know. Matilda even talked about differentiating professional development for teachers the way instruction can be differentiated for students.

Professional development can also take place outside the school, at immersion conferences for instance, either locally organized or through organizations specialized in languages such as the CARLA Institute. This institute also send presenters to school to conduct workshops on site to respond to specific needs. Matilda and Stella even sent teachers abroad when they had an opportunity, favoring groups to give them a common experience in attending a workshop on immersion instead of having one at the time reporting back to the school. Here again, this type of professional development has become more difficult to do due to budget cuts. Consistent with Blase and Blasé (2000) findings on effective instructional principals, Stella asked her teachers to visit another immersion school to observe other immersion teachers.

All the principals believed in and practiced maintaining high visibility, particularly to model the use of the target language and as Stella put it: "to be happy about the experience." They all mentioned they use modeling as a strategy, and I saw them modeling the use of the second language consistently with both teachers and students while conducting field observations. Even in the case of discipline issues, principals used the target language except for one school that had district requirements to use English. In that school, the principal uses the target language first before using English. Modeling and monitoring student use of the target language outside classroom is productive because students usually like to meet the expectations. Stella reported, "The interesting piece is, however, if I walk through the cafeteria or I am out on the playground … they will all of a sudden switch over because they know that's my expectation."

The principals in this study believe in setting the tone in regard to modeling and using the target language. As a results, they provide incentive for teachers to be consistent in their use of the target language and for students who are encouraged to use their L2 skills. Blase and Blase (2000) reported that effective principals model teaching practices and interactions with students which in turn increase teacher motivation to improve their teaching. Ruby said that she models improving her target language skills by taking the risk to speak the target language with native speakers. This way she shows that teachers are not required to be perfect but to be ready to improve their knowledge of the L2 for English speakers and L1 for native speakers. Principals also support teachers by providing material in the target language that teachers will not have to create. Ruby, Matilda, and Stella travelled abroad to buy books and teaching material in the target language.

Teachers benefit from a climate of collaboration with their other colleagues. Ruby alleged that there sometimes is tension between the native speakers and the non-native speakers of the language. To prevent that tension from occurring, the principal must make staff members feel comfortable in speaking any language, mindful of the fact that they can make mistakes. They can also request assistance with struggling students from a pluridisciplinary team led by the principal. Those teachers who prefer the full immersion model with limited English interruption appreciate when the principal promotes that model in the school. Students become motivated when they have various cultural events in relation with the language of instruction. Matilda set up different rewards for students doing well in school or using the target language. These events promote what Coffman

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(1992) called the "specialness" (p. 164) of the school, the goal being to make learning a second language an enjoyable experience for students.

To answer the third research question regarding the influence of the principal's beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on the school climate, there is evidence that the principal play a key part in setting the tone in an immersion school. Believing in collaboration, visibility, and professional development promote a climate favorable for an immersion program. Therefore, the principal has a vital role in promoting a school climate that is conducive to learning content in a second language by the decisions he or she makes.

Limits of the Model

Instructional leadership is an important part of an effective immersion program. However, Yin (2009) urged researchers to stay open-minded during the analysis process to be able to consider rival exponation or to uncover contrary findings. In that regard, I found that although Hallinger's (2010) model encompasses most of leadership beliefs of the participants, it does not account for all the facets of the leadership of an immersion principal. In immersion, there are areas closely related to functions described in the model. I previously included the issues of the cultural aspect in coordinating the curriculum and of protecting the language of instruction in protecting instructional time. Nevertheless, there are themes that do not fit into the framework that I discussed before answering the final research question. These topics are hiring and retaining immersion teachers, professional development for immersion leaders, the influence of the school context, and the turnover rate.

Hiring and retaining immersion teachers

Hiring and retaining quality immersion teachers is not in the model, but all of the

principals in the study referred to that task as challenging and time consuming because

immersion teachers must to be proficient in two languages: the L2 to teach and English to

accomplish other tasks, such as communicating with parents as well as teaching

elementary students. Those principals said they network with different organizations in

the area related to the language of their school, such as the Alliance Française (French

Alliance) or the Chamber of Commerce.

Principals who are fluent in the target language can conduct the interview in

person. They also do formative and summative evaluations, only Stella chose to have

other people to do it but those evaluations are in addition to hers to give teachers a second

opinion on their practice but from the perspective of a native speaker. Here again, a

monolingual principal will have to rely on other people with foreign language expertise

to participate in the interview of candidates to assess their language skills. Hiring teachers

and conducting summative evaluations of teachers are domains critical and sensitive;

consequently, principals must secure the help of people that are able and trustworthy to

assist them. Other potential problems such as issues of confidentiality or issues of

competence may arise if those hired lack training to work at this level of responsibilities.

Professional development for immersion leaders

All the principals in this study mentioned that it is important for them to keep up

with the research on immersion. This is not in the model, but it is important for them to

stay informed of the latest research to find applications for their programs. They are able

to make choices that benefit the program and to help teachers improve their practice.

Staying abreast with the research helps them to deal with parents who may have questions about the program. Principals may also be more confident in their abilities to keep the program on track knowing what is consistent with the school mission. Blase and Blase (2000) remarked that effective principals habitually participated in professional development meetings with teachers, becoming learners themselves. For instance, Ruby attended a workshop on eliciting feedback before bringing that concept to her teachers.

The influence of the school context

The school context shapes some of the attitudes and dispositions of the principals of this study. For instance, Ruby works in a public charter school where she has much freedom to steer the program in the direction she wants. She can hire teachers without having to depend on the district human resource office. That facilitates the development of the second language environment she has. She is also able to hire specialists who are fluent in the target language.

Stella works in a school district that has the immersion program running for over 20 years. The district board supports the only program; some members had their children attend the immersion school. As a result, the program has financial resources and material from the previous years. When she was hired, Stella negotiated with the district board to limit the influence of district initiatives that would be detrimental to the immersion environment. She stated, "I am old enough now to take on a significant amount of risk."

Matilda, on the other hand, works in a school district where there are several immersion schools. There is a bit of competition among them. She is concerned about the low level of financial resources her school receives. For example, she stated that she

wants to make sure that students identified as gifted and talented have their needs taken care of or "we're gonna lose them." She has staffing issues because of the restricted district budget and the human resources office. She reported that the district wanted to hire an assistant principal but that would have cut three or four teaching positions. Moreover, she had to employ a teacher the district had under contract but who knew nothing about immersion programs.

Killian works in a two-way immersion program that started because of the wide community and board support. He reported having limited issues with financial resources and staffing issues. He is able to adapt district initiatives to the requirements of the programs. Instead of having the first three year of full immersion, students start with a ratio of 90% L2 and 10% English. Although Killian privileges the use of the target language as much as possible, there is a minimum of 10% of English for the 50% of the student population who are not English native speakers. As a results, district sponsored presentations and programs in English can be easily integrated in the daily routine.

The turnover rate

Finally, there is the issue of turnover among principals in general. Goldring and Taie (2014) reported that only 78% of all principals in place the previous year were still working at the same school. Immersion principals are equally if not more affected by this trend. Matilda, Stella, and Killian recognized the demanding nature of the position in terms of mental and physical constraints and the need to renew oneself. The amount of work that immersion principals face is huge; they have all the tasks of a regular program with the addition of all the elements linked to the language component. Matilda recognized her job "is like running a senior high school." Stella conceded that she needs

to have an effective administrative assistant "to operate at a very high level." She also wished she "had known how to delegate more before [taking] the job." The school context can add to the difficulty of their job, especially when financial resources are limited. As of the fall semester of 2014, three of the four principals in this study had left the field.

Characteristics of an Effective Immersion School Principal

The last of the four research questions is about the characteristics of an effective immersion school principal. The main characteristic specific to immersion is being passionate about immersion programs. The data show that the four principals in this study have a passion or fascination for immersion programs. They are bilingual and recognize the value of learning well another language. They have gone through the process of learning a foreign language; thus, they are more knowledgeable about the language acquisition process. Their passion and skills enable them to educate the stakeholders—the parents specifically—in a convincing way. They are strong advocates for immersion in general and for their programs and teachers in particular.

Effective principals enjoy being in a stimulating, although challenging, environment. They can take care of themselves to renew their energy and motivation. Seeing students who become fluent in another language is very rewarding because they know what it takes to learn another language.

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Recommendations for Future Research

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After having analyzed the interview answers, the field notes, and the documents, one important feature noted in the discussion and common to the four principals in this study is the ability to speak the language of instruction. However, in practice it is far from

being the case. Ruby and Stella, who worked as immersion teachers before becoming administrators, commented that the principals they worked for were monolingual. When the leader cannot speak the language of the program, the next best case is a principal who can speak a related language. For instance, one principal in a French program was at one point of her career principal in a Spanish immersion school. Nevertheless, there are a number of monolingual immersion principals; therefore, one area to investigate is immersion school principals who do not speak any foreign language to understand how they lead their school without being able to comprehend the content and what surrogate strategies they are using.

The principals in the study strongly believed in the need to protect the immersion environment from unnecessary interaction in English. However, they reported that it is a challenge, sometime because of the school context. Future research could look at the correlation between the leader's knowledge of the target language and the enforcement of language policies in the school.

Some immersion schools have programs in several languages in the same building. Another study could investigate the implications for the principal of having multiple languages regarding how to insure a parity among those language and cultural displays, protecting the language, and staffing issues, especially when the principal speaks one of the languages of instruction.

There is no mention of use of technology in leading the school, although it is implied with test scores and analyzing data. School leaders have different computer programs they use to facilitate their work as a principals. Another study could look at

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technology skills needed to lead immersion programs and how to integrate technology in language learning.

Recommendations for Practice

The results of this study add to a better understanding of effective leadership in immersion schools. Although not always possible, school districts should try to hire first candidates who have learned a foreign language, preferably the target language, or at least another language, especially in the case of languages with common roots such as French and Spanish.

Somebody with teaching experience in language immersion is definitely an asset at long as they have the leadership skills. Although being an effective leader is learned, the ideal candidate should be able to draw from several leadership styles to match the needs of the school and the teachers.

Among those styles, an effective immersion principal displays the elements of instructional leadership. However, this aspect of the position takes time. To achieve that objective, the aspiring leader must be able to delegate the managerial tasks as much as possible to focus on the instructional leadership of the school.

Another quality is being able to be the voice of the program for the community and the school board. Therefore, a candidate for principal position in immersion should be knowledgeable about language acquisition and the role the culture play in learning a language. Someone who has passion and skills for language acquisition can better relate to parents and board members.

At the state level, requirements and procedure to obtain immersion teacher licensure need to be adapted to no longer penalize foreign candidates. Principals have the

impression that the current testing requirements are not favorable for speakers of another language who are seeking to teach in immersion. They cited language issues and possible cultural biases associated with the test. They had teachers under provisional licensure who demonstrate good teaching abilities, but might need to leave the school because of the state requirements. Ironically, they might be able to be licensed in another state. My recommendation is to look at immersion teacher licensure in the nation to find out which states have efficient requirements. Then, a group of advocate of foreign language immersion programs could lobby legislators in other states to adjust their requirements.

As a result of these recommendations, there is the need for instruction to train aspiring principals in immersion schools. The principals in the study have learned their skills on the job or through their experience as immersion teachers. Professional development is also a big need for immersion leaders along with networking with other principals. Some states have a number of immersion programs that warrant the organization of immersion sessions or conferences while others do not. There are institutes that are dedicated to the promotion of immersion programs through workshops and publications. To improve aspiring immersion principal training and seasoned leader professional development, I recommend setting up leadership programs geared toward immersion on line to offer these classes to the largest number possible.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TITLE: Leadership in Language Immersion Schools: Case Studies of Principals' Beliefs, Attitudes, and Dispositions

INVESTIGATORS: Phil Corbaz, M.S., Bernita Krumm, Ph.D., Oklahoma State University

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to examine immersion school principals' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions on effective immersion school leadership. A researcher will conduct case studies in several language immersion schools that have been recognized as being successful programs.

PROCEDURES:

You will participate in an interview of about 30 minutes at the beginning of the day. Interviews will be audio taped for accuracy. After the interview, you will conduct your daily activities while a researcher will shadow you for the rest of the time. The researcher will take notes and may ask you follow-up questions or explanations during that time. The researcher will also receive copies of work documents you have written during the current school year, such as school newsletters and staff bulletins.

This study is designed to last one day at your school, approximately 7 hours (approximately 30 minutes to complete the interview at the beginning of the day, and 6.5 hours for the shadowing part and the collection of documents). Please place your initials on the line below to indicate your agreement to participate:

_____ I wish to participate in the research described above and agree to be audio taped before letting the researcher shadow me for the rest of the school day. I understand that the recording will be transcribed for accuracy. I will get a copy of the transcript to verify that my words are accurately captured. The researcher will have access to all the areas of the school with me and will get a copy of school documents I have written.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION:

The risks to you are minimal. You may also choose to stop at any time.

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION:

If you are interested, we will send you a copy of the results of the study when it is finished.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

All information about you will be kept confidential and will not be released. Transcripts, audiotapes, and documents will be identified by subject number only, rather than names on them. All information (Transcripts, audiotapes, and documents) will be kept in a secure place that is open only to the researchers and their assistants. Audiotapes will be coded to understand leadership in immersion schools. This information will be saved as long as it is scientifically useful; typically, such information is kept for five years after publication of the results. Results from this study may be presented at professional meetings or in publications. You and your school will not be identified by name; we will be looking at results as a whole. It is possible that the consent process and data collection will be observed by research oversight staff responsible for safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of people who participate in research.

CONTACTS:

I understand that I may contact any of the researchers at the following addresses and phone numbers, should I desire to discuss my participation in the study and/or request information about the results of the study: **Phil Corbaz**, M.S., 8802 E 62nd Ct., Tulsa, OK 74133, (918) 249-3481 or corbaz@okstate.edu. **Bernita Krumm**, Ph.D., 310 Willard Hall, Dept. of Educational Leadership, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-9445 or bernita.krumm@okstate.edu. I may also contact Dr. **Shelia Kennison**, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, OSU, (405) 744-3377 or **irb@okstate.edu** with any questions concerning participant's rights.

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS:

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time, without penalty.

CONSENT DOCUMENTATION:

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form has been given to me.

_____   _____

Signature of participant   Date

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the
participant sign it.

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   Date

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Questions for Interview of the Principals

Introduction

Hello, my name is Phil Corbaz and I am a graduate student at Oklahoma State University. I would like to thank you for participating in this study. I am conducting this research to find out what your thoughts about effective immersion school leadership are and what your leadership practices are. You have been selected because you have been recognized as being an effective immersion school leader; I expect to learn much from you. Before we proceed, I need to go over the consent form and have you initial it and sign it at the bottom. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Factual Information Questions:

Please, tell me about your professional background.

Tell me about your educational experience, especially as an administrator.

 (Probe further if needed for level of education, years of teaching and administrative

    experience, and years in the current position).

Do you have any other (factual) information that would be helpful for this study?

Guiding Questions for the Interview:

1.   Why is language immersion important?

2.   What does an immersion leader do? (Probe: similar to other schools? Different?)

        How are those tasks/roles important for an immersion program? What are some of

        the challenges of an immersion leader?

3.   Can you describe your leadership practices in regard to the immersion school? How did these actions affect the running of the school? What are some of the things you wish you had known before taking the position?

4.   In your opinion, what are some of the qualities and characteristics of an effective immersion school principal? How is this similar and/or different than a principal in a nonimmersion school? What are some tasks you do as the principal on a typical day?

5.   How important is the school mission in the success of the school?

6.   How do you promote a positive learning climate in your school?

7.   What is the influence of district policies and decisions on your school? What are some adaptations or changes you had to make to follow the State mandates? Do you feel any support from the district or the State?

8.   How do you approach the use of the target language by students and staff members? Has this changed the use of target language school wide in any way? If so, in what ways has this changed? If not, why do you think it hasn't changed?

9.   What is your take on second language and culture acquisition in the immersion school? What influence do you have on the teachers in those areas?

10.   What is your perspective on professional development for immersion teachers? How have your beliefs about professional development affected/changed it in your school?

11.   What are your roles and main duties as the instructional leader? What is your stance on assessment of content and language outcomes? How do you ensure that

the learning objectives are met? What are the resources available for immersion

schools?

12.   Is there anything else you would like to add about leadership in immersion

schools?

VITA

Philippe Charles Corbaz

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: LEADERSHIP IN LANGUAGE IMMERSION SCHOOLS:
CASE STUDIES OF FOUR ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS

Major Field: School Administration

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education in School
Administration at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in
December, 2014.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Educational
Psychology at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2005.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at Oral
Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma in May, 2001.

Experience:

2001-2011: Immersion Teacher K-5, Tulsa Public Schools
2011-2013: Fourth and Fifth Grade Teacher, Canton de Fribourg, Switzerland
2013-2014: Teacher on Assignment PreK-6, Canton de Vaud, Switzerland
2014-present: Dean at the elementary level, Canton de Vaud, Switzerland

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