

WASHBACK AND STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY
COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING:
IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

by

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Abstract

This research study explored the influence of summative assessment and stakeholders on contemporary Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in high-stakes educational settings. The participants comprised of second language instructors that were instructing university preparatory English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. Each participant had advanced qualifications, had extensive teaching experience, and self-identified as a contemporary CLT instructor. The study utilized a phenomenological methodology to examine the participants lived experience of their respective working environments. A fuller understanding of the desirable and undesirable effects of summative assessment and stakeholder influence on contemporary CLT practice emerged from the study. The study concludes by synthesising the findings with current research to reveal practical knowledge for those involved in proficiency based second language program design to consider.

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Associated Definitions and Reference Terms

Assessment: Assessment is a process which endeavors to continually monitor learner progress and provide feedback to support learning (Sousa, 2015).

Assessment Alignment: Refers to the alignment of learning activities and assessment tasks. In an aligned system the learner is said to be 'trapped' without an avenue to succeed without learning what he or she is intended to learn (Biggs, 2003).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): CLT is the term used in the second language teaching field to denote the teaching of a second language for the purpose of communicating in that language (Lee & VanPatten, 2003).

High-stakes Assessment: Refers to the status of the assessment. Assessments on which participants' careers or study plans hang are most likely to heavily influence teaching and learning behaviors (Alderson & Wall, 1993).

Language Acquisition: The development of the linguistic system in the mind/brain, this is accepted as a largely unconscious process (VanPatten, 2003).

Language Learning: Signifies the process of consciously learning aspects of language, usually associated with traditional language classrooms (Krashen, 1982).

Negative Washback: Undesirable influence of assessment on classroom practice (Alderson & Wall, 1993).

Positive Washback: Desirable influence of assessment on classroom practice (Alderson & Wall, 1993).

Reliability: Refers to the degree to which assessment produces stable and consistent results on repeated trials (Carmines & Zellar, 1979).

Testing: Testing is utilized to measure what a learner knows at a given moment. Testing is a singular event. Testing differs from assessment in its purpose. (Sousa, 2015).

Summative Assessment: Refers to assessment with a primary goal of assessing quality (Taras, 2005).

Validity: Refers to how well assessment measures what it is purported to measure (Carmines & Zellar, 1979).

Washback: Denotes the influence of assessments on classroom practice (Alderson & Wall, 1993).

Chapter One

The immense desire for an opportunity to have access to an English education has reverberated throughout the world. Inadvertently, this trend has caused preparatory language departments at universities to become the major gatekeepers of who gets admission into university (Ryan, 2010). It is vital that language departments ensure instructors have the ability to enable students to efficiently gain the English language skills they need to support their future studies with consideration of diverse cultural learners' needs, desires, and expectations.

Second language instruction has emerged through the growth of understanding of second language acquisition and general education learning theory (VanPatten, 2003). The relatively new field of *Second Language Acquisition* (SLA) can be traced back to the early 1960s when Noam Chomsky's theories on first language acquisition (1965 on) were applied to ideas about second language learning (VanPatten, 2003). The role of the teacher in the field of general education, and language education has been undergoing a major shift away from the traditional and behaviorist view of *teachers as passive technicians*. Contemporary education conceptualizes *teachers as reflective practitioners* who facilitate knowledge through an integrated approach, and *teachers as transformative intellectuals* who embrace the sociopolitical role of language (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). The shift can be exemplified through the introduction of Core Competencies in the British Columbia's K-12 curriculum. Core competencies consist of intellectual, personal, social and emotional skills used engage in deep and life-long learning. Teachers utilize classroom activities that promote students use of thinking, collaboration and communication to solve problems, address issues, and make decisions (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2017). Ontario's K-12 curriculum assessment and instruction guidelines evidence the transition towards teaching professionalism as the curriculum endorses individual

and collective ownership of learning, achievement, and student well-being (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013).

Language institutions require assessment strategies that address the incongruent nature of utilizing traditional standardized testing to assess the process-based learning in contemporary second language teaching. Researchers have called for standardized assessment that seeks to gauge communicative proficiency rather than linguistic knowledge (Bachman & Palmer, 1996) and process-orientated assessment strategies, such as portfolios, presentations and written products to address this incongruence (Coombe, Davidson, O'Sullivan, & Stoyoff, 2012) .

The objective of this research study was to gain an understanding of the phenomenon of assessment and stakeholder influence on contemporary Communicative Language Teaching practitioners. The study was designed to elicit practical knowledge for the advancement of effective second language learning curricula. The phenomenological research methodology was used to explore the lived experience of highly qualified instructors with extensive experience of working in the high-stakes testing environment of university preparation placement courses. The pre-eminent second language teaching qualification is a Master degree in the field of second language teaching in Canada. Master of Second Language Teaching degrees offered throughout the world are: Master of Education (MEd) in TESOL, Master of Arts (MA) or Science (MS) in Applied Linguistics, Master of Arts (MA) in English with an emphasis in TESOL and Master of Arts (MA) in Teaching (MAT) in ESL.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The literature revealed gaps in the understanding of the nature of assessment and stakeholder influence on professional second language instruction, which is practiced in accordance with current Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles. The study sought to highlight these gaps in knowledge by exploring the influence of current summative assessment strategies and stakeholders on contemporary CLT.

1.2 Significance of the Research

The results enabled a greater understanding of the desirable and undesirable effects of summative assessment and stakeholder influence on advanced Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) practice. The findings revealed practical knowledge for the advancement of curricula. The study also elucidated the need for further research into the area of influences that inhibit the successful implementation of CLT in high-stakes settings. The study results may be of interest to language institutions striving for excellence and for skilled instructors seeking to promote systemic change toward conditions that facilitate optimal language acquisition. I was interested in conducting this study to help establish Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as a practice with unique qualities that cannot be addressed with strategies solely taken from general education and yet that fits well with the constructivist and social learning approaches that prevail in Canadian higher learning environments.

1.3 Purpose of the Study and Research Question

The overarching purpose of the study was to examine the lived experience of contemporary language instructors. I was interested in exploring the influences that inhibit the successful implementation of CLT within high-stakes English as a Second Language (ESL) course settings. I opted to study influence with regards to highly qualified instructors with

extensive experience as a means to identify second language teachers that have applied knowledge of the current CLT principles and emerging hypotheses in their course design and class delivery.

A phenomenological qualitative research method was used to gain meaning and understanding of the complex forces that summative assessment and stakeholder influence bring to bear on skilled instruction. The study illuminated the influences that may impel skilled instructors to alter their instructional content and methodologies by analysing the lived experience of the study's participants.

1.3.1 Research questions. I sought to reveal the lived experience of contemporary second language instructors working within a high-stakes second language instructional setting through this study. The central questions guiding the study were the following: how does summative assessment influence advanced second language classroom instruction; how do stakeholders influence advanced second language classroom instruction; and what input can be gleaned from instructor responses to better inform institutions to address the undesirable effects of assessment and stakeholder influence on contemporary second language instruction?

1.4 Background of the Study

Current Communicative language Teaching (CLT) theory has not fully transferred into practice. Teaching methodologies have become more communicative in many cases, but testing largely follows more traditional structures that emphasize lower-order thinking with a focus on form rather than meaning (Brown, 1994). Jacobs and Farrell (2003) asserted that traditional testing structures create a *washback* effect that deters teachers from adopting current methodologies. Moya and O'Malley (1994) maintained that such undesirable washback effects stemmed from utilizing product-orientated assessment in order to measure the process-orientated

instruction associated with contemporary CLT. Messick (1996) reiterated the necessity of aligning instruction with assessment:

Ideally, the move from learning exercises to test exercises should be seamless. As a consequence, for optimal positive washback there should be little if any difference between activities involved in learning the language and activities involved in preparing for the test. (p. 241)

Communicative Language Teaching is the teaching of a second language for the purpose of communicating in that language. CLT advances instructional principles and approaches drawn from the fields of Second Language Acquisition and Educational Theory (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). CLT currently involves the notion of providing learners with large amounts of meaning-bearing and comprehensible input through activities that are meaningful in nature (Barcroft, 2016). Lee and VanPatten (2003) stated: “[CLT] cannot be equated with first learning some vocabulary, then learning some grammar, and then finding something to talk about to use the grammar and vocabulary” (p.1). Kumaravadivelu (2003) stated that traditional second language teaching, based on the notion of teachers as transmitters of information, is no longer considered adequate to facilitate contemporary CLT. The second language instructor’s role has become one of a facilitator as instructors endeavor to facilitate the maximizing learning potential through active engagement in communicative activities. As contemporary CLT seeks to promote active learner engagement, traditional extrinsic learner motivators such as standardized tests have become problematic (Noles, Clement, & Pelletier, 1999).

A number of teaching methodologies have consequently emerged in order to cope with the communicative orientation of language instruction and the facilitative role of the second language instructor. The post-method era began to emerge after the turn of the century as a movement away from the limiting dogmatism of methodology (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

Kumaravadivelu (2003) suggested that post-method orientated researchers are challenging the

concept of teaching methods, asserting that blind adherence to any one methodology is too limiting to meet the dynamic nature of the linguistic, conceptual, and communicative capacities of a given group of learners.

A contemporary second language instructor is able to select and adapt teaching strategies, methods, and approaches in order suit the dynamic nature of any given classroom situation (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Kumaravadivelu stated that an instructor draws from his or her Second Language Acquisition theoretical knowledge base in order to assess the suitability of any instructional methodology or approach upon application in the classroom.

The goal of this research study was to consider the inherent benefits and challenges that current summative assessment practices and stakeholder influences place on contemporary second language instructors. An in-depth account of the aforementioned theories is provided in chapter two as part of the literature review.

1.5 Researcher Context (Personal Location)

I am a second language instructor with 13 years of experience in the field. My related educational background includes a Master of Applied Linguistics and a Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) diploma. I have also attended a multitude of language teaching conferences and workshops specific to language-teaching issues. I am currently situated in Canada, but have the experience of instructing in university settings in Mexico, Colombia, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. I have sought to understand the dynamic nature of the language classroom while striving to adhere to the overarching theoretical principles of current communicative language instruction throughout my career. I believe strong institutional support and curriculum design is vital to enable learners to efficiently acquire language proficiency. I am a strong advocate of the movement toward instructor professionalism and

autonomy within the second language instructional context. Instructors acting as professionals are not bound by the dictates of a prescribed textbook or syllabus that cannot take into consideration the fluid dynamics of a particular class setting.

I have instructed under the following summative assessment structures: the standardized assessment schemes of the Cambridge English Language Assessment exams and the Educational Testing Service's (ETS) Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL®) test; purely portfolio based assessment schemes; combinations of alternative assessment and standardized assessment strategies; and text book-based testing and teaching systems. Instructing under differing assessment schemes has enabled me to experience the complex array of positive and negative pressures on instruction inherent in each assessment scheme.

1.6 Conceptual Lens (Theoretical Orientation)

The theoretical framework for this study was guided by the *interpretive description* qualitative research approach developed by Sally Thorne (2008). Interpretive description arose from the phenomenological tradition, utilizing themes and patterns to draw out knowledge pertinent to practical application (Thorne, 2008). Interpretive description strives to answer the question *so what* and is driven by the overriding aim of gathering practical useable knowledge (Thorne, 2008). Interpretive description does not dictate adherence to a prescribed set of procedures. It consists of guidelines that enable the mindful integration of theoretical and technical devices into the researcher's study (Thorne, 2008).

I chose to follow the interpretive description research approach as I wanted to explore, understand and explain the phenomenon of assessment washback and stakeholder influence as it directly affects practicing advanced second language instructors; as influence is rooted in human experience, dealing with influence on human endeavor; as little is known about the phenomenon

of washback and stakeholder influence on advanced second language instructors; and as I sought to put forward hypotheses relating the advancement of second language learning curricula.

The interpretive description methodology allowed me to reveal the lived experience of the participants experiencing the phenomenon of assessment and stakeholder influence and reveal information to improve curricula. Interpretive description's hermeneutic underpinnings allowed me to acknowledge and work with the inherent biases and assumptions I hold as I am an experienced ESL instructor.

1.7 Limitations and Challenges

Several limiting factors emerged as I conducted this research study. I was unable to limit my study to the Canadian university context as I could not secure a sufficient number of participants. Consequently, I decided to widen my study to include university contexts world-wide. Despite reaching out to thousands of instructors I was able to secure five of the six participants I initially set out to obtain. Many potential participants stated that they shared the concerns the study set out to highlight but were unable to participate due to time constraints. I acknowledge that this widening of context and lowering of participants negatively impacted the amount of data collected. However, I believe that my study retained sufficient representative credibility as: the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) context is an international phenomenon; and I was confident that my categories were saturated as I saw in the data similar instances over and over again. As I explored the experiential context of the participants, maintaining interpretive authority proved difficult. I found myself constantly reflecting on and analysing my own bias and experience in an effort to ensure that my interpretations were trustworthy. During the interview process I made an effort to ensure my questioning was impartial and I limited my conversational input as much as possible.

1.8 Delimitations

In a contemporary second language classroom the instructor emphasizes the learning of the linguistic system through the process of communicating (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). University second language courses commonly include additional skills specific to the academic environment and the students' needs. Academic skills include formal writing, critical thinking, study habits, understanding of cultural norms, and educational perspectives. Assessment schemes generally do not clearly delineate between linguistic competence and academic skills. This study was primarily concerned with assessment and stakeholder influence on the instructors' core pursuit of facilitating linguistic competence. Due to the lack of clarity in differentiating between linguistic competence and academic skills, I examined assessment and stakeholder influence from the assessment contexts as found in practice in their entirety. This study looked at how the assessment of language proficiency and additional academic skills, along with stakeholders, influence classroom instruction within a university preparatory program context.

The study was solely concerned with the impact of assessment washback and stakeholder influence directly on contemporary CLT, and sought practical knowledge that can be of use to language departments and curriculum designers seeking to advance curriculum. Mitigating factors such as the institutional realities of creating a marketable language program that curriculum designers and department management must consider when developing curricula were not considered in this study.

1.9 Thesis Overview

My intention in conducting this research was to explore summative assessment and stakeholder influence on contemporary second language teachers. The study explored the extent these influences impact instructional practices. The study further considered the desirable effects

of washback and stakeholder influence to reveal how instructors experience the interplay between positive and negative washback.

The thesis is comprised of five chapters. Chapter One introduces the topic of the study, outlines the study rationale, situates the researcher in the context of the study, outlines the theoretical and conceptual framework, and considers the limitations of the study. Chapter Two presents a review of current literature relevant to the research study. Chapter Three outlines and provides supporting rationale for the qualitative methodology that I utilized for the study; presents the stages of the research study until completion with the inclusion of ethical considerations; and outlines the background of each participant. Chapter Four presents the data, themes, and patterns uncovered through the process of categorization and findings discussion in light of the current literature. Chapter Five details the implications and suggests recommendations for the development of second language learning curricula.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

The study investigated the influence of summative assessment and stakeholders on contemporary Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the high stakes environment found in university preparation courses for international students. An understanding of the related literature is needed in order to better appreciate the impact of these influences on CLT curricula.

The literature reviewed in this chapter is delineated into five sections. Section 1 outlines the current state of CLT by summarizing the historical journey and the theoretical underpinnings and practices of CLT. This section serves to illustrate the unique nature of the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and how that uniqueness impacts curriculum design and classroom practice. Section 2 outlines the current research pertaining to the nature of language assessment with a specific focus on the nature of assessment alignment within the CLT context. Section 3 outlines the theoretical framework relating to the phenomenon of positive and negative forms of assessment washback. Section 4 presents an overview of current research on washback in the context of second language learning. Lastly, section 5 explores alternatives to ESL curricula based on standardized testing. Of all the literature reviewed, Hargreaves and Shirley's (2009) call to embrace post-standardization in education best reflected the study's findings.

2.1 Section 1: History, Theoretical Underpinnings and Application of SLA Principles

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is the instruction of a second language for the purpose of communication (Richards, 1996). CLT comprises of a collection of approaches informed by current Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory (VanPatten, 2015a). However, as theory has evolved, it has not smoothly translated to practice leaving the field largely in a quasi-behaviorist state (VanPatten, 2015a). The current situation is best explicated with an understanding of the history of second language theory and practice.

2.1.1 Historical path of second language acquisition. The field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) began to emerge during the 1950s and 60s when behaviorism dominated the field of psychology. At the time, the US military adapted learning methodologies that promoted habit forming for use in the second language learning classroom. Errors were singled out during production and corrected, dialogues were memorized, and language further rehearsed through language drills. Chomsky's (1957) work on first language acquisition began to challenge the way researchers thought about how first languages were learned (VanPatten, 2003). Chomsky postulated that habit forming alone would be woefully inadequate to account for the rate and amount of language children acquire when internalizing language. He theorized that humans must instead have an innate internal language system that allows them to learn language (as cited in VanPatten, 2003). This system later became known as the *Language Acquisition Device* (Gass & Selinker, 2001). Chomsky's (1957) ground breaking work was soon picked up by SLA researchers and applied to second language learning. A seminal paper entitled *The Significance of Learners' Errors* (Corder, 1967) suggested foremost that acquiring a second language involved innate processes and mechanisms that are unique to language. That paper and the subsequent pioneering work by prominent researchers in the early to mid-1970s ushered in the contemporary era of SLA research (VanPatten, 2003). Researchers since the 1970s have primarily concerned themselves with: what learners do when they are learning a second language; what stages of learning they progress through; how second language differs from first language; how errors occur; how extraneous factors affect acquisition; and how learners access and make use of the internalized linguistic system in order to communicate (VanPatten, 2003).

2.1.2 Current assumptions about the nature of second language acquisition. Lee and VanPattern (2003) outlined the uncontested areas of agreement that is currently seen in the field of SLA. The areas can be summarized as: SLA is the creation of an unconscious linguistic system through a variety of complex processes in a dynamic manner that takes time; skill acquisition is different from the creation of an unconscious linguistic system; and most second language learners are unable to achieve native like competence.

SLA researchers contend the degree and manner in which the unconscious linguistic system can make use of the explicit learning of grammatical and lexical forms. This contention is termed *the interface debate* within the field of SLA (Han & Finneran, 2014). Proponents of the *no-interface* position hold that explicit learning has no relevance in the acquisition of language. Advocates of the *strong-interface* position maintain that language learning is largely, if not completely, regarded as a conscious process. Traditional approaches to second language teaching can be equated to the strong-interface position. Proponents of the *weak-interface* position hold that linguistic forms made salient, for example via highlighting or repetition, can enable a greater chance for the linguistic system to *uptake* these forms. A stronger form of the weak-interface position holds that the conscious *noticing* of grammatical forms and lexical items by the learner can expedite uptake (Han & Finneran, 2014). The majority of researchers in the field of SLA favor the weak-interface position (Han & Finneran, 2014). Rod Ellis (2005) claimed that, given the insufficient evidence for each position, instructional curricula should incorporate instructional methodologies derived from each interface position.

2.1.3 Second language acquisition theory to communicative language teaching principles. Research has revealed that language acquisition cannot be isolated from communication. Communication must be both comprehensible and meaning-bearing to be of

value in the creation of the mental representation of a second language (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). A working definition of the nature of communication is first needed due to the central role of communication in CLT. Lee and VanPatten (2003) put forward the definition, extrapolated from Savignon's (1997) work on communicative competence: "Communication is the interpretation, expression and negotiating of meaning in a given context" (p. 53). Communication in a CLT classroom setting therefore involves students being constantly involved in what is being talked about. In this sense they are not being talked at but, talked with (VanPatten, 2016a).

Jacobs and Ferrell (2003) stated current thinking in CLT has led to eight major changes in approaches to language teaching: a) greater learner autonomy; b) allowing for social nature of learning; c) the curricular integration of wider subject matter; d) focus on meaning; e) diversification of learning strategies; f) development of higher-order thinking skills; g) teachers becoming co-learners; and, h) incorporation of alternative assessments. To accommodate for this paradigm shift CLT instructional curricula are constructed around communicative tasks, replacing grammar and vocabulary (VanPatten, 2016a). However, it should be made explicit that that this does not mean that classroom practices need always be task based or that language forms cannot be incorporated into the classroom (VanPatten, 2016b).

2.1.4 Rate of language acquisition. Cummings (1979) introduced the terms *Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills* (BICS) and *Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency* (CALP) to highlight the differing time periods immigrant children typically needed to obtain conversational fluency compared to grade-appropriate academic proficiency in the target language. Collier, (1987); Klesmer, (1994); and Cummins, (1981) found that immigrant children required approximately two years of classroom instruction to develop BICS and a further three years to develop CALP to the level of their target language speaking peers.

2.1.5 Cultural factors affecting student academic learning. Cultural influences play a significant role in second language preparatory courses at Canadian universities as classes are made up of international students from various cultural backgrounds. Institutions and language instructors need to consider the cultural perceptions and expectations regarding education before designing and implementing the instructional curriculum. Contemporary Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles can often be at odds with many of these assumptions. To exemplify, Huang's (2005) study on student perceptions of learning academic listening in the classroom found that Chinese students tended to question the value of a classroom that focuses on discussion rather than lecture, deviates from following a textbook, and emphasizes group work. Institutions can mitigate cultural and other learner influences on instruction by aligning assessment with desirable instructional approaches (Biggs, 2003). For example, the internationally recognized *International English Language Testing System* (IELTS™) standardized language proficiency test follows a communicative orientated format.

2.1.6 Professionalism in communicative language teaching. Professionalism is defined in the Canadian Oxford Dictionary Online (2016) in the following way:

The combination of qualities and conduct regarded as essential to professional practice. These include knowledge, skills, relevant competence, behavioral qualities, and values of honesty, integrity, ethical probity, and capability of working well with patients or clients, colleagues, and representatives of the public.

The concepts of critical reflection and inclusion into a wider discourse about expertise within the field are prominent within the literature concerning professionalism in education (Englund, 1996; Hedgcock, 2002; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Kumaravadivelu (2003) called for language instructional practices to go beyond relying on mechanical teaching strategies and methods, and towards critical thinking about practice. The post-method era requires language instructors to

become *strategic practitioners* with the ability to read and reflect on the dynamic nature of the communicative language classroom. Kumaravadivelu (2003) noted that the paradigm shift could further include the current movement, in the wider field of education, toward the notion of teachers as *engaged transformative intellectuals* (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). The literature described teachers who are transformative intellectuals as:

Professionals who are able and willing to reflect upon the ideological principles that inform their practice, who connect pedagogical theory and practice to wider social issues and work together to share ideas, exercise power over the conditions of their labor, and embody in their teaching vision of a better and more humane life. (Giroux & McLaren, 1989, p. 23)

In juxtaposition to the current view of teachers as strategic practitioners and/or transformative intellectuals is the traditional view of teachers as *passive technicians*. Passive technicians are charged with transmitting content knowledge to the student without alteration. The aim of the traditional approach is to promote the understanding of content knowledge and, as such, it is rooted in behaviorist educational theory (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Table 1, presented on the next page, illustrates the functions and features of these three viewpoints of teaching.

The proposed research study concerned itself only with participants who identify as reflective practitioners and/or transformative intellectuals as outlined above. Second language instruction through a passive traditional approach was purposely excluded from this study as it is not compatible with current CLT principles.

Table 1

The Roles of a Teacher: A Summary

	Teachers as passive technicians	Teachers as reflective practitioners	Teachers as transformative intellectuals
Primary role of teacher	conduit	facilitator	change agent
Primary source of knowledge	professional knowledge + empirical research by experts	professional knowledge + teacher's personal knowledge + guided action research by teachers	professional knowledge + teachers personal knowledge + self-exploratory research by teachers
Primary goal of teaching	maximizing content knowledge through prescribed activities	all above + maximizing learning potential through problem-solving activities	all above + maximizing sociopolitical awareness through problem-posing activities
Primary orientation of teaching	discrete approach anchored in the discipline	integrated approach, anchored in the classroom	holistic approach, anchored in the society
Primary players in the teaching process (in rank order)	experts + teachers	teacher + experts + learners	teachers + learners + experts + community activists

Note. Adapted from “Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching” by B. Kumaravadivelu, 2003, Yale University Press. Copyright 2003 by Yale University.

2.1.7 Transformative learning. *Transformative learning* theory has offered educators an approach to elicit a deep form of learning. Transformative learning requires learners to go beyond thinking about knowledge in terms of acquisition and application and to further consider how knowledge is internally reflected. It enables emancipation from life experience rooted in the unquestioned assumptions layered onto us by the societies and cultures we grow up in (Mezirow, 1991). Merriam and Bierema (2014) concluded that the overarching goal of adult education is to

enable a more liberated, socially responsible, and autonomous society. The author's stated goal is achieved by encouraging learners to strive for making more informed choices. Hargreaves (2003) argued that teachers need to prepare students for success in the knowledge based society of today by advancing learning principles such as ingenuity, advancement of collective intelligence, creativity, problem-solving, cooperation, flexibility, networking skills, and life-long learning. He claimed that curricula developed around soulless standardization and market fundamentalism are inadequate to achieve this goal. Transformative learning involves education that creates opportunities for reflective thought, imaginative problem posing, and discourse, involving group deliberation and group problem-solving of real-life experience (Mezirow, 1997). Students identify, then critically examine their own and others assumptions and deeply held beliefs through the transformative learning process (Mezirow, 1991). To facilitate a transformative learning classroom the instructor ensures these principles: a) full access to information; b) freedom from coercion; c) opportunity for all to voice beliefs, challenge others, defend oneself, explain, assess evidence, and judge arguments; d) assumptions are critically reflected upon; e) all participants are empathetic and open to other view points; f) an active listening environment; g) a clear search for common ground; and h) a democratic discussion environment. Assistance from the teacher gradually dissipates as the class becomes more self-directive until, ultimately, the teacher assumes a co-learner role (Mezirow, 1997).

Derince (2012) pointed out the trend in university organizations to structure themselves on behaviorist models where students are often trained to take an endless stream of exams. She called on teachers to focus on transforming the future society. Derince (2012) postulated that this could be done by finding ways to implement critical learning into the classroom. Gardner (2008) made note of the wave of restrictive legislation that affects many Western education systems by

forcing standards-driven curricula in education. Despite this, she saw opportunity in turbulent times because as systems change they can leave spaces for new ideas.

2.1.8 Outcomes based education. Curricula designed around outcomes are making headway into the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) industry as a method of accommodating the needs of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Burns, 2003). Curricula designed with *Outcomes Based Education* (OBE) framework focus on what students can actually do after they are taught or have learned (Spady, 1994). This translates to a set of *can do* statements which illustrate what a language learner can do with language in the real world in the TESOL field (VanPattern, 2015b).

Spady (1994), outlined a description of the theory of OBE, in stating that it was built on the following assumptions: a) every student is able to succeed as a learner, b) successful learning leads to more success; and c) that educational institutes have control over the conditions which make it possible for success. However, OBE has not come without its issues. Schlebusch and Thobedi (2004) concluded through their study of OBE implementation in South Africa that grade eight ESL learners experienced problems with OBE due to insufficient use of advanced strategies for teaching and learning by the instructors. Burns (2003) similarly concluded that language learners may view the subjective nature of a proficiency orientated system as both demotivating and weak. He claimed that the subjective nature and pass/fail benchmarking inherent in the OBE framework does not allow for straight forward integration with traditional grading systems, which present a multitude of application issues.

2.2 Section 2: Communicative Language Assessment Strategies

The aim of a communicative language assessment is to determine to what a learner can do with the language as opposed to establishing how much of the grammatical and lexical

knowledge is understood by the test-taker. Assessment is made up of a set of purposeful tasks that are both relevant in subject matter and appropriate in level for the test-taker (Coombe et al., 2012). The authors stated five major issues inherent with communicative assessment: a) how to gauge one overall language proficiency from multiple language skill tests (speaking, reading, writing, and listening) given that results may greatly vary; b) how to account for human factors such as personality, mood, culture, that may impede performance on a given communicative task; c) how to test perceptive language skills (reading and listening) without a clear notion of what understanding consists of; d) how to test productive language skills (speaking and writing), as it is not clear how to ascertain when a piece of writing or spoken production has achieved its purpose; and, e) that language tests can only be made up of sampling aspects of language, because the enormity of purposes language is used for, only a fraction could be selected for the creation of tasks presented in the test. The designing of any communicative language proficiency assessment strategy currently involves compromises as these issues remain largely unresolved (Coombe et al., 2012). A test developer needs to balance test qualities of reliability, construct validity, authenticity, interactivity, impact, and practicality for the given situation (Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

2.2.1 Standardized assessment strategies. Moya and O'Malley (1994) stated that process-orientated curricula and instruction associated with CLT is largely viewed as being incongruent with product-orientated assessment and as such standardized testing. The high stakes language tests such as IELTS™ and TOEFL®, nevertheless, remain prevalent within the industry. These tests strive for improved reliability and validity in the face of the multitude of confounding factors inherent in the testing of communicative tasks (Coombe et al., 2012).

2.2.2 Alternative assessment. Alternative assessment consists of an ongoing interactive process between the learner and the instructor in assessing learner performance (Hancock, 1994). Alternative assessment methods include portfolio collation and task-based language assessment (Coombe et al., 2012).. Additional benefits of this form of assessment include better higher-order thinking and life-long learning skills (Hancock, 1994).

Alternative assessment is largely a qualitative approach and subjective in nature, thus the test validity and reliability tend to become difficult to establish and maintain. Maintaining validity and reliability can lead to a potentially costly and time-consuming situation creating the impetus for many institutions to avoid incorporating alternative assessment strategies (Moya & O'Malley, 1994). Alternative assessment need not be implemented in isolation from standardized testing. Coombe et al. (2012) stated that it is best implemented in conjunction with standardized tests as part of a multiple-measures assessment scheme.

2.3 Section 3: Assessment Washback

The term washback has come to denote the manner and extent a test influences teaching and learning practices (Alderson & Wall, 1993). Test influence on teaching and learning practices may occur in a myriad of desirable or undesirable ways, and need not necessarily correlate with test validity. A poor test could conceivably encourage good study habits, while a good test may cause undue anxiety (Alderson & Wall, 1993). This independent nature of washback gave rise to the term *washback validity* (Messick, 1996). The extent to which washback will be greater in tests with perceived important consequences, as with high-stakes testing, will differ among individuals (Alderson & Wall 1993).

2.3.1 Alignment. A curriculum is said to be aligned when the assessment represents the curriculum well (Biggs, 2003). Curriculum built around communicative activities and tasks,

reveals alignment when an assessment scheme is communicative in nature. However, effective standardized assessments that are communicative in nature are problematic to design. Spolsky (1985) noted that the reason for this difficulty is that “any language test is by its very nature inauthentic, abnormal language behavior, for the task is not to give so much as to display knowledge” (p.1). The rise in the inclusion of alternative assessment practices has largely resulted from the challenges of creating effective communicative standardized assessment schemes (Haney & Madaus, 1989).

2.3.2 Motivation and performance. The relationship between motivation and performance is very complex. One should not assume that extrinsic motivation provided by the test will translate into desirable behaviors (Alderson & Wall, 1993).

2.3.2.1 Heuristic / algorithmic tasks. Pink (2011) argued that motivation acts differently on algorithmic tasks than on heuristic tasks. He defined algorithmic tasks as those that comprise routine steps leading to success, while heuristic tasks have no clear path to success.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has evolved into a heuristic undertaking. Pink outlined the danger of making use of extrinsic motivators such as *if-then* rewards, goal setting, and deadlines to encourage heuristic tasks. He used the analogy of an artist being only able to create sub-optimal art when external pressures such as the possibility of monetary gain came to bear. Pink noted performance is not hindered if the external motivator is perceived as *enabling*. He defined an enabling motivation as one that creates a feeling of empowerment to do something exciting or interesting by the motivator giving useful information and feedback about ability. The motivator must ensure that the task has a clear connection to a larger purpose.

2.3.2.2 Anxiety: Debilitating and facilitating. Alderson and Wall (1993) stated that the effect of assessment washback on performance may be additionally viewed through the

consideration of anxiety on a learner or teacher. Anxiety may be experienced as debilitating or facilitating depending on the interrelation of many factors specific to the teacher or learner, the assessment, and the perceived consequences of the assessment.

2.4 Section 4: Review of the Research of ESL Washback on Teachers and Students

I have found relatively few washback studies of note in relation to the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Alderson and Wall (1993) noted a lack of washback studies in general. I found no study of washback in the field of TESOL that specifically focused on contemporary CLT instructional practices. The existing literature was divided into five major themes: a) Washback on the teaching and learning curriculum; b) Washback on teaching methods; c) Washback on classroom assessment; d) Washback on student learning; Washback on the attitudes, view points, and feelings of second language instructors; and, e) Washback on student motivation.

2.4.1 Lack of studies controlling for instructional professionalism in communicative language teaching. I found a deficit of literature that focused on instructional professionalism in the application of contemporary CLT principles. The majority of studies focused on second language instruction as it exists in practice. Varying degrees of CLT instructional professionalism can be gleaned from each study. This is of interest as the distance between theory and practice in the wider TESOL environment is evident.

Cheng's (1997) research into washback influence on secondary ESL teaching in Hong Kong sampled teachers to represent language teaching as it is being practiced there. Her study revealed an overall lack of applied knowledge of current CLT practices, not only in second language teachers but in all stakeholders concerned. The lack of applied knowledge is evidenced through her outline of the over reliance on textbooks as direct teaching support and through

interviews where it was revealed that the majority of teachers were grappling with very basic CLT concepts such as integration of skills and learner participation. Cheng noted that some schools use solely test-practice papers for classes preparing for the final exit test. Qi's (2007) study on testing as a pedagogical change agent in China found that instructional practice did not follow test developers' intentions. Communicative tasks were not utilized in the classroom. Instead instructors focused on the testing situation and the assumed preferences by the markers.

Studies situated in Western universities include Shohamy's (1993) study which focused on second language education at the secondary level in Iowa. She noted a difference between novice and experienced language instructors. Novice language instructors were more embracing of testing formats that encouraged communicative strategies as they better aligned with their instructional practices. Experienced instructors on the other hand saw the test as a burden that they sought to manage without changing their approach. A Canadian study of teachers' perspectives on assessment change in TESOL at the secondary level comprised of teachers who all had at a minimum a Bachelor of Education and a TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) training certification of some nature and ranged from novice to veteran teachers. The study showed the varying professional stances and beliefs that lead to inconsistent findings (Turner 2006).

2.4.2. Washback on teaching and learning curricula. The following studies found washback on curricula from various types of high-stakes standardized tests. By washback on teaching and learning curricula I refer to the influence of assessment on the instructor's choice of what material and language related skills to focus on in class. Erfani (2012) made a comparative study of the market-leading standardized proficiency university entrance tests TOEFL iBT® and IELTS™ in the Iranian context. The study found both positive and negative washback. However,

negative washback was more substantial in both test formats. The study concluded that negative washback acted to push class activities away from communicative activities and toward unproductive test-taking strategies. A number of related studies have found similar results and a summary of their breakdown can be located in table 2.

Li's (1990) research into the introduction of the Chinese *National Matriculation English Test* (NMET) followed a similar pattern. Li considered this to be positive washback as Li's study found a movement away from the focus on the formal linguistic properties of language and toward the practice of language skills. Wall and Alderson's (1993) highly cited Sri Lankan study came to similar conclusions, but lamented that the test encouraged teachers to focus only on the skills that appeared in the test. A number of related studies have come to similar conclusions and are summarized in table 2.

The following studies found no washback on curricula from various types of high-stakes standardized tests. Wersdorp's (1982) study looked at the effect of introducing multiple-choice tests on language instruction of the writing skill. The questionnaire data gathered found that no significant narrowing of the curriculum occurred. Watanabe's (2000) study found evidence of no washback. He surmised that this was due to an inability of teachers to change traditional practices what-so-ever. The researcher, however, did note that the lack of movement away from traditional practices could also be due to a multitude of other reasons from lack of test specifications to imbedded cultural traditions.

Studies relating to washback on the curriculum have revealed that washback is a strong force for shaping the instructional curriculum, influencing what teachers decide to teach in the second language classroom. Studies revealed that washback from standardized tests can be an effective tool to move teachers away from traditional linguistic-based instructional practice.

However, the studies also indicate that washback leads teachers to narrow their instructional practice, encouraging teachers to focus only on what is necessary for passing the test.

2.4.3. Washback on teaching strategies, methods and approaches. Several washback studies on teaching strategies, methods and approaches were discovered in the literature. Shohamy (1993) found that the test looked at in her study influenced only novice teachers' methodologies. She noted that additional communicative activities were employed by novice teachers when preparing their students for oral tests. Stecher et al.'s (2004) study of the writing section of the *Washington Assessment of Student Learning* test revealed that teachers incorporated processes and strategies intended by the tests into their instruction. Alderson and Hamp-Lyons' (1996) study found that while assessment did influence how teachers taught, the effect was in no way uniform from teacher to teacher. A number of related studies came to similar conclusions as Alderson and Hamp-Lyons' study and are summarized in table 3.

The following studies found no washback on teaching strategies, methods and approaches utilized by the instructor. Qi (2007) conducted a study to ascertain whether instruction followed test developers intent within the high stakes secondary school *National Matriculation English Test* (NMET) in China. Qi found that high-stakes tests are not effective tools for bringing about instructional change. Turner's (2006) Canadian study looking into Professionalism in the context of high-stakes tests found that when second language instructors were faced with mandated assessment and curricula changes they managed realignment of their classroom practices only within their personal beliefs and professional stances concerning teaching methodologies. Qi's (2005) study found that tests designed for both the change in instruction and to measure language proficiency tend to fall short of either or both goals due their conflicting nature. Numerous other

studies have found testing to have little to no influence on strategies, methodologies, and approaches and are summarized in table 3.

Overall, the studies revealed a complex picture of washback on instructors' strategies, methodologies and approaches. The research has holistically shown that a direct relationship cannot be established. Any washback appears sparse and not uniform in nature. It appears that test reform by itself is unable to effect methodological change of language instruction.

2.4.4 Washback on classroom assessment. Wesdorp (1982) studied the use of multiple choice question type testing in the high-stakes language learning environment. The researcher found no significant evidence to suggest in-class assessment was changed to match the final test structures. The conclusion was that this study did not reveal washback on classroom assessment.

Wall and Alderson's (1993) Sri Lankan study found that the newly implemented test had a major effect on in-class testing design. Their findings revealed that instructors changed the content of their class work, and that in class testing tended to mimic the question style of the final test. Wall and Horak (2006) looked at washback from the TOEFL® test, noting that screening, diagnostic and practice tests purposefully followed the TOEFL® test format.

Washback in relation to how in-class assessment changes as a result of assessment has been studied in a limited manner. The literature has not produced consistent results, and therefore it is premature to glean tendencies.

2.4.5 Washback on student learning. The following studies found washback on student learning. Hughes (1988) studied a newly introduced exam in a Turkish university language program, and concluded that student learning was found to have increased. However, as the results were compared to tests with no resemblance to the newly incorporated test, his conclusions were not robust. Saif's (2006) study looked at test washback on students after

teachers had received training to prepare them for the new exam. In this circumstance, positive washback was found as student learning had improved. Negative washback was found in Tsagari's (2011) study, which found that instructors devoted large portions of class time to intensively prepare for the test despite believing that the exam created a lack of student autonomy and ability to communicate.

The following studies found no washback on student learning. Wesdorp's (1982) Dutch study found that no negative or positive washback was found on student learning with the incorporation of multiple choice orientated testing. Cheng (1998) found similarly, concluding that student learning strategies remained largely unchanged.

Pan's 2014 study looked into how the exit tests (the local GEPT[®] test, and the internationally recognized TOEIC[®] test), influenced student learning strategies, and test performance in Taiwan. He found that the test had no significant effect on the learning strategies employed out of class by the students. Students were found to fall back on traditional learning strategies, such as studying grammar patterns, despite the communicative orientation of the tests. Pan's study concluded similarly with studies by Chang (1998), and Xie (2013) in its finding that study habits are not easily coerced by a test. Watanabe's (1992) study looked into the effect the high-stakes university entrance English language examination has on language learning strategies for subsequent language study. The study lacked enough vigor to substantiate any findings. It did reveal the complexity of the phenomenon of washback, raising further questions for future studies.

Jinsong, Peiying, and Xiaomei's (2014) study looked into student learning washback from the Fudan English Test after its introduction in Fudan University in China. They found limited evidence of positive washback on student learning practices. They concluded that in

order for positive washback to occur additional factors such as resources, support, and information need to be developed and incorporated alongside the test.

Research into the area of student learning is sparse and somewhat haphazard. However, it can be generally gleaned from the studies that students tend to fall back on traditional learning strategies such as studying grammar patterns, despite the communicative orientation of any test.

2.4.6 Washback on the mental state of instructors (attitudes, and feelings). Shohamy (1996) found that overall negative reactions, including stress, anger and humiliation as a result of newly introduced tests, largely stemmed from the fact that teachers had not been consulted about the test in advance, but also because of the pressure they felt to teach in ways dictated by the exam. Li's (1990) study into the *National Matriculation English Test* (NMET), showed teachers' feelings of unease toward the exam abated as time passed. Cheng's (1998) study revealed that the avoidance of feelings of guilt motivated one teacher to focus heavily on test preparation. Alderson and Hamp-Lyons (1996) similarly found negative attitudes including frustration being fermented toward the use of the TOEFL® test.

Not all teachers were found to harbor negative feelings, some felt positive and felt enjoyment in their teaching experience. Read and Hayes (2003) documented positive feelings of teachers toward the IELTS™ test orientation in their New Zealand study. A number of related studies have found similar results and a summary of their breakdown can be located in table 7. A range of both positive and negative feelings and attitudes of teachers towards standardized testing has been observed suggesting that many additional factors need to be considered.

2.4.7 Washback on attitudes and feelings of learners. Li (1990) and Read and Hayes (2003) noted positive student feelings toward the revised exam, which coincided with heightened

motivation. However, Shohamy et al. (1996) found that students tended to mirror teachers in feeling anxious about the imposed test changes.

Studies have shown that students' attitudes need not necessarily reflect that of the teachers. Alderson and Hamp-Lyons' (1996) study found no evidence to suggest students' insistence of methodology, use of practice tests, or test specific strategies (in a TOEFL® orientated testing situation). However, other studies found this not to be the case. Through teacher interviews, Wall and Horak (2006) revealed that student expectations of classroom activities pressured teachers' instructional decision making. Other related studies have found similar results, and are located on table 7 (appendix A) in a summarized format.

The conflicting results indicated that washback on the learners' attitudes and feeling is not straight forward. The inconsistent results from the studies indicate that many forces appear to play a role in shaping the attitudes of learners towards assessment.

2.4.8 Washback on student motivation toward exams. Zhan and Wan (2015) looked into the positive washback effect of the high stakes English language exams found in China. They looked at student practices outside the classroom, and found that the motivation generated from the test was largely short-term, peaking in the weeks before the exam. Tsagari's (2011) study indicated that students felt a strong motivation to pass the test as passing was associated with opportunities for professional and educational advancement. However, instructors also reported that students found the intense exam-orientation of class resulted in students becoming demotivated and bored. A number of other studies have found similar results and a summary of their findings can be located in Table 9 (Appendix A). Watanabe (1992) concluded that exams motivated students only to pass the exam which perhaps best sums up research findings associated with exam washback on motivation.

2.5 Section 5: The Fourth Way: The Inspiring Future for Educational Change

Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) utilized the term *The Fourth Way* to denote the post-standardization era in the field of *K-12* education. They stated: “We are entering an age of post-standardization in education. It may not look, smell, or feel like it, but the augurs of the new age have already arrived and are advancing with increasing speed” (2009, p1). Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) argued that the coming post-standardization era follows the three major phases of educational changes found within developed nations. In the first phase (1950s – mid 1970s) teachers were afforded much trust and autonomy enabling them to largely teach as they saw fit. The first phase resulted in an innovative time period, but it also came with a lack of consistency. The second phase (mid 1970s – late 1980s) saw a systemic reversing where instructors were intensely mistrusted. High importance was placed on standardization, and uniformity. The second phase had the net result of diminished quality, depth, and breadth of learning. The third phase (late 1980s – present) sought to balance professional autonomy with accountability. Support networks and training were incorporated alongside vigorous performance data. The third phase, despite its promise, has not encouraged learning, creativity and change, but rather habit and compliance, while narrowing the focus to short-term issues. Hargreaves & Shirley (2009) asserted that, “As *The Third Way* [the third phase] has evolved, it has not put the passion back into teaching nor the pleasure into learning” (p. 45).

The principles put forward by Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) include: a) the creation of a vision that is inspirational, inclusive and compelling in order to guide learning and achievement; b) investment into high-quality teacher attraction and retention; c) creation of professional cultures of trust, cooperation, and responsibility geared toward improvement; d) promotion of evidence-informed change as opposed to data-driven reform; e) maintenance of trust

relationships between all administrating bodies; and, f) community engagement, development, and empowerment (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). Central to the development of these principles was the recognition of the tendency for distracters in the educational system to divert teachers away from effective instruction. Distractors included mandated targets, excessive testing, formulaic curricula, multitudes of rubrics, droves of standards, and an overwhelming emphasis on the basics. Professionalism must be fostered and then trusted in order to lower the need for such distractors as previously stated. Professionalism is achieved with high-quality teachers, positive and powerful professional associations, and lively learning communities combined with indirect accountability measures such as test sampling, which promote responsibility over accountability (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). The post-standardization era in the field of *K-12* education was essentially about relinquishing autocratic control of curricula in favor of a democratic professional path toward improvement (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009).

2.6 Summary of the Literature Reviewed

The reviewed literature outlined the current knowledge pertaining to the impact of assessment on CLT curricula. The literature illustrated how the unique nature of the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) impacts curriculum design and classroom practice, illuminating the complex nature of assessment and stakeholder influence. Hargreaves and Shirley's (2009) depiction of the emerging post-standardization age in the wider field of education was briefly examined as its principles of democratic professionalism may be relevant in the search for a way forward for the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) industry. The following chapter discusses the research methodology used within the study.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1 Qualitative Research

The phenomenological qualitative research methodology best suited this study because I wanted to explore, understand and explain the phenomenon of assessment and stakeholder influence as it directly affects practicing advanced second language instructors. The fundamental purpose of a phenomenological study is to gain understanding and meaning of human experience regarding a phenomenon through a description of the underlying universal meaning or essence (van Manen, 1990).

Qualitative research is borne from a constructivist perspective. Guba and Lincoln (1989, cited in Waters and Mehay, 2010, p.3) demonstrated that the philosophical paradigm of constructivism is based on relativist ontology and a subjectivist epistemology. Guba & Lincoln outlined that “In Constructivism: The nature of truth about ‘what is what’ is socially negotiated (with others) AND; That the true meaning of knowledge is then internally constructed” (cited in Waters and Mehay, 2010 p. 3).

van Manen (1990) described phenomenological research in the following way: “phenomenological research is the description of the experiential meanings we live as we live them” (p. 11). The phenomenological researcher endeavors to understand the reality of others by allowing the participants to guide the process (Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano, & Morales, 2007). A phenomenology creates opportunity for the researcher to immerse her/himself into the phenomena being explored (Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano, & Morales, 2007).

Hermeneutic phenomenology contends that researchers’ biases and assumptions cannot effectively be set aside by bracketing (Gadamer, 1960, 1998). Hermeneutic phenomenology views researchers’ assumptions and biases as embedded and essential to the interpretive process.

The researcher routinely considers how his or her own experience relates to the issues that arise during the period of research (Allen, 1996, as cited in Lavery, 2003). *Interpretive description* follows the hermeneutic view (Thorne, 2008):

No human being is immune from theoretical influence (and bias), and therefore the way in which this susceptibility is handled involves explicit recognition and understanding, so that it influences the research in ways that are consistent with integrity to an inductive reasoning process that generates findings that are well grounded within data. (p. 71)

I utilized the interpretive description methodology as it allowed me to explore the phenomenon of assessment and stakeholder influence with an orientation toward revealing information for practical application. Interpretive description's hermeneutic underpinnings allowed me to acknowledge and insert my point of view, as an experienced ESL instructor, from a non-biased perspective.

3.2 Interpretive Description Methodology

The interpretive description research approach draws from phenomenology as it is rooted in the study of human experience of phenomena. Interpretive description strives to answer the question *so what* and is driven by the overriding aim of gathering practical useable knowledge (Thorne, 2008). Thorne stated that she developed this strategy to address the applied knowledge orientation of the health care industry. The analytic procedures of interpretive description go beyond sorting, coding, and describing to additionally involve synthesizing, theorizing and re-contextualizing in order to understand the phenomena and ultimately generate a theory (Thorne, 2008). The interpretive description methodology suited my study as I sought practical knowledge that was applicable to the advancement of second language instruction and curriculum design.

The interpretive description methodology does not require the researcher to adhere to a prescribed set of procedures. The methodology presents guidelines that enable the mindful

integration of theoretical and technical devices into the researcher's study (Thorne, 2008). The guidelines for interpretive description are outlined by Thorne:

Interpretive description studies: a) are conducted in as naturalistic context as possible in a manner that is respectful of the comfort and ethical rights of all participants; b) explicitly attend to the value of subjective and experiential knowledge as one of the fundamental sources of clinical insight; c) capitalize on human commonalities as well as individual expressions of variance within a shared focus of interest; d) reflect issues that are not bounded by time and context within which the current expressions are enacted; e) acknowledge a socially *constructed* element to human experience that cannot be meaningfully separated from its essential nature; f) recognize that, in the world of human experience, reality involves multiple constructed realities that may well be contradictory; and, g) acknowledge and inseparable relationship between the knower and the known, such that the inquirer and the object of that inquiry interact to influence one another. (p. 74)

3.3 Ethical Considerations

This study conformed to the UNBC policy on research involving human participants and did not commence without the approval of the UNBC Research Ethics Board (REB). The study was guided by the Tri-Council Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct for Research involving Human Subjects (CIHR, NSERC & SSHRC, 2014). This policy promotes research that is conducted according to the highest ethical standards.

3.3.1 Confidentiality and anonymity. I understood the importance that I maintained confidentiality and anonymity for all participants who took part in the study. I have kept the names and contact information stored on a password protected computer accessible only to myself. I asked each participant to choose a pseudonym for identity protection. I replaced all references to participants with their corresponding pseudonyms in the thesis and subsequent publications. The interview transcribed data was accessible only to me while follow-up email threads were accessible to supervisory committee members who were requested to keep all correspondence on a secure password protected computer.

3.3.2 Vulnerable populations. This study had minimal risk as there was not any part that could harm a participant or a participant's students. The signed consent form used to inform the participants of the research process and expectations was reviewed for understanding and signed as consent to volunteer in the study. Participants were informed they did not have to answer any question if they do not wish to without the need to explain their choice. Participants were volunteering and were informed they could withdraw from the study if at any point they felt uncomfortable or upset. I would have respected his/her wishes without challenge.

3.4 Research Procedures

3.4.1 Recruitment of participants. Participant criteria for the study were that they had worked as second language instructor within a high-stakes university or college setting; held a Master's degree in second language teaching; self-identified as an advocate of current Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles; and, were willing to volunteer their time to be part of the research study. I distributed the Participant Recruitment Email Brochure (Appendix C) to each viable participant that I could determine from online searches at educational institutions across Canada.

I widened my search to universities world-wide due to insufficient numbers of Canadian participant commitment to the study. The interviews were from approximately 45 to 60 minutes in duration. I did not require additional email discussion with any of the participants. I conducted five interviews before obtaining sufficient saturation of the data.

The interview process was divided into two sections with the initial section structured to draw out data on the instructional background of each participant and the specific context in which each worked. The second section of the interview process garnered information relating to

the lived experience of the participants' regarding the influence of summative assessment and stakeholders on their instruction.

3.4.1.2 Voluntary participation. The participants in this study were chosen to contribute on a purely voluntary basis. Any participant could have withdrawn from the study at any time without consequence. If a participant did choose to leave the study, all information collected from that participant would have been deleted or shredded.

3.4.1.3. Recruitment process. I began the recruitment process by analyzing the publicly available information from the language departments in Canadian universities. I searched online and identified viable candidates and contacted their department chair(s) to assist with distributing the *Participant Recruitment Brochure* (Appendix C). The brochure stated the research questions, research opportunity, research purpose, research goals, and the participant commitment necessary to successfully accomplish the study. I set up a participant recruitment booth at the *Teachers of English as an Additional Language* (TEAL) conference in Vancouver held on 18 November 2017 to find enough candidates to perform the study due to lack of response through the previous attempt. I eventually had to widen my participant search to include international universities and colleges.

3.4.1.4 Consent. Each interested viable participant was sent the *Participant Consent Form* (Appendix D) for review and signature indicating they wished to participate. Interviews did not commence until I obtained the signed consent form.

3.4.2 Data collection process. The data collection process began with finding eligible participants and collecting the signed consent forms. The next phase included the scheduling of interviews. Each participant interview was approximately 45 to 60 minutes via the *Microsoft Skype* application. I reminded each participant about using the *Sync* cloud system for future

contact and discussion after completion of their interview. The purpose of follow-up discussion was to enable further engagement with participants should themes emerge that required additional input.

3.4.2.1 Data collection and storage. The research participant interviews were conducted through the *Microsoft Skype* application and the audio was recorded with the *MP3 Skype Recorder* application. I did not conduct any face-to-face interviews. However, I had prepared to do so in a quiet public space such as a coffee shop and by using the Olympus VN-541PC Digital Voice Recorder. I did not utilize a transcriber. I would have employed a research transcriber if unforeseen time constraints had arisen. A transcriber would have signed the *Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement Form* (Appendix E) if he/she was needed for the research study. Names and location identifiers were replaced by a pseudonym. Physical and electronic copies of transcripts and recordings were stored in a locked filing cabinet at the residence of the researcher. Electronic files were accessed only on a password-protected computer. The data was used for writing this thesis and future publishable academic articles. All information will be deleted and shredded by May 31, 2028.

3.5 Data Analysis

Patton (1999) stated qualitative analysis is fundamentally a creative process that relies on the insights and conceptual capabilities of the analyst in recognising patterns, linkages and plausible explanations. Patton maintained in order to have credibility and validity the analysis must also show that it is analytically rigorous, mentally replicable, and explicitly systematic (Patton, 1999).

3.5.1 Triangulation. Triangulation of methods of data collection and analysis strengthen the research study (Patton, 1999). Patton (1999) stated “The logic of triangulation is based on the

premise that no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival explanations” (p. 1192). This research study consisted of a combination of interview and document qualitative analysis. The kinds of triangulation this study permitted were *triangulation of sources* in which curriculum documents were examined for consistency with interviews and *triangulation of perspective* in which I interpreted the data through multiple perspectives. Patton (1999) noted that inconsistencies that arise through the process of triangulation should not be viewed as a sign of weakness in the credibility of the results, but rather as offering insights into the complex relationship between inquiry approach and the phenomenon under study.

3.5.2 Components of data analysis. The components of data analysis consist of *coding*, *categorization* and *conceptualization* (Richards & Morse, 2013). Raw data is organized into ideas while depicting what is going on through coding. The process of categorization begins after the data is coded. Researcher categorization reveals concepts, themes, and patterns which eventually lead to conceptualization for the researcher. At this point the study is moved from description to analysis and the researcher moves beyond identification of patterns toward exploration of possible concepts. The researcher’s knowledge, informed by literature, enables the interpretation and explanation that derives and justifies understanding (Richards & Morse, 2013).

3.5.3 Data analysis process. The data analysis process of this research study started after all the participants had verified and approved their interview transcripts. I then went through the abstraction process of coding, categorization and conceptualization for each interview transcript. I subsequently created a codebook of the illuminated themes and concepts derived from each participant’s interview transcript (Appendix F through J).

I compared and contrasted themes and concepts from all participant interviews to identify larger categories, themes and concepts with the goal of illuminating the essence of the

phenomenon and drawing out practical advice. I summarized the analysis of the data, outlined the findings and presented the resulting implications and recommendations that are all culminated in this particular thesis report.

3.6 Research Credibility

Thorne (2008) proposed that researchers consider the criteria of epistemological integrity, representative credibility, analytic logic, and interpretive authority in order to address rigor in the qualitative nature of interpretive description studies. Leininger (1994) argued that the quantitative criteria of validity and reliability are not well suited to substantiate qualitative findings as they serve the quantitative needs of the logical positivism ideology used in a scientific method.

3.6.1 Epistemological integrity. The researcher must write the research question and interpret the data in accordance with the stated epistemological standpoint of the study (Grey, 2013). An epistemological standpoint denotes the nature of knowledge and how it is acquired (Waters & Mehay, 2010). As noted above, I conducted this study from a subjectivist standpoint, which maintains the fundamental position that knowledge cannot exist without individuals to construct it.

3.6.2 Representative credibility. A qualitative study should demonstrate representative credibility. The claims the study makes should be consistent with the manner the study was sampled in order for a qualitative study to show representative credibility (Thorne, 2008). The representative sample of this study consisted of contemporary communicative language instructors teaching in high-stakes settings.

3.6.3 Analytic logic. A study should show evidence of the inductive reasoning process to be analytical. Erlandson (1993) advocated an adherence to the principle established by Lincoln

and Guba (1982) in which the researcher creates an audit trail in which another researcher or *inquiry auditor* could follow the reasoning process. The audit trail establishes the dependability of a qualitative study and the confirmability of its data and conclusions (Lincon & Guba, 1982). Chapters 4 and 5 detailed the researches inductive reasoning process.

3.6.4 Interpretive authority. The study should demonstrate an interpretive authority. Interpretive authority is the assurance that the researcher's interpretations are trustworthy, revealing some truth beyond his or her own bias and experience (Thorne, 2008). The context of the researchers experience and bias were outlined in sections 1.5. I reflected on my own biases and assumptions by maintaining a journal of reflections throughout the research process. During the interview process I made an effort to ensure my questioning was impartial and I limited my conversational input as much as possible.

3.7 Summary

This study followed a qualitative research design methodology to explore the lived experience of the phenomenon of assessment and stakeholder influence on advanced second language instructors. The study utilized the interpretive description approach to further advance the research goal of collecting useable knowledge for the advancement of curricula inclusive of contemporary communicative language teaching (CLT) practices. I paid attention to and was cautious of participant confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process.

All sensitive data was stored on password-protected systems or kept in a lockable cabinet accessible only to those formally permitted access to the data. Data will be deleted and/or destroyed by May 31, 2028.

Data analysis was carried out with attention to maintaining credibility. I took into consideration epistemological integrity, representative credibility, analytic logic, and interpretive

authority throughout the data analysis process. The following chapter discusses themes from the data analysis.

Chapter Four: Data, Themes and Discussion

This chapter is broken down into two subsections: a) data collected from the interview process on the instructional background of each participant within the specific context in which each worked; and, b) the emerging themes garnered from the interview process relating to the lived experience of the participants' dealing with the influence of summative assessment and stakeholders on their instruction. The categorised information is presented in each section in this chapter and then discussed in relation to the reviewed literature.

4.1 Professional Context of Research Participants

I asked the participants questions to illuminate the instructional context in which they work. Information was gathered regarding the following topics: a) the instructional background of the participants; b) the general interpretation of the principles governing Communicative Language Teaching; c) the learning context; d) the learner's background context; and, e) the assessment structure utilized at the participants place of employment.

4.1.1 Instructional background of participants.

Table 2

Instructional Background of the Research Participants

Participant	Location	Employment experience
Gary	University, Canada	Gary was a language instructor with over 10 years of experience and an assessment developer. Previously he had the role of associate chair of language training. He has a Master's of Educational Psychology Degree
Jeffery	University, Canada	Jeffery was a language instructor with over 10 years of experience. He had the additional role of curriculum writer and support. He has a Master's degree in English Literature and Film studies, and a Certificate in TESOL.
Jaden	University, Canada	Jaden was a language instructor with over 10 years of experience various post-secondary institutions around the world. He was on a committee that creates assessment. He has a PhD of Education with a focus on assessment, Master of Applied Linguistics and was an IELTS examiner. He was instructing IELTS Prep classes utilizing only a little CLT. However, he had extensive experience in the gate-keeping proficiency-based programs offered at his institution.
Tim	University, U.A.E.	Tim was an instructor with over 30 years of experience in language instruction. He had instructed under alternative and standardized assessment structures. He has a Master's degree in the field of TESOL.
David	University, Qatar	David was an instructor and coordinator of an academic writing gatekeeping program. He had extensive experience in TESOL instruction. He has a Master's degree in the field of TESOL.

I was grateful to be able to interview a group of professionally upstanding second language instructors. Each participant had many years of experience and was highly qualified in the area of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). They all instructed English for academic purposes in a university setting either in Canada or the Middle East. Most of the participants had advanced in their careers accepting additional duties such as curriculum

development, assessment development, and program coordination. Each participant clearly articulated the complexities of their experience with washback and stakeholder influence within their professional context in addition to their professional portfolios and speaking about their knowledge in the area of contemporary Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Their credentials clearly placed them as advanced practitioners in their fields.

4.1.2 General interpretation of the principles governing communicative language teaching. I asked each participant to outline the major principles they use to guide their instruction. Gary described the informed eclectic instructional approach that guides his second language instruction. He stated he kept up with related research in the field. Gary's instruction combined a *focus of forms* with task-orientated instruction. Jeffery's interpretation of CLT was based around communication rather than accuracy. He used meaningful tasks to overcome the inauthentic context of the classroom. He found instructor/student rapport essential in developing authentic communication with learners. Jeffery saw the role of the language instructor to also include enabling students to self-question adopted learning strategies. Jaden favored the use of authentic texts in his teaching. He maintained a student-centered class. Jaden ensured student *buy-in* by giving students the reasoning behind classroom activities. He stated that grammar teaching made up part of class structure at least in the beginning. Tim advocated student-centered methodologies that enable learner encoding of language rather than decoding methodologies that break language down into teachable items. David refrained from describing his interpretation of CLT.

Each participant's description of the principles that guided their instruction correlated with Jacobs' and Ferrell's (2003) account of the current thinking in CLT (see section 2.1.3) and with Kumaravadivelu's (2003) description of the post-method era where language instructors

need to become *strategic practitioners* with the ability to read and reflect on the dynamic nature of the communicative language classroom. Tim was the only instructor who advocated approaches exclusively guided by the no-interface position (see section 2.1.2). The other participants endeavored to include more traditional elements in their instruction such as direct grammar instruction and role-play activities. It was clear that these traditional elements did not lead their instructional curriculum. In my view, all participants could be classified as *reflective practitioners* of CLT (as outlined in section 2.1.5).

4.1.3 Learning context. I asked each participant to describe the context in which their instruction took place in order to substantiate the high-stakes nature of their instructional situation. Jeffery was part of the gatekeeping program for second language learners wanting to enter the university. Gary's instruction took place in the context of an *English for Academic Purposes* (EAP) high-stakes environment where many students were under the threat of losing funding. He was required to instruct EAP and the *Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada* (LINC) program to students simultaneously. A lot of acculturation education took place at the start of the English as a Second Language (ESL) program to ensure students would be able to function in universities within the Canadian context at the undergraduate level in Jaden's institute. Tim instructed a foundation program where there was a strong standardized exam focus that created a *teaching to the test* context. Once learners passed the foundation program they continued their English language studies alongside their undergraduate courses. Tim's previous employment context was strongly student-centered utilizing a purely alternative assessment structure. He stated "I just worked on what I saw. Authentic needs of the students, so I start interacting with them, I find what their problems are and I develop something based on that as we go along". David instructed the second level writing course at his institute in which passing

students gained full access to the academic program. The curriculum at his institute was recently revised to add more time for teaching academic skills.

Alderson and Wall (1993) stated that the extent of washback will be greater in tests with perceived important consequences as is the case with high-stakes testing. All of the participant instructors' courses were *gate-keeping* courses as learners that failed were denied full entry to academic programs. Two participants noted additional pressures on their learners that served to increase the high-stakes nature of their language assessment. Gary pointed out that many of his learners are additionally under the threat of losing funding for their studies. Jeffery noted that for many students cultural and family pressure to pass the test can be immense.

4.1.4 Learners' background context. The research participants were questioned about the wider context of their students. Jeffery noted that extrinsic learning was expected and valued exclusively by learners that came into the program and as such learners had a strong focus on passing tests. He noted that learners were under great pressure from their families to get to the degree program as soon as possible; many students entered the program with an inflated belief of their language proficiency level; and, learners did not know how to successfully learn a second language. Jeffery mentioned that when students received a failing grade or were placed in a lower level than they expected they generally externalized the blame with a focus away from language proficiency. All of the participant instructors helped students come to the realization of their proficiency level by enabling learners to see what was needed in terms of language outcomes. Gary noted that the language learners he interacted with generally did not have an adequate understanding of CLT. He stated that learners tended to arrive with an expectation of a textbook focus, an expectation of teaching to the test, and a belief that grades are a negotiation

between instructor and learner. When Gary's students did not find what they expected, many became frustrated.

Alderson and Wall (1993) stated that due to extraneous factors assessment washback effects individual learners and teachers differently. The participants' experience was consistent with Huang's (2005) study which found that that Chinese students tend to question the value of a classroom that focuses on discussion rather than lecture; deviates from following a textbook; and emphasizes group work.

4.1.5 Assessment structure utilized at place of employment. Each participant outlined the assessment structure of their institution. Jeffery's institute utilized standardized assessment mixed with horizontally uniform in-class standardized testing. Gary's institution employed the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB), which were modified in-house for their particular EAP (English for Academic Purposes) context. The benchmarks were modified to include the non-holistic grammatical and vocabulary competencies as the holistic nature of CLB was considered insufficient to assess readiness for entry into undergraduate study. Standardized assessments were aligned to the benchmarks. Gary mentioned the rubric for the standardized test attempted to avoid holistic interpretations by focusing on grammatical forms and in-class isolated skill-based quizzes comprised a small part of the summative grade. Jaden's institute utilized a purely standardized assessment structure utilizing established themes developed in-house with a focus on English for Academic Purposes (EAP) that included higher-order thinking tasks and questioning. He stated that in-class standardized tests made up a small portion of the final grade, but were not subjective in nature. Tim's institute was strongly standardized where students were prepared for one standardized test with no use of in-class summative grading. A purely alternative assessment system was used at Tim's previous employment location and instructors

utilized learner-generated portfolios to derive the summative grade. David instructed the writing skill course that utilized standardized testing of writing tasks that were graded with non-holistic rubrics. These rubrics itemized academic competency and language mechanics separately. The writing course utilized mid-terms and in-class quizzes to make up part of the final grade.

The curricula at Gary's place of employment and Tim's previous place of employment were consistent with Spady's (1994) description that an Outcomes Based Education (OBE) framework focuses on what students can actually do after they are taught or have learned and VanPattern's (2015b) contention that in TESOL this translates to a set of *can do* statements which illustrate what a language learner can do with language in the real world. Standardized testing prevailed in all of the participants' educational settings despite Moya and O'Malley (1994) stating that process-orientated curricula and instruction associated with CLT is largely viewed as being incongruent with product-orientated assessment and as such standardized testing.

Five of the six instructional contexts examined in this study can be equated with Hargreaves and Shirley's (2009) third phase of general education (section 2.5) in that professional autonomy was balanced with accountability. Tim's previous employment can be equated with Hargreaves and Shirley's fourth phase of general education (section 2.5) in that responsibility was promoted over accountability.

4.2 The Experience of Dealing with Assessment and Stakeholder Influence

Each participant discussed how they experienced the pressure stemming from assessment on their instructional practice. Influence from assessment and stakeholders that shaped the instructional context was discussed. Seven major themes emerged from the information: a) Experience of assessment alignment; b) Experience of student influence on instruction; c)

Experience of academic course instructor influence on instruction; d) Experience of institutional/administrative influence on instruction; e) Experience of alternative assessment washback; f) Experience of assessment washback; g) Overall effects of influences on instruction; and, h) Instructional desires.

It was obvious that each of the participants was dedicated to the successful learning of the students as they ardently articulated their experience with assessment and stakeholder influence. It became clear that the complexities of human influence lay at the root of many of the long-standing issues they experienced.

4.2.1 Experience of assessment alignment. Most of the participants did not find that the standardized assessments were significantly out of alignment with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Jeffery had a positive experience with standardized assessment in finding that it worked well with CLT as long as CLT was introduced and conducted correctly. He noted that formative assessment helped to pull learners toward the wider goal of improving academic language proficiency. Gary noted that standardized assessment was achievable only when created and maintained by those qualified in assessment. He determined that the advantage of a well aligned standardized test was that it helped to isolate gaps that need addressing. Jaden found in-class tests particularly advantageous as they are more easily aligned to classroom practices. He found that topics could be tailored to learner needs and interests, and that the reasoning behind in-class testing became clearer. David sought to improve standardized assessment alignment through consistency with the themes and topics of the undergraduate courses. He found that as the assessment had been sufficiently aligned, teaching to the test successfully becomes part of the course structure. David also believed that team work among instructors helped to overcome subjectivity issues in standardized rubrics.

Tim believed standardized testing, in itself, induced artificial learning environments which prevented the alignment of assessment to CLT. Tim noted that instructors end up teaching grammar directly as it is an inherent need of the standardized test. Teaching grammar directly happened despite his institute not giving instructors access to the standardized test as a measure to ensure instructors avoided teaching to the test.

An overall acceptance of standardized assessment as a successful tool was observed from most of the participants in the study. These four participants indicated that creating a valid and reliable standardized test that was aligned with CLT was difficult, but could be adequately achieved. Every participant's place of employment had or was about to undergo curricular change indicating a possibility that all of the participants' institutions had not yet obtained an adequate standardized assessment structure. This fact would endorse Coombe et al. (2012) claim that standardized tests strive for improved reliability and validity in the face of the multitude of confounding factors inherent in the testing of communicative tasks.

4.2.2 Experience of student influence on instruction. Each participant depicted their experience with test-focused learners and how they push for more traditional instructional approaches as beneficial to their short-term goal of passing the test. Two participants noted that in some cases this pressure was extreme, amounting to students harassing teachers or dropping their courses in favor of self-study. Jeffery found that learners tended to look for shortcuts to passing tests as they see ESL as secondary to academic studies in stating "they just want to get to it". He complained that learners see grammar instruction as a shortcut and pressure instructors to teach this way. Jeffery noted that, in extreme cases, learners will even drop a course to study for the IELTS test if they feel their test focus is not being met by the instructor. Jeffery mitigated learner pressure by ensuring that learners bought in to the approaches he utilized in class. He

found that student buy-in can generally be achieved if CLT is introduced correctly, with more success if the learner comes from a Canadian-based curriculum. Gary mentioned his students' frustrations of experiencing a different learning environment caused them to pressure the instructor to move toward the traditional teaching and assessment practices they are familiar with. These frustrations include: a lack of understanding of an outcomes-based curriculum; an inflated belief in their proficiency level; a belief that their grade is negotiable; an expectation of being taught to the test; and an expectation of a textbook focus. He stated that the coercion from students was intense and at times escalated to the verbal bullying of instructors, which caused a lot of stress for instructors. Assigned student advisors also often gave learners poor advice that aligned with their misguided belief of their learning situation. Tim felt that learner pressure combined with a standardized assessment structure and institutional dynamics had the effect of negating the successful implementation of CLT. Tim noted that within the alternative assessment orientated curriculum in his previous place of employment students did not resist CLT once they were able to see that they were actually improving their language proficiency. Jaden did not experience significant student influence on CLT. He stated "My students are from China and I think that [the] common perception is 'teacher knows best' and they decided to come to Canada because of the change in teaching style". Jaden stated that in order to minimize learners' insistence for teaching to the test, learners needed to know the reasoning behind assessment:

You can't do one without the other. If the test is good but the students don't know why they are doing the test or the students don't notice the goals of that test or what the test is doing, then it doesn't work because it doesn't motivate the students. The students don't have the realization that there could be a positive washback to testing.

David stated that his writing assessments were aligned with CLT and that he did not experience significant learner washback.

Learner influence on instruction via pushing for the traditional teaching practices they are familiar with and by insisting their instructor teach to the test was a major concern for most of the participants. All participants felt that the effects of student influence could be overcome through the following solutions: a) Ensuring buy-in from students by introducing CLT correctly and giving the reasoning behind classroom activities; b) Ensuring an understanding of why they are doing the test and what the goals of the test are; c) Providing institutional support of CLT, and, d) Ensuring improved alignment. These findings support the small amount of research reviewed in section 2.4.5 on the influence of assessment on student learning, which generally finds that students tend to fall back on traditional learning strategies such as studying grammar patterns, despite the communicative orientation of any assessment.

4.2.3 Experience of academic course instructor influence. Each participant described the pressures that came to bear from instructors in the undergraduate programs in which the passing language learners advance into. Most of the participants commented on issues generated from a lack of understanding of what academic language learning involves and how long it takes. Gary noted that academic course instructors do not see their role as facilitators of communication for language learners, do not respect language departments on equal terms as academic departments, and expect unrealistic language proficiency gains from the time learners spend in the language program. He highlighted his point by recalling a conversation in which he had to convince preservice high school teachers of their responsibility to teach all of their students inclusive of their ESL students how to effectively communicate within their subject area.

Most of the participants spoke about the importance of their communication with academic course instructors. They regarded academic course instructor feedback as invaluable information that could be used to improve the course and assessment structures. Gary further

noted that academic course instructor feedback was important in reducing tension between academic course instructors and second language instructors. Jaden outlined an example of important information coming back from academic course instructors, which was their desire for learners to be able to communicate in higher domains of thought. He noted academic course instructors were less concerned with English language learners' inaccuracies in grammar and lack of advanced vocabulary.

The research findings indicated that academic course instructors generally question the integrity of ESL instructors. Nevertheless, the participants valued academic course instructors' feedback when it could be used to improve the course and assessment structures. To the best of my knowledge no research has looked into the area of academic course instructor influences on the delivery of preparatory programs.

4.2.4 Experience of institutional/administrative influence. All participants lamented the lack of understanding by the administrative staff of the unique dynamics an ESL program brings. Jeffery felt that the business model pressures the program to push students through when they are not yet able to succeed in an academic environment. He also noted that the complexity in the hierarchical structure of the ESL department within the university structure caused difficulty in communication with stakeholders. Gary similarly stated that within his institution there was little understanding and respect for CLT and the structure needed to support it. He noted that his university structure formally designated a lower professional status for language instructors. This amounted to an intense and stressful relationship within the university. Gary also stated that there was a lack of institutional understanding of how stakeholders influenced the curriculum, and a lack of institutional understanding of the time required for academic language proficiency to develop. In Jaden's experience, the administration endeavored to limit academic

freedom for standardization. “Their justification is that we have so many new teachers and that the new teachers need to be on board; it's easier if everything is standardized”. He continued, “Management frowns on alternative testing because they are more worried about students comparing their assessment techniques and complaining about it”. Overall, he found management to be unsupportive of CLT in practice:

I find that there is less and less academic freedom, because it's easier to have ten teachers teaching exactly the same thing. It's easier for assessment of both the teacher and the students and I think that works a bit against Communicative Language Teaching because you don't have the freedom to do what you want based on the students' needs and desires.

David's frustrations with the difficulties in coping with management caused him to surmise that management had a surface level understanding, looking only at student pass and fail rates as they did not understand the process of second language instruction. His frustration included management insisting on testing on different days with multiple versions with little regard for the difficulties in test creation. Tim found that management overestimated what could be obtained by learners. He postulated that institutional and student influences act in unison: “It's not just the students, it's the institution as such. [It] has the effect of negating the implementation of CLT”.

Tim summed up the feelings of all participants with his poignant comment: “If management would actually understand. We need somebody who knows [communicative] language teaching at the top”.

The lack of understanding departmental management had of the unique dynamics an ESL program brings created an intense and stressful relationship between the participants and the university intuition. The participants found their institutions to be in practice unsupportive of CLT. To my knowledge no research on the effect of an uninformed management structure on CLT has been conducted.

4.2.5 Experience of alternative assessment washback. All of the participants had had some experience with the introduction of alternative assessment as part of summative assessment or, as in Tim's experience, the entirety of assessment. All participants felt that incorporating alternative assessment to be of value, but cautioned in its implementation in stating that the right context needed to be present for it to be effective. Jeffery stated that he believed there is a place for alternative assessment. He asserted that instructors must be careful that language is assessed in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and language structure. Gary described his previous experience with alternative assessment as a "hot mess". He stated that "instructors were not capable of creating and assessing tasks". He found that the lack of understanding and implementation of learning tasks lead to strong negative student washback that amounted to verbal harassment at times. He added the notion that accountability is hard to achieve with the inconsistent nature of alternative assessment. Gary's opinion revealed alternative assessment is not viable without knowledgeable qualified instructors and with institutional support. Jaden found the standardized assessment structure at his institution to be effective. He found this was the case as for many of his students, learning English is seen as an obstacle rather than a goal, and the tests provide some extrinsic motivation. He viewed his experience with alternative assessment as precarious because of its subjective nature. He cautioned that if alternative assessment becomes standardized then it defeats its purpose. Despite Jaden's stance on alternative assessment he desired a less standardized assessment environment in stating, "Our mandate is not just about language, it's about academic readiness to enter university. I think teachers should be allowed to select their expert judgement in those cases and because of over standardization we are losing some of that". Tim noted all teachers need to be following same approach for alternative assessment to be effective. He felt CLT was successfully able to be implemented based on his instructing

experience in a fully alternative assessment-based curriculum. David's institute had unsuccessfully experimented with introducing alternative assessment through portfolios. He stated that alternative assessment was abandoned as management, parents and students all complained. He commented, "The people here don't support that type of alternatives that much. Especially the top management". Nevertheless, alternative assessment continued for some instructional activities such as blogging, albeit with very small summative grading.

The participants' descriptions of their experience with alternative assessment indicated that they all felt that alternative assessment is not viable without knowledgeable instructors that act in a professional manner and institutional support because of its subjective nature and inability to hold instructors accountable. Moya and O'Malley (1994) stated that alternative assessment is largely a qualitative approach and subjective in nature, thus the test validity and reliability tend to become difficult to establish and maintain. This finding correlates with all of the participants' experiences.

4.2.6 Experience of assessment washback. Of particular note is that a theme of direct washback did not emerge during the interview process. None of the participants felt their instructional approach as was directly driven in any way by the assessment structure. The claim that washback from traditional testing structures deters teachers from adopting current methodologies (Jacobs & Farrell, 2003; Moya & O'Malley, 1994) and the findings from studies relating to washback on teaching strategies, methodologies and approaches appear not to apply to skilled communicative language instructors.

4.2.6 Overall effects of influences on instruction. Several wider effects of washback and stakeholder influence were illuminated through the interview process. The fact that all of the participants spoke of recent or upcoming changes to the assessment structure at their place of

employment is worth noting. Jeffery described what he felt as an underlying uneasy dualism between communicative outcomes and language outcomes, which complicates language instruction. Gary stated that his unhealthy working environment where instructors were unable to perform optimally stemmed in part from the fact that management did not seriously consider washback and assessment influence. Tim noted that standardized assessment structures constantly are rearranging/changing due to the socio-economic triangle of competing pressure – Institution, instructor, and learner. He outlined how this socio-economic triangle plays out:

A student will have certain expectations and expect the teachers to meet those expectations, so obviously teachers modify their way of teaching, their approach to teaching. They betray their own way of understanding of how they should learn to simply meet both the management and the student.

He added:

I know what I need to do as a teacher for you to learn. So how can I meet your expectations given my whole knowledge and at the same time I'm keeping management happy and eventually they will keep paying me to keep doing my work. So, it's a tricky, it's a tricky little thing. It's complicated. Most of us just end up betraying ourselves basically.

Tim's experience with a fully integrated alternative assessment curriculum led him to believe that there is a deeper instructor satisfaction with an alternative assessment based system.

4.2.7 Instructional desires. I asked what each participant desired to support their language learners' paths to success toward the end of each participant interview. Jeffery voiced his desire for language supports for language learners for the duration of their educational journey. Additionally, he wanted to see communication improved between all stakeholders:

There has to be really good communication between the instructor and the student. But also between the program and the students coming in. Students [that] are enrolling in your program should have a very clear understanding of what they are going to learn, why they are going to learn, and how this learning is going to help them meet and fulfill their future learning goals. Then washback in assessment can be maximized for benefit.

Gary wanted to see more reflection system-wide and a confidence to take on any systemic changes that are required. He noted instructors did not want to teach to the test despite pressure to do so from stakeholders. He would have liked to see academic course instructors understand their role in ongoing communication development for language learners, greater learner involvement in curriculum, and more class hours for instruction and assessment. Gary summed up his frustrations with his working environment:

Our leadership doesn't seem interested in asking the questions or finding the answers to the type of questions that you're asking me today that are really important. I think that is a very crucial, critical missing piece to what is happening at least with our institution, possibly within many others.

Jaden would have liked to see less standardization and professional development in assessment for instructors and management. Finally, Tim stated, "If management would actually understand. We need somebody who knows language teaching at the top. You know, that actually knows".

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings of the participants' lived experience of assessment and stakeholder influence on their instruction. The findings were then discussed in relation to the current literature. The study's findings were unique in the fact that they stemmed from a study controlled for highly experienced and qualified Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) instructors working within a high-stakes environment. I found these factors to be lacking in much of the current research on the phenomenon of washback in a TESOL setting.

The findings showed that, in the cases observed, the combined effect of washback and stakeholder influence results in a continually changing, unhealthy working environment in which skilled CLT instructors are unable to perform optimally. Tim summarized the findings well:

I know what I need to do as a teacher for you to learn. So, how can I meet your expectations given my whole knowledge and at the same time I'm keeping management happy and eventually they will keep paying me to keep doing my work. So it's a tricky, it's a tricky little thing. It's complicated. Most of us just end up betraying ourselves basically.

Contemporary communicative language instructors are tasked with embracing professionalism within this uncondusive environment as outlined in Kumaravadivelu's (2003) call to go beyond relying on mechanical teaching strategies and methods, and towards critical thinking about practice (see section 2.1.5).

Chapter Five: Implications and Recommendations

The aim of this phenomenological research study was to elicit practical knowledge for the advancement of effective second language learning curricula in a high-stakes environment. The study was intended to be of interest to language institutions that strive for excellence and for skilled instructors seeking to promote systemic change toward conditions that facilitate optimal language acquisition.

This chapter examines the potential implications and highlights several recommendations for language institutions to take into consideration for the implementation of a curriculum inclusive of contemporary Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) practices. It is not my intent to generalize the findings into the wider Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) field. These findings may enlighten and benefit others in the TESOL field who can relate to the experiences of the participants and inspire much needed further research.

5.1 Study Implications

By comparing and contrasting the findings with the existing literature I drew out four significant implications for curriculum development in high-stakes ESL settings. The section is divided into the following implications: a) Standardized assessment is difficult to implement successfully; b) Alternative assessment should be incorporated with caution; c) Direct washback on instructional approach is negligible, and; d) Stakeholders' influence impedes successful implementation of CLT. The implications indicate that there is no simple solution to the issues raised.

5.1.1 Standardized assessment is difficult to implement successfully. Moya and O'Malley (1994) stated that standardized assessment is product-orientated and as such cannot be fully aligned to the process-orientated instructional curricula required in CLT. Their claim

implies an instructional system that encourages direct teaching to a standardized test is not viable in the CLT context. This study, however, claims that programs can utilize standardized assessment successfully provided the assessment is adequately aligned to the outcomes. Most of the participants' experiences led them to understand that creating adequately valid and reliable assessment is a difficult task that requires specialized training.

5.1.2 Incorporate alternative assessment with caution. Alternative assessment is largely a qualitative approach and subjective in nature thus the test validity and reliability tend to become difficult to establish and maintain. Maintaining validity and reliability can lead to a potentially costly and time-consuming situation creating the impetus for many institutions to avoid incorporating alternative assessment strategies (Moya & O'Malley, 1994). The participants' experiences revealed in this study concurred with Moya and O'Malley's claim. The participants noted the following implications: a lack of contemporary CLT and assessment skills with their colleagues; an institutional unwillingness to foster and trust professionalism of the ESL instructors in the program; and an institutional unwillingness to reflect CLT professionalism in the institutional structure. These findings made alternative assessment impractical for their institutions to fully adopt.

5.1.3 Direct washback on instructional approach is negligible. The assessment structure does not directly influence the contemporary communicative language instructors' instructional approach regardless of its format. A more complex picture has emerged regarding pressures from other stakeholders that make informed instruction problematic in that some instructors choose to modify their instructional approach to the detriment of informed language instruction.

5.1.4 Stakeholders' influence impedes successful implementation of communicative language teaching. The study revealed that learners who were unable to continue language learning practices they were familiar with or did not see a strict adherence to teaching to the test questioned the integrity of the language program and their instructor. The participants strived to overcome this issue by promoting learner buy-in from students by introducing CLT and giving the reasoning behind classroom activities. The participants were clear in stating there was no institutional support given in overcoming this issue.

The experience of the participants revealed that academic course instructors and other institutional stakeholders who did not see the proficiency gains in learners that they expected tended to question the integrity of the language program and the instructors. Management was unable to react in a supportive manner as they were not sufficiently knowledgeable in CLT practice in these cases.

The study also showed that academic course instructors and the institution, as a whole, placed unrealistic expectations on the language program and failed to understand that Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) is a complex task that is generally recognized within the field of SLA that requires five to seven years of instruction to develop (Roessingh, Kover, & Watt, 2005). The findings also indicated that academic course instructors were not aware of or knowledgeable in the role they had in developing second language learner communicative ability.

Communication between instructors and the institutional stakeholders was strained with the study participants experiencing a lack of professional respect and disregard for the unique knowledge they possess. An intense and stressful relationship developed between the CLT instructor and those in the university system above them.

This study revealed the combined effect of unchecked washback and stakeholder influence that resulted in a continually changing, unhealthy working environment in which skilled CLT instructors were unable to perform optimally. The net result was language programs stagnating in mediocrity. I suspect skilled staff would seek alternative employment as it arises due to this type of work environment.

5.2 Recommendations

The discussion of the findings and literature review point to several recommendations for language institutions to consider for the implementation of a curriculum inclusive of contemporary CLT practices.

1. Institutions need to invest in time and specifically trained professionals to undertake the complex task of creating valid and reliable standardized assessments. Alternatively, institutions may choose to outsource all or part of their assessment by incorporating established assessments such as the Cambridge suite.
2. Institutions need to empower instructors to teach to the outcomes of the test rather than directly teaching to the test in order to ensure that the standardized test maintains its validity. Empowerment could be achieved through: in-house training of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) (Outlined in section 2.1.8); institutional support for students struggling with the concept of OBE; and educational programs aimed at ensuring the buy-in of all stakeholders to OBE.
3. Curriculum developers should incorporate alternative assessment with caution. Alternative assessment should be incorporated to the degree that instructor professionalism and institutional trust of that instructor professionalism allows.

Employment of highly credentialed staff and consistent in-house training would be invaluable to advance instructor professionalism and institutional trust.

4. Institutions need to facilitate professional communication between all stakeholders. Communication between academic course instructors and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instructors needs to be respectful of the unique professional context CLT takes place in. Learners enrolling in the language program should have a very clear understanding of what they are going to learn, why they are going to learn, and how this learning is going to help them meet their future learning goals.
5. Institutions need to place realistic expectations on the language program, given that *Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency* (CALP) is a complex task that takes five to seven years to develop with instruction (Roessingh, Kover, & Watt, 2005). Sufficient academic language proficiency cannot realistically be achieved through an intense language program alone. Institutions may overcome the shortfall by extending language preparatory programs and by incorporating specifically designed language supports throughout the learning pathway of the language learner.
6. Institutions need to define and make explicit the role academic course instructors have in developing second language learner communicative ability.
7. Institutions need to foster professionalism through professional development of contemporary CLT and language assessment creation. Professionalism is achieved with high-quality teachers, positive and powerful professional associations, and lively learning communities combined with indirect accountability measures such as test sampling, which promote responsibility over accountability (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009).

8. Management of language departments need to mitigate the questioning of CLT instructor integrity by stakeholders as informed arbitrators. This would entail that management knows and can articulate how principles emerging from the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) constrain the practice of CLT.
9. Institutions need to consider the negative effects of the professional marginalization experienced by CLT teachers within the university setting. Respect for the professional practitioner role of the second language instructor needs to be fostered. MacDonald (2017) called for the embrace of a *Third Space* of professionalism within the Canadian universities for the EAP sector. Fostering postmodern professionalism focused on engagement, service and collaboration.
10. Institutional hierarchy needs to be informed in best practices in the field of CLT. I recommend institutional stakeholders read the book *While We're On the Topic: BVP on Language, Acquisition, and Classroom Practice* (2017) by Bill VanPattern. It is concisely written to a non-technical audience and reasonably priced.

5.3 Future Research

This study was unique in the fact that it looked at influences that inhibit the successful implementation of contemporary CLT in high-stakes settings. The lack of research in this specific area indicates the need for further research to substantiate the study's findings before generalisations can be inferred to the field of TESOL. The research study revealed further research is required in the areas of: a) Standardized assessment and alternative assessment within an outcomes based framework; b) Stakeholder communication; c) The role of academic course instructors in second language learning; d) Professionalism in TESOL, and, e) Stakeholder buy-in.

5.4 Conclusion

The lived experiences of the five skilled instructors are testimonies to the need to break away from the dystopian second language systems that many university language departments inadvertently follow and embrace a structure that successfully supports contemporary Communicative Language Teaching for the sake of the learner.

The significant finding of this study reveals the systems the participants work for do not allow for advanced practice resulting in the frustration and alienation of knowledgeable CLT practitioners. The revealed participant experiences did not find assessment to directly cause their frustrations, regardless of the assessment type. The study revealed that this untenable situation arose due to: the difficulty of successful implementation of standardized assessment; the condition-dependent nature of alternative assessment; and the power of stakeholder influence to impede successful implementation of CLT. The findings will assist to bridge the gap in the understanding of the influences that affect the implementation of CLT in high-stakes settings and set the stage for future research in the field of study.

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Appendix A: Summary of Research on Washback

Table 3

Research Concerning Washback on the Teaching and Learning Curriculum

Author(s)	Context	Significant Conclusions
Studies that Found Significant Washback		
Barnes (2016)	Vietnam	Influence found but mediated by the use of the selected test preparation text book.
Cheng (2005)	Hong Kong	Test played a role in moving traditional teaching toward more communicative activates.
Erfani (2012)	Iran	Negative washback out-weighted positive washback.
Green (2007)	UK	Test-prep classes were not beneficial in raising test scores.
Lam (1994)	Hong Kong	Teachers significantly modified their curriculum and instruction to match the content of the exam.
Li (1990)	China	Positive washback found as test promoted language practice over linguistic class orientation.
Shohamy, Donitsa-Schmidt, and Ferman (1996)	Israel	A narrowing of the curriculum to tested areas.
Stecher, Chun, and Barron (2004)	USA	Only the genres found on the test were practiced in class.
Tsagari (2011)	Greece	Intense focus on test prep found.
Tsushima (2011)	Japan	Teachers favored teaching to the test.
Wall and Alderson (1993)	Sri Lanka	Teachers focused only on the skills that appeared in the test.
Wall (2005)	Sri Lanka	Teachers focused only on the skills that appeared in the test.
Studies that Found No Significant Washback		
Watanabe (2000)	Japan	No washback due to inability of teachers to change traditional practices what so ever.
Wersdorp (1982)	Netherlands	No narrowing of the curriculum was found.

Table 4

Research Concerning Washback on Teaching Strategies, Methods and Approaches

Author(s)	Context	Significant Conclusions
Studies that Found Significant Washback		
Alderson and Hamp-Lyons (1996)	U.S.	Effect varied within instructors.
Burrows (2004)	Australia	Effect varied within instructors.
Read and Hayes (2003)	NZ	Effect varied within instructors.
Saif (2006)	Canada	Greater teacher understanding lessened variability.
Shohamy (1993)	Israel	Only novice teachers' methodologies were influenced by the test.
Stecher, Chun, and Barron. (2004)	U.S.	Teachers incorporated processes and strategies intended by the tests into their instruction.
Watanabe (1996)	Japan	Effect varies within instructors.
Studies that Found No Significant Washback		
Cheng (2005)	Hong Kong	Methodological change initiated through testing happened only very slowly, reluctantly, and with difficulty.
Hargreaves (1997)	Egypt	Teaching methods were independent of testing.
Qi (2005)	China	Tests designed for the both change in instruction and to measure language proficiency tended to fall short of either.
Qi (2007)	China	High-stakes tests were not effective as tools for bringing about instructional change.
Tsagari (2011)	Greece	No change from traditional methodology despite communicative focus of test.
Turner (2006)	Canada	Teachers manage washback through their personal beliefs and professional stances.
Wall and Alderson (1993)	Sri Lanka	Washback on teaching methodology was inhibited for a multitude of reasons.
Wesdorp (1982)	Netherlands	Influence of test on methodology was so small that it is of no consequence.

Table 5

Research Concerning Washback on Classroom Assessment

Author(s)	Context	Significant Conclusions
Studies that Found Significant Washback		
Wesdorp (1982)	Netherlands	No significant evidence to suggest in class assessment was changed to match the final test structures.
Studies that Found No Significant Washback		
Wall and Alderson (1993)	Sri Lanka	In class testing tended to mimic the question style of the final test.
Wall and Horak (2006)	Central and Eastern Europe	Screening, diagnostic and practice tests purposefully followed the final test format.

Table 6

Research Concerning Washback on Student Learning

Author(s)	Context	Significant Conclusions
Studies that Found Significant Washback		
Hughes (1988)	Turkey	Concluded that student learning was found to have increased.
Saif (2006)	Canada	Positive washback was found after teachers had received training to prepare them for the new exam.
Tsagari (2011)	Greece	Intense prep for test despite believing that the exam created a lack of student autonomy and ability to communicate.
Studies that Found No Significant Washback		
Cheng (1998)	Hong Kong	Students' study habits were not easily coerced by a test.
Jinsong, Peiying, & Xiaomei (2014)	China	Limited positive washback found on student learning.
Pan (2014)	Taiwan	The test had no significant effect of the learning strategies employed out of class by the students.
Watanabe (1992)	Japan	Revealed a multifaceted nature of the phenomenon of washback on learning.
Wesdorp's (1982)	Netherlands	No positive washback was found on student learning with the incorporation of multiple choice orientated testing.
Xie (2013)	Hong Kong	Student study habits were not easily coerced by a test.

Table 7

Research Concerning Washback on the Mental State of Instructors

Author(s)	Context	Significant Conclusions
Studies that Found Negative Washback		
Alderson and Hamp-Lyons (1996)	U.S.	Found negative attitudes including frustration being fermented toward the use of the TOEFL [®] test.
Cheng (1998)	Hong Kong	Avoidance of feelings of guilt motivated one teacher to focus heavily on test preparation.
Li (1990)	China	Teachers' feelings of unease toward the exam abated as time passed.
Shohamy (1996)	Israel	Overall negative reactions due to lack of consolation and pressure to adhere to teach to the test.
Studies that Found Positive Washback		
Johnson, Jordan, and Poehner (2005)	U.S.	Instructor was willing to doubt his own evaluations in light of results from standardized test.
Read and Hayes (2003)	NZ	Documented positive feelings of teachers toward the IELTS [™] test orientation.

Table 8

Overview of the Research Concerning Washback on Attitudes and Feelings of Learners

Author(s)	Context	Significant Conclusions
Alderson and Hamp-Lyons' (1996)	U.S.	No evidence to suggest students' insistence of methodology, use of practice tests, or test specific strategies.
Ferman (2004)	Israel	Individual difference in attitudes and feelings toward exams.
Li (1990)	China	Positive student feelings toward the revised exam coincided with heightened motivation.
Lumley and Stoneman (2000)	Hong Kong	Students were more exam orientated than the teachers.
Read and Hayes (2003)	NZ	Positive student feelings toward the revised exam coincided with heightened motivation.
Shohamy (1993)	Israel	Individual differences in attitudes and feelings toward exams.
Shohamy, Donitsa-Schmidt, and Ferman, (1996)	Israel	Students tended to mirror teachers in feeling anxious about the imposed test changes.
Wall and Horak (2006)	Central and Eastern Europe	Student expectations of classroom activities pressured teachers' instructional decision making.

Table 9

Research Concerning Washback on Student Motivation toward Exams

Author(s)	Context	Significant Conclusions
Berwick and Ross (1989)	Japan	Marked increase in the intensity of student motivation in the final year of high-school.
Jinsong, Peiying, & Xiaomei (2014)	China	Students perceived test as giving them motivation to learn English.
Pan (2014)	Taiwan	Learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivations were enhanced by formal testing.
Tsagari (2011)	Greece	Exam-orientation of class resulted in students becoming demotivated and bored.
Watanabe (1992)	Japan	Exams motivated students only to pass the exam.
Zhan and Wan (2015)	China	Motivation generated from the test was largely short-term.

Appendix B: Guiding Questions



Guiding Interview Questions

1. Contemporary communicative language teacher is a mouthful and not that well defined in the literature. Can you first talk a little about your instruction? Specifically how you differ from more traditional approaches.
2. What is the assessment strategy utilized in your department? How is it evolving?
3. How aligned are assessment strategies at your educational institution with content and teaching methodologies that you utilize?
4. In your opinion, how appropriate is standardized proficiency based testing such as.....for your practice?
5. In your opinion, how appropriate are alternative assessment schemes such as.....in your practice?
6. In your view, what is the importance of stakeholder buy-in in your practice?
7. How do the assessment strategies at your educational institution impact institutional support for the incorporation of contemporary CLT?
8. In your opinion, how can contemporary CLT be best supported practically institution wide?
9. What other issues related to washback on your instruction that were not covered above have you experienced and what additional related insights can you offer?

Appendix C: Participant Recruitment Email Brochure**Research Participant Recruitment Email Brochure****Advanced TESOL Instructors Required for Interview Based Research Project**

Dear, xxxx

I have contacted you as you are a practicing master's prepared ESL instructor. Would you like to participate in a research study that explores the influence of assessment on the advanced second language instructor?

The Question

What is the experience of advanced language instructors dealing with assessment washback within high-stakes University preparatory ESL course settings?

Research Opportunity

Are you interested in sharing your experience as an advanced ESL instructor? As a Master of Multidisciplinary Leadership student in the Education Department at the University of Northern British Columbia, I am currently conducting a phenomenological research study under the supervision of Dr. Catherine Whalen.

Research Purpose

- i. To examine the lived experience of master's prepared instructors, dealing with assessment washback within high-stakes University preparatory ESL course settings.
- ii. To gain a fuller understanding of the desirable and undesirable effects of standardized assessment on advanced practice in order to elicit practical knowledge for the advancement of curricula.

Research Goals

- i. Interview and document advanced ESL instructors experience with assessment washback within their educational setting in order to elicit common themes.
- ii. Provide a possible way forward based on current practice and practicing professionals.
- iii. To be of interest to language institutions striving for excellence, and skilled instructors seeking to promote systemic change toward conditions that facilitate optimal language acquisition.
- iv. To reach a larger audience by, additionally, publishing the study in an academic journal.

Participant Commitment

You will need to participate in a *Microsoft Skype* interview of approximately one hour in duration. Additionally, you will need to further engage in electronic dialog should themes emerge that require additional input.

The Sync cloud service will be utilized for the transference of files and electronic dialog. This will require you to create a personal Sync account (Free for up to 5GB of use). Sync is a fully encrypted, zero-knowledge cloud service that makes it easy to store, share and access your files from everywhere with privacy guaranteed.

Your name will not be revealed at any time. Pseudonyms will be used to replace name and location identifiers.

You will be informed not to use professional or personal identifiers that would identify your place of employment. Should you accidentally reveal any identifiers, I will remove them from the transcript of the interview.

You will be asked to speak only in general terms about your curriculum to ensure that no proprietary or sensitive information is revealed to me. I will remove any proprietary or sensitive information accidentally revealed by you from the transcript of the interview.

Please reply to knowless@unbc.ca to show your interest in sharing your experience as an advanced ESL instructor.

Regards,

Steven Knowles

Appendix D: Information Letter / Participant Consent Form**Information Letter/Participant Consent Form****The Phenomenon of Assessment Washback on Contemporary Communicative Second Language Teaching**

Student Researcher: Steven Knowles

As a Master of Multidisciplinary Leadership student in the Education Department at the University of Northern British Columbia, I am currently conducting a phenomenological research study under the supervision of Dr. Catherine Whalen.

You can contact me by cell phone at 250-981-5909 or email at knowless@unbc.ca. Alternatively, you can contact my supervisor by office phone at 250-960-5639 or email at catherine.whalen@unbc.ca

In addition to the UNBC graduate degree, I intend to use the data for future academic publications and in conference presentations.

Purpose of Project

I am inviting you to take part in this research study because you are a highly qualified practicing ESL instructor working within a high-stakes University preparatory ESL course setting.

I will synthesize your contributions with contributions from other advanced instructors.

I am conducting this study to gain a fuller understanding of the desirable and undesirable influence of assessment on advanced instructional practice.

The goal of the research project is to elicit practical knowledge to enable a better understanding of the assessment requirements needed to support advanced instruction at an institutional level.

The participants in this study will choose to contribute on a voluntary basis. Any participant may withdraw from the study any time without consequence. If a participant should choose to leave the study, all information collected from that participant will be deleted or shredded.

What will happen during the project?

If you agree to be part of the study, you will need to participate in a Microsoft Skype interview of approximately one hour in duration. Additionally, you will need to further engage in email dialog should themes emerge that require additional input.

You will be informed not to use professional or personal identifiers that would identify your place of employment. Should you accidentally reveal any identifiers, I will remove them from the transcript of the interview. Additionally, you will be asked to speak only in general terms about your curriculum to ensure that no proprietary or sensitive information is revealed to me. I will remove any proprietary or sensitive information accidentally revealed by you from the transcript of the interview.

I will conduct the interview through the Microsoft Skype application and record the audio with the MP3 Skype Recorder application. Either I, or a research transcriber, will transcribe the interview verbatim. Any transcriber will first have signed the UNBC Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement Form. I will replace names and location identifiers with a pseudonym before the transcriber receives the recordings. I will store physical and electronic copies of transcripts and recordings in a locked filing cabinet. Any data collected and transcribed will be done so on a password-protected computer and encrypted storage device.

After coding, I will return the results to you to ensure there is agreement in the revealed experience of the studied phenomenon. Each participant will be able to amend or delete their individual transcribed document where he or she deems fit. I will only utilize the final agreed upon coded document for analysis.

The Sync cloud service will be utilized for the transference of files and electronic dialog. This will require you to create a personal Sync account (Free for up to 5GB of use). Sync is a fully encrypted, zero-knowledge cloud service that makes it easy to store, share and access your files from everywhere with privacy guaranteed.

Risks to participating in the project

I am predicting there is minimal to no risk to any participant interested in participating in this research study. I intend to strictly follow ethical practices as stated in the UNBC Policy on Research Involving Human Participants and conduct the research according to the Tri-council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans 2014 (TCPS2). If participants want to withdraw from the study for any reason, their information will be destroyed and no portion of their data will be used in any final reporting of this study or in any future studies. Participants' confidentiality will be protected by the use of pseudonyms. I will store all raw data collected on an encrypted storage device and keep it in a locked file cabinet and save it on the Sync encrypted cloud server. The transcriber will only utilize the Sync encrypted cloud for

accessing and storing data. A password protected computer will be only used when working with the data.

As a research participant, you do not have to answer any question if you do not want to. If at any point in the study, you feel uncomfortable or upset, and wish to end your participation, then I will respect your wishes.

Benefits to participating in the project

By being part of the study, you will be helping language institutions that strive for excellence; and providing an academic voice to skilled instructors seeking to promote systemic change toward conditions that facilitate optimal language acquisition.

Confidentiality, Anonymity and Data Storage

All names and contact information of participants will be strictly confidential through the use of pseudonyms agreed upon by the participant. The interview sessions will be recorded and transcribed by a transcriber who will have signed a confidentiality and disclosure form previous to receiving any interview recordings. The transcriber will have access to the interview recordings which address participants as their chosen pseudonyms, thus the transcriptions will not have the real identity of each participant nor their affiliated institution. I will store the data and all forms with identifying names and contact information on an encrypted storage device in a locked file cabinet and in the Sync encrypted cloud storage. The transcriber will only utilize the Sync encrypted cloud for accessing and storing data. A password protected computer will be only used when working with the data for security measures.

I will ensure that data will only be kept on hard-drives and/or memory sticks that are encrypted with either BitLocker or AES Crypt software.

Microsoft Skype will be utilized for conducting interviews in this study. Microsoft Skype utilizes encryption to ensure security. However, the extent to which Microsoft itself and governmental agencies may have access to Skype content is unsure. Skype has also been shown to be vulnerable to malware designed to monitor your calls and videos.

I will be retaining the data for a period of 10 years after the final thesis report if approved in order to use it for future publications and conference presentations. The data will then be permanently destroyed/deleted/shredded.

Compensation

All participants in the study will choose to contribute on a purely voluntary basis.

Study Results

I will report the results of the study in my graduate thesis. Additionally, I intend to publish the findings in academic journal articles and present the findings at academic conferences.

Questions or Concerns about the project

If you have any questions about what I am asking of you, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at knowless@unbc.ca or by cell phone at 250-981-5909. Alternatively, you can contact my supervisor Catherine Whalen by email at catherine.whalen@unbc.ca or by office phone at 250-960-5639.

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in the study, contact the UNBC Office of Research at 250 960 6735 or by e-mail at reb@unbc.ca.

Participant Consent and Withdrawal

Taking part in this study is entirely up to you. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part, you may choose to pull out of the study at any time up to the completion of the study without giving a reason and without any negative impact on you [for example, employment commitments].

If you withdraw from the study your data will be removed from the study and destroyed.

CONSENT

I have read or been described the information presented in the information letter about the project:

YES

NO

I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this project and to receive additional details I requested.

YES

NO

I understand that if I agree to participate in this project, I may withdraw from the project at any time up until the report completion, with no consequences of any kind. I have been given a copy of this form.

YES NO

I agree to be recorded.

YES NO

Follow-up information (e.g. transcription) can be sent to me at the following e-mail or mailing address:

_____.

YES NO

Signature (**or note of verbal consent**):

Name of Participant (Printed):

Date:

Your signature below indicates that:

- You have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.
- Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Participant Signature

Date

Printed Name of the Participant signing above

Appendix E: Transcriber Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement



Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement

This study, *The Phenomenon of Assessment Washback on Contemporary Communicative Second Language Teaching* is being undertaken by Steven Knowles at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC). The objective of the study is to examine the influence of high-stakes assessment on advanced second language instruction.

Data from this study will be used to complete the requirement for the Master of Multidisciplinary Leadership. Additionally, the researcher intends to publish the study in an academic journal.

I, _____, agree as follows:

1. To keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g. disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the Principal Investigator(s);
2. To keep all research information in any form or format secure while it is in my possession;
3. I will not use the research information for any purpose other than creating translations;
4. To return all research information in any form or format to the Principal Investigator(s) when I have completed the research tasks;
5. After consulting with the Principal Investigator(s), erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the Principal Investigator(s) (e.g. information stored on computer hard drive).

Recipient

(Print name)

(Signature)

(Date)

Principal Investigator:

(Print name)

(Signature)

(Date)

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact:

Dr. Catherine Whalen
(250) 960-5639 and catherine.whalen@unbc.ca



This proposed study has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Board at UNBC. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Office of Research by email at reb@unbc.ca or telephone at (250) 960-6735.

Appendix F: Codebook - Jeffery

Themes Relating to the Context of the Instructional Experience

Tables 1 through 5 depict the context of Jeffery's instructional experience.

Table 1.

Theme Category: Instructional Background

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
4	3	They are complementary, they balance each other yes. Uhh, this is one area, like in terms of my position as a curriculum person I don't have as much, I'm less familiar with the internal diagnostic tests (Em hem). Ahh, that's one area of the curriculum that I have not been able to get to yet so	Curriculum writer

Summary. Additional to language instruction Jeffery is also involved in curriculum writing.

Table 2.

Theme Category: CLT Interpretation

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	22	Communicative Language Teaching like from me tries to get the student, no matter what proficiency level that they are at to begin using the language in a real authentic kind of context or way as soon as possible. Instead of trying to teach say perfect pronunciation or to teach them grammatical structures as they used to do, you would write endless mounts of drills perfecting your grammar, before you ever spoke a single word in English.	CLT based around communication rather than accuracy.
1	27	obviously in the modern classroom it's all about authenticity	Authenticity
1	29	our focus is more narrow, to the context to the language, to the skills that they need to be successful in a	EAP focused

university environment.

1	33	I know the language classroom is always sort of inauthentic, ha, right, (by it's nature, ha) it's a cocoon isolated from reality, (yeah) in some ways. Um, so you try to do your best to provide meaningful tasks and get them using those tasks in authentic ways.	Use of meaningful tasks to overcome inauthentic context of the classroom.
1	44	. Focuses on intelligibility, can you communicate your message effectively?	Focus on communication
6	1	So the instructors tone, umm, your attitude and general environment that you've created in the classroom, is it one that where students feel safe and secure in making mistakes (Yeap). Now, if they do, then washback is much, much different and much more likely to result in the learning outcomes that you want and the learning that your students are, are desiring.	Rapport
7	13	teachers have to be there and be able to present students with some of this information and maybe construct their classes somewhat around somebodies ideas of metacognition, self-regulation, being able to analyze your strategies that you apply to your learning in different context and be able to, sort of self-question. Arh, is it a strategy actually working for me right now (yeah). 'Do I need to switch to something else to be able to be successful or to meet the goal that I have for myself'.	Student learning how to learn.

Summary. Jeffery's interpretation of CLT is based around communication rather than accuracy. He uses meaningful tasks to overcome inauthentic context of the classroom. He finds rapport essential in developing authentic communication with learners. Jeffery sees the role of the language instructor to also include enabling students to self-question adopted learning strategies.

Table 3.

Theme Category: Learning Context

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
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- 2 12 If students pass our highest level they are granted entry into university degree setting Gate keeping program

Summary. Jeffery is part of the Gatekeeping program for second language learners wanting to enter the university.

Table 4.

Theme Category: Learner's Background Context

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
3	9	students arrive with, Ahhh, maybe an inflated belief in (Em hem) their language proficiency	Inflated belief in language level
3	13	this often results in a backlash of sort of externalizing blame. (yeah, yeap) There is environmental blame, umm, 'the test room was too cold, too hot, too dry, too loud', 'the audio wasn't, wasn't, good enough', umm, 'I was under slept' or 'I had jet lag' (yeap). Umm, I, So there is all kinds of blame, but it's all externalized, it's very rarely it's self-reflective. (Em hem) .Umm, Not 'what could I have done to improve the outcome', it's some other accommodation had to happen, um	Externalizing blame for low test scores with focus away from language proficiency.
3	28	Some students they, they will accept it. They will realize that within the couple of weeks of classes that they are placed properly. (Em hem), Um, that they realize that 'no my English proficiency is not enough to be in higher levels, and certainly, 'I'm not ready to, to deal with the share weight and volume of, of course work of a university program'. (Em hem). So quite often, like our instructors were, were able to do a good job of convincing students that you need to be where you are and this in the long term will benefit you.	Instructors able to help students come to realization of proficiency their proficiency level once they see what is needed in terms of outcomes.
3	40	Yes, and, and this, this attitude or this belief system about failing a test, or not doing as well as anticipated it serves them very poorly with language learning, because the victories in language learning are so slow. And it can be very hard to see progress, and they want to see fast progress, they want to get to their business degree.	Cultural belief about passing tests

3	43	There is so much parental pressure and financial pressure, they have invested in a lot of resources coming across the ocean and settling in a new strange small city in the middle of Canada. 'I just want to get to it', 'I just want to get to the real learning right', and language learning is somehow secondary strangely, ha ha.	Pressure to get to degree
5	21	being predominantly mainland Chinese, assessment is sort of an inherent motivator for these students, (Em hem) for good and bad, Umm, so, in general, I find that no matter, in no matter what skill I'm teaching assessment is kind of the stick and the carrot, simultaneously (Yeap). Umm, it's, it motivates students to complete assignments, umm, it motivates them to do or complete tasks that perhaps they otherwise wouldn't do on their own, ahh, so there is almost a necessity in the program to have assessment sort of on an ongoing bases in order to get students to do what you want them to do because a lot of the time they are not intrinsically motivated to complete this, uhh, complete the task that is set for them. Ahh, they require some kind of mark as a validation for their work	Extrinsic learning expected and valued exclusively.
7	7	Yeah, I think how to learn, is a huge question for many students, umm, it that they don't have frameworks to apply to their own, uh, learning management. I think I mentioned self-regulated learning in our, a little bit last week, when we talked (yeap). They are not able to reflect on, umm, their strategies,	Don't understand how to learn a language (expect through skill building).
7	23	many of our students expect the very traditional student teacher relationship (Yeap). You have like the sage on the stage delivering pearls of wisdom that the students collect, right, and that and that is very much the Eastern pedagogical model or (yeap) or students don't have questions, they just wait for the information to be delivered to them and they studiously write it down	Behaviourist style expectations

Summary. Extrinsic learning is expected and valued exclusively by learners that come into the program and thus have a strong focus on passing tests. They are under great pressure to get to the degree program as soon as possible. Many coming with an inflated belief of their language proficiency level. Learners do not know how to learn a second language successfully.

When they receive a failing grade or are placed in a lower class than they expect they generally externalize the blame with a focus away from language proficiency. Teachers are able to help students come to the realization of their proficiency level once they see what is needed in terms of outcomes.

Table 5.

Theme Category: Assessment Structure

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
2	30	there is no, there is no summative test at the end. It's just based on their accumulative assessment throughout the term.	Standardized mixed with in-class testing
2	40	that final level would share that same test, which would make up some of the grade. Jeffery: That is correct, yes. So for example in writing, the writing instructors would get together, they would decide on a specific, Uuh, test question, and then the students would all write on the same question. Then (Yeap) same with listening, they would all listen to the same lecture material and all complete the same standard test, (Yeap, yeap)	In-house Standardized testing (horizontal)

Summary. Standardized assessment mixed with in-class standardized testing (horizontally uniform).

Themes Relating to the Experience of Washback

Tables 6 through 11 depict Jeffery's experience of washback.

Table 6.

Theme Category: Experience of Assessment Alignment

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
3	45	'I just want to get to it', 'I just want to get to the real learning right', and language learning is somehow secondary strangely, ha ha.	ESL is secondary to learning 'just want to get to it'
5	48	It depends a little bit on student back ground, Umm. So, we do have a certain percentage of students that go to say a Canadian based curriculum high school in China. And they tend to arrive here much better prepared, acclimatized little, but more familiar with the social cultural components of learning English in a Canadian context because they had Canadian trained teachers.	Student Buy-in – better if the come from Canadian based curriculum in China.
6	16	Now if that is all been done well and students feel that, you know, the channel of communication that they can ask questions they can say 'I don't understand, what this means', 'I don't know how to complete that component of the assignment'. The channel of communication are open and explanations are provided in a clear and really supportive (yeap) way. Then washback and the potential for the benefits for assessment are great.	Positive from standardized tests if CLT done right.
6	24	students would buy in to the fact that what they are learning in the class is valuable to them in the future (yeap), and that, in fact, the writing assignments that they will face in university are going to be far more complex and with multiple projects going on simultaneously, right. So, to me, a lot to do with assessment in the classroom and the results of assessment have a lot to do with the student teacher relationship, classroom management and the learning environment that the instructor creates	Buy in – if CLT done right.
6	37	they come to you after they receive say an initial assignment back and the feedback and they come to you and they say 'teacher can you give me, more grammar exercises', 'Can you teach us, can you teach us, whether it's this structure, whether it's passive voice (yeap) whatever it is'. And I sort of, I look at them, 'Well, ok, but are you ready to do the work?', 'I can teach you, and I can lead you down this path, but me just presenting the material to you doesn't mean any learning is going to happen', right (em hem), 'you have to meet me half way and do the work'. And very often I find students don't want to do the work. (Yeah, they are	Students looking for short cuts see grammar as one of them.

looking for shortcuts) They want you to come to them with some grammar worksheets, and they will do the grammar worksheets, perfect them. Then you never see any implementation in their actual writing (yeah). So I think the..., to come back to your original point, it that, um, feedback or assessment on very specific things can be beneficial, but the students have to be willing to put in the work (yeah) and to be self-reflective of like their progress (yeap yeap).

- | | | |
|-------|--|---|
| 10 46 | there's this kind of interesting phenomena that sometimes happens especially if students get placed in one of the lowest levels. Umm, there can be, I mentioned about how washback can be, can result in this sort of, existential crises with in the student (yeap), where there's, they are very bitter. So, some students will take this to the extreme, where they will, just a very small number, but it does happen where they actually stop coming class altogether in order to study for say the IELTS exam (em hem) they will withdraw from the program and attempt, they say that are going to study and then they go write the IELTS in hope of being able to jump levels. Very rarely works, though students persist in doing this all this has pretty negative consequences. Obviously there no coming to class, so they are short of defaulting of four months of valuable learning experience to go study for an (I agree) exam | Students will drop course to study for test if they feel their test focus is not being met. |
| 10 18 | I see formative assessment like within the program. Like within the discrete skill like listening, speaking, reading, writing. Formative assessments I think students tend to value as long as there is clear communication between the instructor and the student about how these learning tasks are applicable, (yes) how they will benefit them (Yeap). So, there is like a tangible, umm, message in something that students can understand and project into the future as opposed to oh right I just have to jump through this hoop (Yeap). I don't really understand why I have to jump through this hoop. But I'll jump through it because it's worth 30% of my mark (yeah). | Formative assessment helps to pull to wider goal of improving. |
-

Summary. Learners tend to look for shortcuts to passing tests as they see ESL is secondary to undergraduate studies they ‘just want to get to it’. They see grammar instruction as a shortcut and pressure teachers to teach this way. In extreme cases learners will drop a course to study for IELTS test if they feel their test focus is not being met. Student buy-in becomes important and can generally be achieved if CLT introduced correctly, with more success if the learner comes from a Canadian based curriculum in China. Standardized tests work well with CLT as long as CLT is introduced and conducted correctly. Formative assessment helps to pull to wider goal of improving.

Table 7.

Theme Category: Experience of Indirect Academic Course Instructor Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
9	9	A lot of misunderstanding of what can be accomplished in, ahh, in four months in a language program. So, I have a lot of conversations with or I'm in discussion groups with university professors and they are mystified by how students who have you know come through our program or come in to the university with a specific IELTS mark and that they see, all they see is like deficiencies, and they are mystified as to how these students arrive here (Yeah). And I find that that this sort of a misunderstanding about how students acquire academic proficiency. That it results in a lot of finger pointing and blaming and results in a lot of spinning dialogue about how do we support these students. ‘Shouldn't they be able to do this already when they arrive in first year business or second year business?’, ‘Shouldn't they be able to do XYZ and be perfectly, you know, capable of making a presentation to the class?’ So, in terms of like providing support to communicative teaching I actually think it needs to extend far beyond the walls of the discrete English language program (yeap).	Lack of understanding of what language learning involves and how long it takes.

Summary. Instructors from undergraduate courses lack understanding of what language learning involves and how long it takes.

Table 8.

Theme Category: Experience of Institutional/Administration Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
9	28	I think all across Canada like English language programs such as ours they are housed in very different units within the universities (yeap), and so they have a very different political arrangement, different levels of formal acknowledgement, uhh, within the institution, uhh, so there is a lot of complexity in terms of where that English language institute is housed in the umbrella of the University and how it is able to communicate with stakeholders throughout the university. To actually understand what, what happens in an English language centre	Complexity in the hierarchical structure of the ESL department within the university structure causes difficulty in communication with stakeholders.
8	36	International students are seen as a way to maintain the bottom line (yeap). So, that's one very uneasy relationship between higher university administrations, administrative like desires and the desires and hopeful outcomes of a language program imbedded within that institution	Business model pressures program to push students through.

Summary. Complexity in the hierarchical structure of the ESL department within the university structure causes difficulty in communication with stakeholders. Business model pressures program to push students through.

Table 9.

Theme Category: Experience of Alternative Assessment Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
7	39	What alternative? Umm, I think within a program such as ours which is a gatekeeping program (yeap) there,	Must be careful in that language is being assessed in

	one has to tread somewhat carefully with say the portfolio model in in writing, because in our program we want to get, make sure it's possible, to be as sure as possible that we are assessing language, that we are assessing language components as opposed to merely jumping through hoops (em hem) merely say, 'Ok I able to hand in X number of pages therefore I get a grade for that' (yeap), not even assessing what is happening within the document, in terms on say vocabulary, uh, grammar, uh, language structure of all kinds, um, like are they, is the form of the writing recognisable within an institutional setting (em hem), as opposed to just like free writing. Which has its place as a fluency based activity, but in terms of like assessing we have to be very careful to balance between assessing language and assessing other things that are extra linguistic.	terms of grammar and vocabulary.
8	5 I think there is definitely a place for alternative forms of assessment like that. It's just it has to be, um, looked at carefully and make sure that it is in balance with the learning objectives and our obligations to, um, the university over all in terms of student preparation in terms of being sufficiently ready to enter degree study	Carefully implement in balance with learning objective and obligations

Summary. There is a place for alternative assessment. However, we must be careful in that language is being assessed in terms of grammar, vocabulary, language structure (task based but not purely task assessed).

Table 10.

Theme Category: Instructional Desires

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
9	21	I think that within university administration there needs to be a recognition of the fact that learning academic English, whether that be writing, reading, speaking vocabulary, listening to lectures and what have you takes a long time and these students require supports all along the way. Umm, and it can't just be in the form of like an academic writing center where students go and	Language support for duration of study

see a tutor. There has to be social-cultural components maybe even like mentors that help students begin to like navigate the terrain of a Canadian University. Umm, so, in terms of communicative language teaching, yeah. The supports need to be robust.

- 10 30 So, there has to be really good communication between the instructor and the student. But also between the program and the students coming in. Students are enrolling in your program they should have a very clear understanding of what they are going to learn, why they are going to learn, and how this learning is going to help them meet and fulfill their future learning goals (em hem, ok). Then washback in assessment can be maximized (yeap) for benefit. Quote of the interview

Summary. Language support is needed for the duration of second language learner's study.

There has to be really good communication between the instructor and the student. But also between the program and the students coming in. Students [that] are enrolling in your program should have a very clear understanding of what they are going to learn, why they are going to learn, and how this learning is going to help them meet and fulfill their future learning goals. Then washback in assessment can be maximized for benefit.

Table 11.

Theme Category: Overall Washback Effects

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
8	20	I think largely within our program, I think there is an uneasy an uneasy, what is the word and uneasy dualism. Uneasy relationship between this notion of the communicative outcomes the language outcomes (yeap) and students passing. Um from the curriculum writers	Uneasy dualism between Communicative outcomes vs language outcomes - Teaching to pass or to

side. Primarily, like when we are developing materials. outcomes
We are very much looking at language based learning
outcomes. What will the student take away in terms of
communicative language proficiencies, skills from these
assignments, um, because ultimately, because we don't
have a dedicated exit standardized test. Where we have
sort of, we have final exams to each of the discrete
courses and our highest level that contribute to the
overall mark, um, student just passing, yeah they make
it through the program. It's assumed that they have
absorbed and meet the learning objectives to a certain
degree. So from the point of view of the language
program, we hope that they have learned enough,
improved enough to be able to kind of survive at least
within the university context

Summary. Uneasy dualism between Communicative outcomes vs language outcomes -
Teaching to pass or to outcomes.

Appendix G: Codebook - Gary

Themes Relating to the Context of the Instructional Experience

Tables 1 through 5 depict the context of Gary's instructional experience.

Table 1.

Theme Category: Instructional Background

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
2	16	We offer the same midterms and final across levels. Umm, I've been the primary designer or those assessments and for the rubrics that accompany them.	Assessment developer

Summary. Additional to instructing Gary is an assessment developer.

Table 2.

Theme Category: CLT Interpretation

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	11	I've never stuck to one particular kind of approach or methodology in class	Eclectic instructional style
1	14	I've always found that text books don't always, they're not always designed with a process, a teaching process in mind, or necessarily a good teaching practice in mind.	Textbooks are ill-aligned to practice.
1	23	I tend to pull in from a lot of different approaches to learning	Informed Eclecticism
1	32	And I like to experiment, too like if I see something, or I'm like, oh inspired by something that I've read or I've seen	Continuous Informal research
5	17	so that I can build, so if they are good with, ahh, simple present simple past whatever I can maybe work on to perfect tenses or, ahh, these other things (yeah) so it's actually helped us organise a little more though it doesn't necessarily make us grammar um dependence.	Focus on forms instruction combined with task orientated instruction.

Summary. Gary uses an informed eclectic instructional approach to his ESL instruction.

He keeps up with related research in the field. His instruction combines a focus of forms with task orientated instruction.

Table 3.

Theme Category: Learning Context

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
6	15	they negotiate for marks on the test, cause it's a negotiation, 'I give you, I give you this mark' rather than, um, you earning it or whatever it is right (yeah) so it's a constant fight, I mean I've had colleagues go on stress leave because of the abuse of the students in this regard. The relentless bullying and hostility and comments it's never ending. The the lines that are crossed are (yeah), you know, just mind blowing sometimes.	High stakes pressure coming to bear.
6	25	a lot of ours are funded, they have limited government funding (uh huh) to take their ESL	High stakes treat of losing funding
6	44	It's part of the providing a quality learner experience is that somebody should be able to come into our ESL program and they go smoothly efficiency into a nursing program, let's say. You know, that's the way it should be they shouldn't have to have an external test, theoretically to be able to go into this thing. So our administrators our leadership want this. Our international students come in, they don't want it to be these other things that have to happen, it should happen in-house	All stakeholders want departmental/internal assessment for gate-keeping purposes.
7	13	and the students feel the heat because they have, um, these governmental funding deadlines, timeline, you know, where it is going to expire.	High stakes threat of losing funding.
12	19	Our leadership doesn't seem interested in asking the questions or finding the answers to the type of questions that you're asking me today that are really important. Umm, and I think that is a very crucial, critical missing piece to what is happening at least with our institution, possibly within many others	Leadership not interested in asking the right questions or finding right answers.
41	3	Our counter parts, because we have the ESL intensive program and we have a LINC program as well	ESL intensive program

Summary. Gary instruction takes place in the context of an EAP high-stakes environment where many students are under the threat of losing funding. Gary is required to instruct EAP and LINC learners simultaneously. He has experienced extreme pressure to

increase grades escalating to bullying from students at times. All stakeholders want departmental/internal assessment for gate-keeping purposes into the academic program, yet leadership do not seem interested in finding answers to important washback related questions.

Table 4.

Theme Category: Learner's Background Context

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
10	18	well number one none of the students think that the can pass IELTS and they are probably right.	Student IELTS test perceived as difficult
6	15	they negotiate for marks on the test, cause it's a negotiation, 'I give you, I give you this mark' rather than, um, (you earn a mark, yeah) you earning it or whatever it is right (yeah) so it's a constant fight, I mean I've had colleagues go on stress leave because of the abuse of the students in this regard. The relentless bullying and hostility and comments it's never ending. The the lines that are crossed are (yeap), you know, just mind blowing sometimes.	Student belief that grade is a negotiation.
7	1	they don't have an understanding of what good teaching practice is they don't know what our tests should or should not look like. Um, they don't know what good assessment is in ESL	Students don't have understanding of CLT or proficiency assessment.
10	33	we do have student advisory panels (em hem) that are ESL leadership, where there is a representative from each class who comes forward. All they talk about is tests, you know, all that talk about is tests, the teacher doesn't prepare me for the test. What they really mean is that the teacher it not teaching to the test	Student frustrations of not being taught to the test.
10	42	The other thing they complain about is the text books. You know, we don't have enough time to finish a text book. 'No we don't'. The textbook doesn't align with the outcomes, 'no it doesn't', you know, And the teacher doesn't always use the textbook, 'no she doesn't or no he doesn't, because it's not good enough right'	Expectation of textbook focus.

Summary. The language learners Gary's interacts with generally don't have an adequate understanding of CLT. They tend to arrive with an expectation of a textbook focus with

corresponding teaching to the test, grades are seen a negotiation between instructor and learner.

When they do not find this many learners become frustrated.

Table 5.

Theme Category: Assessment Structure

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
4	5	not everybody else is, is confident and capable to do those final assessment pieces	Standardized assessment designed by the few that are qualified to contend with the complexities of assessment creation.
4	16	We actually have maps for each exam that show which test items align to specifically which outcome	Standardized assessment is mapped to outcomes.
4	32	we actually had to map grammar outcomes to the CLBs	Grammar points extracted from 'can do' statements for rubric development.
2	6	we are COB based we work with the Canadian Language Benchmarks which suggest that any of our, um assessments should also be, therefore be task based	Outcome based with Task based assessment.
2	10	On top of that though, we have obligations to, sort of academic obligations	Outcomes directed to EAP context
2	15	our mid-terms and our finals are are standardized. We offer the same midterms and final across levels	Standardized testing
2	18	our quizzes and then our projects that are offered within a level are entirely teacher based. So they could focus on a particular skill	In-class isolated skill based quizzes comprise small part of summative grade.
2	42	The rubric that assesses whether or not they were able to complete the task, whether or not they were actually able to write the email. But there are also elements on the rubric that look at pragmatics, the use of, umm, correct expressions, umm, there is a grammar piece for level appropriate, umm, grammar expectations	Rubric for standardized test attempts to avoid holistic interpretation. (focus on forms)
3	19	CLB tasks, umm, that are designed by, umm, Canadian Centre for Language Benchmarks (em hem) are holistic they don't, um, evaluate the grammar or the pragmatics or the vocabulary. They just look at them holistically which, so we couldn't, when it came to providing an ELP like an English Language Proficiency level for, ahh, in-house or even external mattering, it wasn't sufficient because we needed to be able to say academically speaking this persons got the grammatical, vocabulary skills	Holistic nature of Outcome model was not regarded as sufficient to assess readiness for entry into undergraduate study. And therefore was modified.

5	24	when the assessment actually comes they see on the rubric like, umm, must demonstrate mastery or control or developing control of this particular form	Outcomes directly state explicit grammatical forms.
5	16	a learner wont progress up into a 6 unless they have demonstrated a certain degree of competency with that form	Reverting back to forms for passing requirements

Summary. Gary's institution utilizes an Outcomes Based curriculum created in-house for their particular EAP context. The outcomes are modified to include the non-holistic grammatical and vocabulary competencies as the holistic nature of outcome based curriculum is considered insufficient to assess readiness for entry into undergraduate study. Standardized assessments are aligned to the outcomes. The Rubric for the standardized test attempts to avoid holistic interpretation by focusing on grammatical forms. Additionally, in-class isolated skill based quizzes comprise small part of the summative grade.

Themes Relating to the Experience of Washback

Tables 6 through 12 depict Gary's experience of washback.

Table 6.

Theme Category: Experience of Assessment Alignment

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
4	11	Strongly, powerfully, really really good. Um, it took us. I had to have a bit of a stern talking to. I went on mat leave after developing our first round of exams and when I came back, umm, they had the tests, the teachers had gone in and altered exams	Assessment alignment achievable but only when created and maintained by those qualified in assessment.
5	9	Like grammar is included as part of a lesson perhaps as a pre-task or a post-task analysis for example if if a teacher is doing an actual task cycle	Teaching to the Test - Belief that instructors are not using skill building methodologies despite assessment having a forms component.
5	33	The students want it and this is, the issue is that the teachers prefer not to. Umm, I can say collectively we want to be able to teach how to communicate well in English. What the students want and ask regularly is	Teaching to the Test – Students strongly conditioned to focus only on test.

		‘Is what you're teaching now teacher on the test’, ‘no’, ‘then I don't want to learn this’ (yeap). And this is where we get arguments or, um, students don't buy-in, they fight, they check out mentally, mentally check out whatever it is. If it's not on the test many of them have no interest in learning it	
6	1	Oh they and we could talk ourselves blue in the face they they don't have the same goal as we do when it comes to the classroom and so it's a battle	Teaching to the Test - Students strongly conditioned to focus only on test.
9	28	, whether it's the workplace or an academic program it's nice to know what the gaps are because we want to be able to address them. Like 'oh we weren't even testing for that' do you know what I mean, like, um. Now we can see if they can do it, right (em hem). Um, or roll it back and looking at our outcomes and saying ‘well our outcomes will never actually meet the thing that you're doing so do we need to develop another program for it’.	Positive washback – a well aligned standardized test help isolate gaps that need addressing. OBE allows gaps to be addressed systematically.

Summary. Assessment is achievable only when created and maintained by those qualified in assessment. Neither Gary nor other instructors are not using grammar focused methodologies despite assessment having a forms component and the fact that students are strongly conditioned to focus only on the test. The advantage to a well aligned standardized test is that it helps isolate gaps that need addressing. Additionally, utilizing the outcomes based model allows gaps to be addressed systematically.

Table 7.

Theme Category: Experience of Indirect Student Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
6	9	I'm having this fight with a lot of learners this year who are not um achieving what they would like to achieve because they think they are awesome	Student inflated belief in proficiency level.
6	12	‘You know at the end of the day these are the outcomes that we have, that you have to show me you have to demonstrate to me that you can do’, ‘well I can do that’ ‘well then why why aren't you doing’ right (em hem).	Student frustration of Outcomes based system.
6	15	they negotiate for marks on the test, cause it's a negotiation,	Belief that grade is a

		'I give you, I give you this mark' rather than, um, (you earn a mark, yeah) you earning it or whatever it is right (yeah) so it's a constant fight, I mean I've had colleagues go on stress leave because of the abuse of the students in this regard. The relentless bullying and hostility and comments it's never ending. The the lines that are crossed are (yeah), you know, just mind blowing sometimes.	negotiation.
6	31	So um, It is intense over here so I guess that students just are not on the same page, umm, don't care to be on the same page and it's, um, really stressful (yeah yeah I understand).	Dealing with learner desires is stressful.
7	1	they don't have an understanding of what good teaching practice is they don't know what our tests should or should not look like. Um, they don't know what good assessment is in ESL	Students don't have understanding of CLT or proficiency assessment.
8	19	It's not helping right, cause they the students the navigators said I should try and skip the next level and I'm like 'why would you want to do that?' (em hem). So, yeah, largely a gap between what is realistic and what their expectations are, so. (you can't power study a language, its..) No, it's like math, figure out memorized formulas like [sarcastic tone]. So yeah, very big disconnect.	Talking navigator's poor advice as it aligns with their belief of their learning situation.
9	4	We'll if they are not blaming the teacher then I, they are blaming themselves so. ESL teachers will take the hit. But you're right the self-depreva.. they beat themselves up. like it's my fault, well, no maybe you don't have good partnership between, you know, whoever is instructing you, like it is a partnership in a sense	Self-Blaming or teacher blaming for failure.
9	7	a learner can't be expected to know all the principles of language learning, they don't, that's not their job to know how it works. They need a good mentor, they need a good facilitator who can be a part of that process for them	Students can't be expected to understand principles of language learning.
10	30	They perceive it as such, but it is not	In-house test perceived as easier than IELTS.
10	33	we do have student advisory panels (em hem) that are ESL leadership, where there is a representative from each class who comes forward. All they talk about is tests, you know, all that talk about is tests, the teacher doesn't prepare me for the test. What they really mean is that the teacher it not teaching to the test	Student frustrations of not being taught to the test.
10	42	The other thing they complain about is the text books. You know, we don't have enough time to finish a text book. 'No we don't'. The textbook doesn't align with the outcomes, 'no it doesn't', you know, And the teacher doesn't always use	Expectation of textbook focus.

the textbook, 'no she doesn't or no he doesn't, because it's not good enough right'

Summary. Learner's frustrations of experiencing a different learning environment cause them to pressure instructors towards the traditional teaching and assessment practices they are familiar with. These frustrations include: a lack of understanding of an Outcomes based curriculum, an inflated belief in their proficiency level, a belief that their grade is a negotiation, being taught to the test, and an expectation of a textbook focus. The coercion is intense and amounts to bullying causing much stress for instructors. Learners can't be expected to understand principles of language learning and so tend to blame themselves or their instructor teacher for their failure. To compound this assigned student advisors often give them poor advice that aligns with their misguided belief of their learning situation.

Table 8.

Theme Category: Experience of Indirect Academic Course Instructor Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
7	15	, we have pressure from within to be able to provide effective language instruction for them to ladder in	Pressure to perform well from academic course instructors.
7	38	Oh my God yes, yes, there is so little respect from them for what we do. And as language instructors even within the field we are not even considered professionals like they are	Lack of respect
8	30	, some preservice high school teachers who had opted to take this intro to ESL methodology and they had this attitude 'well I'm teaching science, it's not my job to teach that to teach English. And I lost it. I said that yes it is, I said that 'you are teaching everybody in that room how to communicate in a way that is expected within the field of science, right, the terminology the when your doing scientific reports, how to report on your results or talk about your experiment'. Like that is language, 'You're building academic language proficiency for everybody whose in-house first language or second language'. 'It is your responsibility to teach them how to communicate about science in a way that is expected in English'. 'It is your job to do that so you need to know what	Don't see their role as facilitators of communication for language learners.

that means, right, not just for a second language learner but for anybody whose in their..'. 'It just might be easier or faster for the native speaker to pick it up than your non-native speaker'. 'But yeah you're part of that, um, specific language learning process and if you don't recognise that, then your only serving a certain number of students

9 42	getting the feedback after we developed that new assessment has been really good because we stopped getting, ah, there was less screaming than ha ha than before about learners being ready or not ready. So that's been better, you know, communicating about, um, what they want and whether or not we can account for it.	Feedback important to reduce tension and increase communication.
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Summary. Academic course instructors who teach the courses that language learners feed into: don't see their role as facilitators of communication for language learners, do not respect language department on equal terms as academic departments, and expect unrealistic language proficiency gains from the time learners spend in the language program. However, listening to their feedback has been important to reduce tension and increase communication

Table 9.

Theme Category: Experience of Institutional/Administration Washback

Page Line	Textual Data	Code
7 17	we are serving too many masters. Including our own institution who have little understanding and often times little respect for what it means to be an ESL professional and what it means to be a good ESL program.	Little understanding and respect for CLT and the structure needed to support it.
7 32	I sat in meetings where we were just getting screamed at	Intense and stressful
7 41	But, you know, it's even professionally we are not considered on an equal level our program isn't taken seriously because we are foundational and our learners language proficiency is always called into question. Um, you know we are not act.. we are not strictly an academic program for goodness sakes	Lack of respect via professional status.
7 45	, 'you know, we have all of these other influences going into our programming our curriculum development and our assessment so no we are not making you happy either', they scream at us, they scream.	Lack of institutional understanding of other stakeholder influences to curriculum.
8 12	'Well, they have been here for four years, why can't they	Lack of institutional

do it?', 'Cause it's not, it's a skill set that takes a heck of a lot longer to learn' understanding of time required for academic language proficiency.

Summary. Institutionally there is little understanding and respect for CLT and the structure needed to support it. The structure formally denotes a lower professional status for language instructors. This amounts to an intense and stressful relationship within the university. There is a lack of institutional understanding of how stakeholders influence the curriculum, and a lack of institutional understanding of time required for academic language proficiency to develop.

Table 10.

Theme Category: Experience of Alternative Assessment Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
3	31	The portfolios were a hot mess. Mostly because our team, the majority of our team, umm is not quali, they don't make good tasks, they don't know how to create a performance either like it's. So the portfolios failed us and we ended up teaching to the test	Alt. assessment "A hot mess". Felt instructors were not capable of creating and assessing tasks. (confusion of alternative assessment – trying to standardize alt. assessment)
3	34	if the students didn't do well in a test they would bully teachers into making a new portfolio task that is simpler or to just repeat the task itself until they finally got it right	Alt. assessment encourages strong negative student washback - 'Bullying'.
4	49	thank God my colleagues, you know, have the humility to say to say like I'm not qualified to make an assessment task that is weighted such that it, you know, and it shouldn't, you know, not without development or support or whatever.	Alternative assessment not viable without knowledgeable qualified instructors with institutional support.
4	3	It wasn't consistent, you know, there was, no, you know, there was no way of checking	Assessment consistency not achievable in institutional situation in which accountability is needed.

Summary. Previous alternative assessment structure created 'a hot mess'. Instructors were not capable of creating and assessing tasks. It encouraged strong negative student washback

that amounted to 'Bullying'. It is not viable without knowledgeable qualified instructors and with institutional support. Accountability hard to achieve with inconsistent nature of alt. assessment.

Table 11.

Theme Category: Instructional Desires

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
5	39	I can say with a great deal of confidence that we don't want to teach that way	Instructors do not want to teach to the test.
7	26	I think they need to go away, ha ha.	Emotive response to annoyance with stakeholders' lack of respect and knowledge.
9	13	they need input that they can understand	Comprehensible Input needed from academic course instructors.
11	5	there would be more time in order to teach and to assess.	More class hours for instruction and assessment.
11	6	Ideally, learners would have input at some point along the way on content curriculum outcomes and assessment to a point	Learner involvement in curriculum (desire for student centeredness)
12	9	there is not enough reflection in the institution or departmentally on the effect of all these masters of the of the washback of the student expectations too. Our instructional team brings it up at meetings actually quite regularly but leadership often just throws it's hand in the air and I feel like were chasing our tails. We have the same conversations all the time.	More reflection system wide, systemic changes needed
12	13	About how we'd like these very powerful systemic changes so that we don't have these, um, problems anymore so that it is better for the students.	Systemic changes needed
12	19	Our leadership doesn't seem interested in asking the questions or finding the answers to the type of questions that you're asking me today that are really important. Umm, and I think that is a very crucial, critical missing piece to what is happening at least with our institution, possibly within many others	Leadership not interested in asking the right questions or finding right answers.

Summary. More reflection system wide and Systemic changes are required. Instructors do not want to teach to the test despite pressures to do so as stakeholders lack respect and knowledge. Academic course instructors need to understand their role in ongoing communication

development for language learners. Greater learner involvement in curriculum (desire for student centeredness). More class hours for instruction and assessment.

Our leadership doesn't seem interested in asking the questions or finding the answers to the type of questions that you're asking me today that are really important. Umm, and I think that is a very crucial, critical missing piece to what is happening at least with our institution, possibly within many others.

Table 12.

Theme Category: Overall washback effects

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
12	16	It's not healthy for our instructors because we are not doing our jobs well and so therefore we are not serving our students very well or serving the institution well and we don't have enough time to have very good reflective meaningful conversations about it.	Not healthy working environment and no real fix is being looked at.
7	9	, we are not doing anything well, we are doing most things moderately effectively	Inability to preform optimally.

Summary. Unhealthy working environment where instructors are unable to perform optimally. Issues are not seriously being looked at.

Appendix H: Codebook - Jaden

Themes Relating to the Context of the Instructional Experience

Tables 1 through 5 depict the context of Jaden's instructional experience.

Table 1.

Theme Category: Instructional Background

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
2	48	I was in the committee who made it	On committee that make test
3	1	my PhD is in assessment	PhD in assessment
3	1	I am an IELTS examiner trainer too.	IELTS examiner
5	18	No, (Oh, ok) Because we work in [City] our low season is the winter, so we drop by more than 50% in January, February and March, April (oh ok) it's so cold. Because of that we have a lot of turn over. I think we have more than like 100 teachers right now and only 19 is full time and like another is part-time. A lot of turnover in the part-time sessionals	No training given as high amount sessional instructors are employed.
1	18	in my current situation there is not much communicative teaching, we are just doing prep	Currently instructing IELTS Prep classes only with little CLT.
1	19	but when I teach research writing or I teach four skills or a bridging program I target, I use, authentic text, so I bring what is interesting for the students into the classroom. For example, I take, um, give the students a sense of ownership to the program (em hem) for example, umm, I get students to bring their own material.	Experience in other programs at University.

Summary. Jaden is an instructor at a Canadian University, and is also on committee that creates assessment. He has a PhD in assessment and is an IELTS examiner. Currently he is instructing IELTS Prep classes utilizing only a little CLT. However, he has had experience in the gate-keeping proficiency based programs offered at his institution. His institution employs a large number of sessional instructors and does not provide in-house training to current instructors.

Table 2.

Theme Category: CLT Interpretation

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	19	but when I teach research writing or I teach four skills or a bridging program I target, I use, authentic text, so I bring what is interesting for the students into the classroom. For example, I take, um, give the students a sense of ownership to the program (em hem) for example, umm, I get students to bring their own material.	Use of authentic texts.
1	24	I get them to create student lead discussions every week (em hem). For example, they would lead a discussion for a given topic that they like to discuss in their class. And also, um, it is very student focused	Student centered
2	1	for grammar. I actually have the students teach me a grammar point. In day one I get them to write something, and I look at their writing and I pick up two grammar points that they, uh, they are systemic, that they have problems with and to teach the class. And I get them to teach the class on those two grammar points. I get them to make the exercises. They are just grammar exercises or editing exercises where they actually have to find a text and they have to purposely find those two grammar points that they do (yeah) and so their, so they take owner	Grammar teaching makes up part of class structure at least in the beginning.
2	14	So, I one thing I do in the class, I tell them the reason, my reason behind why I do it (em hem). Students have to be an active participant in the classroom to	The reasoning behind classroom activities is given as a tool to enable buy-in from students.

Summary. Jaden favors the use of authentic texts in his teaching. He maintains a student centered class. To ensure buy-in from students he gives the reasoning behind classroom activities. Grammar teaching makes up part of class structure at least in the beginning.

Table 3.

Theme Category: Learning Context

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	27	They just, like when I see them, they have just arrived, like one day before (yeap). There is a lot of acculturation that needs to take place. So we do lots of things, we do role-play, we do needs assessment and we make sure that students will be able to function in universities in Canadian context at the undergraduate level. In their countries is, there is not group work, there is no mediation of any sort. So I need to focus on that to be able to make sure that students can function in that, can be able to function within that context of masters of PhD program where they have to work in a small groups or work in pairs to be able to do collaborative assignments and activities as such.	Acculturation needed at start of program
2	10	And those people, um, before they finish their bachelor they, and then they study English for 14 years. So, they have already been taught grammar. What they have problems with, is that internalizing those lessons, right.	Students come with 14 years of grammar lessons

Summary. At the start of the ESL program a lot of acculturation education takes place to ensure students will be able to function in universities within the Canadian context at the undergraduate level. Students come with 14 years of grammar lessons, what they have problems with is internalizing those lessons.

Table 5.

Theme Category: Assessment Structure

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
2	23	Well for the gatekeeping program the assessment is, um, we actually only have one standardized assessment. The exit test is anything that we deem	Purely standardized testing

	appropriate for the level and for the student needs, for example we have standard listening test which is a 20 minute of a university lecture	
2 29	in IELTS there is no synthesis or, um, and synthesis or analysis it's actually a purely a listening task, right (em hem). So, in the class, in the gate keeping course I'm more interested in, are they, not just about do they have the language skills but do they have the language and the academic skills to be successful in the university.	Includes higher order thinking tasks and questioning.
2 43	Yeah, it's like two or three or four different versions of	Developed in house
3 12	I think because I am aware of those issues when I was designing the test for our needs. Because the needs that we had in the, in the class was not just about language skills it was about more about, are they able to function in an academic background	EAP focused
3 32	we believe that part of the test construct is to be able to mimic what they will see in their stages at a university level	Testing proficiency within standardized themes.
3 36	are there any sort of alternative assessments that are part of the summative grade? (No)	No Alt assessments make up summative grade.
6 23	No, we'll no, I have bi-weekly, every two weeks I have a test, (Yes, but that's not summative. That's just part of the class?) Part of the class, Well it is progressive so it's all part of their final score. (Yeah) right, um, so it' summative for the language points that we've been using for those two weeks	An in-class portion of final grade
6 37	So with the test that I construct myself sometimes, you know, it doesn't have to be a test. Or I just need to understand that they understand the points of those two weeks. So sometimes I do a class crossword puzzle	An in-class portion of final grade
7 46	No, because I don't have the freedom to push their grade through because all the scores that they see, they see almost immediately so as soon as. Like the students can calculate their scores on average. So there is no pushing through of students (Ok, Ok) right alternative assessment like if I do a crossword puzzle is it for like a vocabulary test. It is still mainstream test presented in a different way. (Yeah, Yeah) It is not an actual engaging their skills in an alternative method. (Yeah, It's not a subjective grade, yeah) Yes, so there is no subjectivity in the test except for when there is	In-class tests are not subjective

synthesis for an argumentation for when I am grading
their style of language use

Summary. The institute utilizes a purely standardized assessment structure utilizing standardized themes. It is developed in-house with a focus of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and thus includes higher order thinking tasks and questioning. In class tests make up a small portion of the final grade, however they are standardized and are not subjective in nature.

Themes Relating to the Experience of Washback

Tables 6 through 14 depict Jaden's experience of washback.

Table 6.

Theme Category: Experience of Assessment Alignment

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
6	1	sure that happens for the final test. But for the test that I'm am allowed to design was a smaller test for what I am doing inside the class. I think they are more motivated because they, um, they are using what they learned in the classroom in a meaningful way that is immediately identifiable for them, um, the goals and to see their own progress of whose in the classroom, (yeah) like I mentioned with my grammar presentation	In-class tests able to be better aligned to classroom practices.

Summary. In-class tests able to be better aligned to classroom practices particularly as topics can be tailored to student interests.

Table 7.

Theme Category: Experience of Indirect Student Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	42	There is no push back because a lot of my students is, my students are from China and I think that common perception is teacher knows best and they decided to come to Canada because of the change in teaching	No pushback towards CLT.

style.

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 6 1 | sure that happens for the final test. But for the test that I'm allowed to design was a smaller test for what I am doing inside the class. I think they are more motivated because they, um, they are using what they learned in the classroom in a meaningful way that is immediately identifiable for them, um, the goals and to see their own progress of whose in the classroom, (yeah) like I mentioned with my grammar presentation | In class tests able to be better aligned to classroom practices. |
| 6 10 | Most of the time they are saying I, that they see that I am being inclusive of their needs. and the topic that they might be interested in (yeah) and so in that positive washback also. (Yeah, so because it's meaningful, therefore it's engaging for them, um, because it's well aligned to the test they can see that the wider goal is met as well as the immediate goal of the test. | Inclusive to needs in classroom tasks and tests. Particularly as topics can be tailored to student interests. |
| 6 15 | (So I think you're telling me that it all needs to come together.) Yes, you can't do one without the other right, if the test is good but the students don't know why they are doing the test or the students don't notice the goals of that test, what the test is doing, then it doesn't work because it doesn't motivate the students. There is no, ah, the students don't have the realization that there could be a positive washback to testing | Students need to know goals of test in order to motivate. |
| 6 15 | (So I think you're telling me that it all needs to come together.) Yes, you can't do one without the other right, if the test is good but the students don't know why they are doing the test or the students don't notice the goals of that test, what the test is doing, then it doesn't work because it doesn't motivate the students. There is no, ah, the students don't have the realization that there could be a positive washback to testing | Students need to know goals of test in order to motivate. |

Summary. No direct washback on CLT “my students are from China and I think that common perception is teacher knows best and they decided to come to Canada because of the change in teaching style”. Less student washback with in-class testing as it can be better

aligned with learners' needs and interests and reasoning behind in-class testing is clear.

However, students need to know reasoning behind assessment.

Yes, you can't do one without the other right, if the test is good but the students don't know why they are doing the test or the students don't notice the goals of that test, what the test is doing, then it doesn't work because it doesn't motivate the students. There is no, ah, the students don't have the realization that there could be a positive washback to testing.

Table 8.

Theme Category: Experience of Indirect Academic Course Instructor Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
4	13	No, um, this is why that test was revamped last year and this is why we did, so we had dialogue, dialogic process between the professors of the different facilities, because we keep track of all those students who enter the university through the program and we have seen the trend that their success has been dropping (em hem), and this is why the course was just revamped, this session the course was revamped for that 7.5 level	Academic course instructors not happy with proficiency of students, dialog with academic course instructors during revamp of course.
4	24	a lot of professors are, they are not native speakers either. (yeap) Right so I think they have an understanding, um, so I think there are some aspects that they are more lenient with their language skills. If they can understand what their student is trying to communicate then they are fine with that. Even if they are all systematic mistakes and there's patches that they can't understand. What they have a problem with is the, um, the academic skills themselves. About, can they synthesize information are they just regurgitating what they, you know, what they heard. Are they understanding the key, are they only being able to identify key words in the text based on the question types (em hem) and be able to just copy the whole thing and being able to get the points, as such, (em hem) Right, so it's more of the communicative intent of the curriculum and the task design itself that I think people are more concerned about, are they able to, are	Need for higher order thinking, while fine with grammar in accuracies.

they able to complete with the students, with the students with a Western style of education, and be able to discuss ideas in that level.

Summary. Academic course instructors voiced concerns about second language learners failing to cope with academic studying environment. Which caused course structural changes to be implemented. Academic course instructors found a greater need for communication in higher domains of thought, while were fine with grammar in accuracies.

Table 9.

Theme Category: Experience of Institutional/Administration Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
5	7	Well, if you're teaching credit courses, even if you're taking like four, I don't know, four different sections of the same course. Every teacher teaches it totally differently. The assignments are not going to be the same. (yeah) And so it's, my feeling is that if they trusted their instructors who had academic freedom enough. (yeah, Do they trust?) We'll when I see more and more standardization I don't see it happening like that, but, their justification is that we have so many new teachers and that the new teachers need to be on board. And it's on board and pretty much easier if everything is standardized (yeah) and that's the justification	Limiting academic freedom for standardization.
5	24	It's good for the new teachers like they are saying. But for the ones who have experience, for the ones who have knowledge and a higher academic background get a little bit trapped. (Yes) so it's hard to envisage how you could move forward in that setting,	Over bearing control.
7	5	So yeah, there is no alternative test and I think that the management looks, you know frowns on alternative testing because they are more worried about students comparing their assessment techniques and complaining about it.	Management frowns on alt. testing as opens door for student complaints.
5	44	I mean our institute is going towards more and more standardization, standardization of tests,	Moving more and more standardized in content.

standardization of curriculum, standardization of even homework assignments, um, there is. I find that there is less and less academic freedom. Because it's easier to have 10 teachers teaching exactly the same thing, then it's easier for assessment of both the teacher and the students (yeah) and I think that works a bit against, um, Communicative Language Teaching because you don't have the freedom to do what you want based on the students' needs and desires

Summary. Administration endeavors to limit academic freedom for standardization.

“Their justification is that we have so many new teachers and that the new teachers need to be on board. And it's on board and pretty much easier if everything is standardized and that's the justification”. “Management frowns on alternative testing because they are more worried about students comparing their assessment techniques and complaining about it.”

Management unsupportive of CLT in practice:

I find that there is less and less academic freedom. Because it's easier to have 10 teachers teaching exactly the same thing, then it's easier for assessment of both the teacher and the students and I think that works a bit against, um, Communicative Language Teaching because you don't have the freedom to do what you want based on the students' needs and desires.

Table 10.

Theme Category: Experience of Alternative Assessment Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
7	19	I would like to see less standardization. I would like to see more teacher adjustment, more respect for teachers expert judgement that would allow students to pass. Because even when assessment says that a student passes, you know that this student is not going to do well, (Yeah) at university or sometimes when a student passes numerically, you know you see what I mean right. Even if they fail then you think that they,	Less standardization

you know that they have the motivation and they are able to excel. Because if our mandate is not just about language it's about academic readiness to enter university I think teachers should be allowed to select their expert judgement in those cases and I think because of over standardization that we losing some of that

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| 5 31 | Well because a lot of my students are Chinese, testing in a way has positive washback because I guess it's that the students is familiar with that type of extrinsic motivation, right, like some students like tests (yeap) like they, if their score is a 10 out of 10 they. Like some students are motivated. And I think it has a lot to do with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (em hem) of assessment, um, and it depends on the class a lot of the students are not, you know, are not intrinsically motivated, you know, their parents told them that they needed to study, they needed to do a master's or they needed to do a bachelors and if you know anything with the Chinese system is that they could get into a job if they went to a good Chinese university than [unclear] anywhere else, (but) because of, they didn't the scores that the needed for their university entrance exam their parents decided ok next best thing is for you go get a [unclear] English and have a degree outside of the country. So some of them are lacking that intrinsic motivation and the tests provide some extrinsic motivation | Alt. assessment. testing culture and students are extrinsically motivated, learning English is seen as an obstacle not a goal. |
| 3 40 | There is very little standardization (em hem) like for example, um, I had a teaching literacy workshop the other day, um, and the teacher was saying that you could use poetry or painting or things to assess their language ability right. (yeah) But a lot of those things are very subjective (yeap) and a single rubric might not be able to encapsulate all the different representations of alternative assessment. (yeap) So unless it was a standardized alternative assessment it kind of defeats the purpose of it. (em hem) Supposed to do it in a classroom setting where it is shaky. | It's 'Shaky' as so subjective – if made too standardized then it defeats its purpose |

Summary. Due to testing culture and students are generally extrinsically motivated. For many students, learning English is seen as an obstacle rather than goal. And the tests provide

some extrinsic motivation (that Alt. assessment can't provide). It's 'Shaky' as so subjective, if alt. assessment is then standardized then it defeats its purpose (Standardized alternative assessment does not work).

Table 11.

Theme Category: Instructional Desires

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
7	19	I would like to see less standardization. I would like to see more teacher adjustment, more respect for teachers expert judgement that would allow students to pass. Because even when assessment says that a student passes, you know that this student is not going to do well, (Yeah) at university or sometimes when a student passes numerically, you know you see what I mean right. Even if they fail then you think that they, you know that they have the motivation and they are able to excel. Because if our mandate is not just about language it's about academic readiness to enter university I think teachers should be allowed to select their expert judgement in those cases and I think because of over standardization that we losing some of that	Less standardization
7	38	I think that professional development of how to make a test, (em hem) you know as something as simple as, you know, if you want to allow teachers to make tests you need to have a standardized understanding of what a test, you know, the test construct. (em hem) and be able to understand inference and validity argument for why a test is valid or not valid. um, (is it reliable and all of this, yeah) or the practically of the reliability or the or be able to assess the target use of the language domain and be able to even understand something like, you know, what is the meaning of a test specification. But there is no professional development provided to teachers	Professional development in assessment.
8	45	and even managers themselves I don't think they understand um how much work it takes and at one person cannot do, create a test specification for a test, it has has to be done in a consensuative in an interpretative way and it takes a lot of time to create a	Management don't understand what is involved in making a test.

single specification for one expert test right. So I think they just don't understand

Summary. Less standardization, Professional development in assessment for instructors and management.

Appendix I: Codebook - Tim

Themes Relating to the Context of the Instructional Experience

Tables 1 through 4 depict the context of Tim's instructional experience.

Table 1.

Theme Category: Instructional Background

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	11	I started formal teaching back in 1990. Bilingual school in [home country] and uh uh, it's 100% communicative or that was. Then I moved down to Saudi Arabia where as you know we worked together, (yeap) and it was a basically communicative student and I mean really students centered methodology. However when I got here to the UAE. The [Company] final assessment called the IELTS and the teachers basically prepared their students for the IELTS exam.	CLT under both extremes of assessment structures.

Summary. Instructor with extensive experience in CLT instruction under a purely

Alternative assessment structure and purely a standardized assessment structure.

Table 2.

Theme Category: CLT Interpretation

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
2	44	I started formal teaching back in 1990. Bilingual school in [home country] and uh uh, it's 100% communicative or that was. Then I moved down to Saudi Arabia where as you know we worked together, (yeap) and it was a basically communicative student and I mean really students centered methodology. However when I got here to the UAE. The [Company] final assessment called the IELTS and the teachers basically prepared their students for the IELTS exam.	Advocates student centered methodology but bends his CLT instruction to the needs of the institute.

Summary. Standardized testing induces artificial learning environments which induce alignment of assessment to CLT (memorizing, etc.). Advocates student centered methodology but bends his CLT instruction to the needs of the institute.

Table 3.

Theme Category: Learning Context

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
5	6	they have, they continue. They have to continue with academic speaking academic writing umm etc etc. because there level. Right now the education department I think is requesting, It's still requiring 6.5 IELTS.	Continue English studies alongside undergraduate courses.
5	35	But you need, It's proportional to the amount of time in input. (yeah) assuming you're highly motivated and you actually want to learn the language (yeah) so you can't go beyond that, beyond human capability so I think, I think sometimes you over estimate what students show be able to learn in a year in a two year academic course at university we need to I don't know what 500 hours (yeah exactly) I don't know how many hours you actually do (yeah) you know what I mean, 20 hours a week I don't know how many weeks multiply that. I don't think it goes beyond 400 or 500 hours. So what can you expect (ha ha exactly) sometimes we over es.. we don't over estimate we over expect their level of English, you know, it's proportional to the number of hours and the motivation etc etc.	Over expect what can be obtained by students.
1	16	the IELTS and the teachers basically prepared their students for the IELTS exam. So in that sense I personally didn't break my tradition as being communicative but I was forced to modify my teaching strategy or my approach so we could actually prepare students for the IELTS exam	IELTS prep.
1	22	we fell back into the grammar teaching because as you know the IELTS has a huge grammar	Do best to make the standardized nature communicative.

component (yeah) so and we prepare them for the writing, but again it was artificial because they had to be prepared for this kind of task 1, task 2, kind of writings. (yeah) so it becomes very artificial really. and I can't help it because the institution it linked to the IELTS and the IELTS is linked to that and so your forced to do as they need (em hem). Though I make it as communicative as possible.

3	8	Yeah, I miss that too because I didn't even in fact prepare classes, I mean we, I just worked on what I saw. Authentic needs of the students (yeah) so I start interacting with them, I find what their problems are and I develop something based on that as we go along.	Deeper teacher satisfaction with alt. assessment system.
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Summary. Continue English studies alongside undergraduate courses. Standardized context – a strong focus on preparing for IELTS exam, teaching to the test vs. Alt. assessment content: “I just worked on what I saw. Authentic needs of the students (yeah) so I start interacting with them, I find what their problems are and I develop something based on that as we go along.”

Table 4.

Theme Category: Assessment Structure

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	16	the IELTS and the teachers basically prepared their students for the IELTS exam. So in that sense I personally didn't break my tradition as being communicative but I was forced to modify my teaching strategy or my approach so we could actually prepare students for the IELTS exam	IELTS prep.
1	22	we fell back into the grammar teaching because as you know the IELTS has a huge grammar component (yeah) so and we prepare them for the writing, but again it was artificial because they had to be prepared for this kind of task 1, task 2, kind of writings. (yeah) so it becomes	Do best to make the standardized nature communicative.

very artificial really. and I can't help it because the institution it linked to the IELTS and the IELTS is linked to that and so your forced to do as they need (em hem). Though I make it as communicative as possible.

Summary. IELTS focused. IELTS has a huge grammar component.

Themes Relating to the Experience of Washback

Tables 5 through 10 depict Tim's experience of washback.

Table 5.

Theme Category: Experience of Assessment Alignment

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
2	44	I think it's artificial, like when they write right now they just memorize certain, what they have to do in the, in the introductory paragraph in the body one and body two and then the conclusion. Most of the language is just memorized. It's artificial.	Standardized testing induces artificial learning environments.
1	28	. I mean when I teach grammar I don't teach the simple present as such. I do present situations where you tend to, you know, to repetitive actions, you know, I work everyday, uh, 'do you brush your teeth?', 'yeah, I brush my teeth'. 'But are you brushing your teeth right now'. 'Oh, no teacher you're not you're sitting in the class'. (em hem). So I do try to make grammar as communicative and a, I would say, functional as possible. But anyway I'm constrained by the needs of the classroom, anyway.	End up teaching grammar as it is need of the test.
1	46	So, now with the new test, it's becoming even worst that IELTS in that it is limiting you further.	New curriculum is more limiting. And thus forces more pressure to teach to the test despite measures to avoid this (not showing teachers the test structure of the test or have them mark it) (double coded)
2	1	So as the teachers as such we are all. Basically, teaching for the test. So what we have done is, we go around looking at the students taking the	Teaching to the test.

		test and we try to remember the kinds of questions we can see	
2	3	Because we don't have access to the test itself. We can see the kinds of questions and obviously most of us have been teaching for a while so based on that we say ok we have got these kinds of questions, we got this kinds of questions. We've got multiple choice questions on this type of grammar we've got ta ta ta. So we design something exercises drilled based on the kinds of questions they are going to get (em hem). But we are not teaching English as such do you see what I mean we just preparing the students for an exam.	No access to test causes more teaching of test taking strategies instead of language.
1	37	Well, yes because that's what they're, that's what the will be tested on. And it's not just the students it's the institution as such	Not just student but relates to institution.

Summary. Standardized testing induces artificial learning environments which negate alignment of assessment to CLT (memorizing, etc.). End up teaching grammar as it is need of the test. New standardized assessment is more limiting. And thus forces more pressure to teach to the test despite measures to avoid this (not showing teachers the test structure of the test or have them mark it). No access to test causes more teaching of test taking strategies instead of language.

Table 6.

Theme Category: Experience of Indirect Student Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	37	Well, yes because that's what they're, that's what the will be tested on. And it's not just the students it's the institution as such	Not just student but relates to institution.
3	26	But anyway basically we are almost back to the same old grammar. (yeah) we can't do grammar translation because we don't speak Arabic but (ha ha) but if we could that's what we would do to keep employed, you know what I mean.	Reverting back to behavioural grammar teaching.
3	35	Well, I think that you don't really need to	Able to convince student learning is

convince them. I think that after one or two weeks they realize that they can actually understand and they can actually produce something so it's more like a demonstration of method. The student, realizes that he is actually learning (yeap) so. He is not spending time to memorize a script and spit it out like a parrot.

Summary. “Well, yes because that's what they're, that's what the will be tested on. And it's not just the students it's the institution as such”. Has the effect of negating the implementation of CLT.

Table 7.

Theme Category: Experience of Indirect Academic Course Instructor Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
5	22	Steve: do feel that um at [OPE] that the students that the teachers above were aware of of what level we brought could bring them up to and their journey in English and sort of how far they had gone? Tim:I think there is a problem with this I mean. What really matters is if you assume that the student is highly motivated ok (yeap) you know he actually engages the 400 or 600 or 500 hours of English he takes at the college level (yeap) What you need, you know, research tells us you need between 700 or 1000 hours (yeah) ok	Academic course instructors not fully aware of how long language learning takes.

Summary. Academic course instructors are not fully aware of how long language learning takes.

Table 7.

Theme Category: Experience of Institutional/Administration Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
5	35	But you need, It's proportional to the amount of time in input. (yeap) assuming you're highly	Over expect what can be obtained by students.

		<p>motivated and you actually want to learn the language (yeah) so you can't go beyond that, beyond human capability so I think, I think sometimes you over estimate what students show be able to learn in a year in a two year academic course at university we need to I don't know what 500 hours (yeah exactly) I don't know how many hours you actually do (yeah) you know what I mean, 20 hours a week I don't know how many weeks multiply that. I don't think it goes beyond 400 or 500 hours. So what can you expect (ha ha exactly) sometimes we over es.. we don't over estimate we over expect their level of English, you know, it's proportional to the number of hours and the motivation etc etc.</p>	
1	46	<p>So, now with the new test, it's becoming even worst that IELTS in that it is limiting you further.</p>	<p>New assessment is more limiting. And thus forces more pressure to teach to the test despite measures to avoid this (not showing teachers the test structure of the test or have them mark it)</p>
1	37	<p>Well, yes because that's what they're, that's what the will be tested on. And it's not just the students it's the institution as such</p>	<p>Not just student but relates to institution.</p>
6	38	<p>If management would actually understand. We need somebody who knows language teaching at the top. (yeah) You know that actually</p>	<p>Management needs to be knowledgeable in CLT</p>
3	26	<p>But anyway basically we are almost back to the same old grammar. (yeah) we can't do grammar translation because we don't speak Arabic but (ha ha) but if we could that's what we would do to keep employed, you know what I mean.</p>	<p>Reverting back to behavioural grammar teaching.</p>

Summary. Management over expects what can be obtained by students. Institutional and student washback act in unison “And it's not just the students it's the institution as such. Has the effect of negating the implementation of CLT. “If management would actually understand. We need somebody who knows language teaching at the top. You know that actually”.

Table 8.

Theme Category: Experience of Alternative Assessment Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
4	23	obviously do to the encoding thing everybody needs to work in the same way. You all need need to be on the same page. (yeap) at least in the approach, the methodology has to be uniform that that I agree (yeap) but the problem is you know to have enough teachers who actually know what they are doing, you know, that understand.	All teachers need to be following same approach.
2	33	Well, I'd rather go for the [OPE] thing. (Yeah) for many reasons, um, I think you do more justice to the reality. I mean it becomes more authentic teaching the the skills in learning would allow them to confront random interaction, you know what I mean, (yeap) well the students here don't seem to be prepared for that. You break the norms and you break away from what they are used to, they are completely lost, (yeap) So [OPE] I think we were process deve.. we were assessing process (yeah) so I think it's a more, it's a better way of doing it because it's. I mean the student learns a lot more	Better way to go supported institutionally.
3	4	We'll that's true. So in the process, what your mentioning what you really need very experienced highly qualified teachers and I don't mean qualified by having degrees, by actually knowing what they are doing. (yeah) So I was really really happy at [OPE] when I was teaching because that is the way I think people actually learn	Alt. assessment needs very experienced teachers.
3	35	Well, I think that you don't really need to convince them. I think that after one or two weeks they realize that they can actually understand and they can actually produce something so it's more like a demonstration of method. The student, realizes that he is actually learning (yeap) so. He is not spending time to memorize a script and spit it out like a parrot.	Able to convince student learning is happening.
3	4	We'll that's true. So in the process, what your mentioning what you really need very experienced highly qualified teachers and I don't	Alt. assessment needs very experienced teachers.

mean qualified by having degrees, by actually knowing what they are doing. (yeah) So I was really really happy at [OPE] when I was teaching because that is the way I think people actually learn

Summary. All teachers need to be following same approach. You are able to convince student learning is happening and therefore get student *buy-in*. institutionally supported Alt. assessment enable better CLT implementation. However, Alternative assessment needs truly qualified teachers.

Table 9.

Theme Category: Instructional Desires

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
6	38	If management would actually understand. We need somebody who knows language teaching at the top. (yeah) You know that actually	Management needs to be knowledgeable in CLT.

Summary. “If management would actually understand. We need somebody who knows language teaching at the top. (yeah) You know that actually”.

Table 10.

Theme Category: Overall washback effects

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	38	So now we changed we dropped the IELTS and now we have a new state designed test called the [name of test] (oh really). So but it is basically like a placement test. It's just like an IELTS there is no interview though	Changing of Curriculum.
2	14	No. We worry ourselves because we know we are not doing it. (but it doesn't seem to go above) exactly. You kind of fall in that triangle.	Triangle of competing pressure.

		There's the institution that has some objectives and you have you're own objectives, and the student has his own or her own objectives. So you are kind of pulled. you know the usual thing. But then the final exam is [exam name] so, you know, you have to prepared them, you know, whether you like it or not. I mean that's what they are going to see	
3	8	Yeah, I miss that too because I didn't even in fact prepare classes, I mean we, I just worked on what I saw. Authentic needs of the students (yeah) so I start interacting with them, I find what their problems are and I develop something based on that as we go along.	Deeper teacher satisfaction with alt. assessment system.
3	26	But anyway basically we are almost back to the same old grammar. (yeah) we can't do grammar translation because we don't speak Arabic but (ha ha) but if we could that's what we would do to keep employed, you know what I mean.	Reverting back to behavioural grammar teaching.
6	12	I think it basically, is that um, when someone pushes you to take an exam. A student well you have certain expectations. (yeah) you expect the teachers to meet those expectations so obviously teachers modify their way of teaching, their approach to teaching they they betray their own way of understanding of how they should learn to simply meet both the management and the student. (yeah, the pressure is enourmus) We are assessed by the students and by the management, see what I mean. So we end up modifying our own way of teaching to to meet the needs. I mean it's a socio-economic triangle	Socio-economic triangle.
6	27	I know what I need to do as a teacher for you to learn. So how can I meet your expectations given my whole knowledge and at the same time I'm keeping management happy and eventually they will keep paying me to keep doing my work. (ha ha) so it's a tricky, it's a tricky little thing. (it is) it's complicated (yeah). Most of us just end up betraying ourselves basically.	Quote of the day.
2	1	So as the teachers as such we are all. Basically, teaching for the test. So what we have done is,	14 overall effects - 6 Assessment Alignment – (double coded)

we go around looking at the students taking the test and we try to remember the kinds of questions we can see

Teaching to the test

Summary. Over all effects of Standardized assessment structure: Constant rearranging/changing of standardized assessment structure born from the Socio-economic triangle of competing pressure (institution, instructor, and learner).

A student well you have certain expectations, you expect the teachers to meet those expectations, so obviously teachers modify their way of teaching, their approach to teaching they they betray their own way of understanding of how they should learn to simply meet both the management and the student.

I know what I need to do as a teacher for you to learn. So how can I meet your expectations given my whole knowledge and at the same time I'm keeping management happy and eventually they will keep paying me to keep doing my work. So it's a tricky, it's a tricky little thing. It's complicated. Most of us just end up betraying ourselves basically.

Overall effects of Alternative assessment structure: A deeper teacher satisfaction with alt. assessment system.

Appendix J: Codebook - David

Themes Relating to the Context of the Instructional Experience

Tables 1 through 3 depict the context of David's instructional experience.

Table 1.

Theme Category: Instructional Background

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	8	I work for the foundation program (yep) but within the foundation program we have three sub-programs. We have the academic writing program, I'm a part of the, actually, I am the coordinator or facilitator for that program, for the 2 writing courses (em hem) this program serves all the colleges here which use English as their medium of instruction. We prepare them for research writing, presentations (em hem), just like an academic program in North America. Academic writing for undergraduates (yep). So this is what I teach, I teach the advanced level, Writing 2	Instructor and coordinator of academic writing gatekeeping program.

Summary. Instructor and coordinator of academic writing gatekeeping program.

Table 2.

Theme Category: Learning Context

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	22	because I am academic writing 2, if they pass their writing 1 they can take some classes in the college, they are allowed to do that, (yep). Then they are waiting to pass our course to take other classes. So there are some prerequisites.	Partial entry to undergraduate program.
2	25	No, no writing also, so for example, you know, last time we did a summary test where the students the students were supposed to read an academic article and then summarize. (yep) so then after the test, we all looked at the grades and problems and issues we had to review the rubric a little bit more (em hem) but the test itself was ok, then the other thing, we had to add like an extra week of teaching them summary, preparing them	Changing curriculum to add more time to teach academic skills.

how to write summary, (ok, ok) so basically the curriculum effective than the test itself

Summary. Partial entry to undergraduate program allowed. Must pass writing course to gain full entry. Changing curriculum to add more time to teach academic skills.

Table 3.

Theme Category: Assessment Structure

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
1	16	We have summary writing, response writing, and then at the end of the semester they submit a term paper (em hem) a mini research paper (em hem) and, with a presentation	Task based.
1	36	Um, well we have a standardized testing, so we run our test our stream, and well, all our tests are writing based and the rubrics are not holistic rubric	Standardized testing with not holistic rubrics.
1	39	Yes, so we have content, so we only look at content, then we have organization, we look at their paragraph structure (em hem) then we have the AP or research and documentation element where we look at their citation, referencing, paraphrasing, integration, (yeah, but not direct, you don't assess grammar or vocabulary directly) Oh yeah, we have one element which is grammar, that is what I was going to say, grammar and vocabulary (sorry) where we look at their mechanics.	Academic portions separated out in rubric alongside mechanics (grammar / vocab).
2	1	So there are mid-terms as well and there are some in class tests, quizzes and in our course in my course specifically we don't have a final exam because of the research paper but in writing one they have a, they have two in-class tests which are equal to mid-term exam and a final exam.	5 Assessment Structure – mid-terms and in-class quizzes as part of summative grade.

Summary. Standardized testing of writing tasks with non-holistic rubrics. Academic portions are separated from mechanics in rubric. Mid-terms and in-class quizzes as part of summative grade.

Themes Relating to the Experience of Washback

Tables 4 through 10 depict David's experience of washback.

Table 4.

Theme Category: Experience of Assessment Alignment

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
2	35	Ah, well we assign them a lot of practice and then we show them how language is assessed, how that element is assessed (Ok) and then practice the thing, we need a lot of practice	Teach to the test.
4	13	Yes, even the articles we select for our assessment we try to address the major we are serving like sometime we go to business major, medical sciences. So we try our best. (yep) like bigger learning outcomes in terms of their course	Try to align to academic needs and topics of undergraduate courses.

Summary. Teaching to the test is part of the course structure. David tries to align to themes to topics of undergraduate courses.

Table 5.

Theme Category: Experience of Indirect Student Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
4	21	Yeah, sometimes it does because you cannot control that event at all but what we do here is we do a lot of learning sessions or moderation (Yep) with articles and then so like we take sample papers and then we grade them and then we discuss together. So we try our best to be on the same page but sometimes of course there are issues with students (Of course) we introduce a second grader or third grader. (Yeah, of course) an extra marker, yeah) It's in control it's like on or two every semester, which is good	Team work to overcome subjectivity issues in rubrics to which lowers student complaints.
3	1	Oh yes that is a possibility yes. (em hem) but they can memorize again, they can memorize some phrases to	Memorizing phrases not a concern

how to, that they could use possibility in summary writing or linking phrases, not more than that, (ok so) only article (Yeah) because they would summarize

Summary. Team work among instructors helps to overcome subjectivity issues in rubrics which in turn lowers student complaints. Learners memorizing of phrases not a great concern.

Table 6.

Theme Category: Experience of Indirect Academic Course Instructor Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
3	46	In preparing the curriculum we did a need analysis, like in the colleges and we met other stakeholders like some of the organisations outside of [institute] and we considered their feedback input and then we design our curriculum. So we did talk to a lot of people outside of our program	Communication with undergraduate teachers when writing curriculum.
4	4	Yes they, as of right now, they are happy (em hem) because we are giving them sort of the skills they need to use when they go to the colleges like writing reports they need all these skills they are learning now and writing like a project or a short thesis they need all of these things. So we are just aligning basically our curriculum and assessment to the college needs	Academic course instructor washback not an issue

Summary. Communication with undergraduate teachers when writing curriculum is important step. “We are just aligning basically our curriculum and assessment to the college needs”.

Table 7.

Theme Category: Experience of Institutional/Administration Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
3	15	Pressure from the management that there are logistic pressure on us because they are more worried, our management, top management is more worried, and they are not from a linguistic language teaching background that's the other thing, they are from	Management wanting testing on different days with multiple test. Not understanding difficulties in test creation.

sciences (Yep) or business background, so the pressure we face from this type of management, number one right now, we are suffering actually, is that we have to have multiple versions of our tests, because there are classes which are on a Sunday and Tuesdays and there are classes which are there are classes on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursdays. (Sorry you have to have monthly?) Multiple version of this (oh, multiple versions, Yep) that is one problem for us because they we have to go through a lot of things readability, to many factors to make sure the, there is some reliability there in the test. (Yep, and you feel that they don't, because they are not from a language testing background, they don't understand what) They don't understand anything, we actually, it was very tough for me because I am the person in charge for exams, so to convince them to allow us to have a common mid-term exam day. So that they are can go and write a two hour exam, they didn't want that, logistic pressure is, is, a lot on us

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|---|----|--|--|
| 3 | 30 | Pressure about proficiency or the level of the test itself, not that much because they don't understand anything there. (em hem) So they give us that type of comment. But at the end of the day if there are too many passing with A grades then we do have to write a report and we do have to do a program evaluation, why there are too many As and vice versa as well. If there are too many F grades there | Surface level only as they don't understand anything. |
| 3 | 39 | : I don't think so, (yeah) we had been lamenting about that, (yeah) it is very difficult to cope with those things. | Difficult to cope with lack of understanding from admin. |
-

Summary. Management wanting testing on different days with multiple test versions.

Management not understanding difficulties in test creation. Management has a surface level understanding only, looking only at numbers passing and failing only as they don't understand anything about second language instruction. Difficult to cope with lack of understanding from admin.

Table 9.

Theme Category: Experience of Alternative Assessment Washback

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
4	40	We did have portfolio. But it didn't work well enough in our context. Because of the culture I think (Yep) so we had to give up on that and we had, we have some online elements as well (yep) we have readings, journals blogs, we do a lot of other alternatives as well but the weighting is low because some people, the people here don't support that type of alternatives at that much. Especially that top management	Not in use as not culturally appropriate.
5	4	It was easier actually to come up with a portfolio but for most of the students and parents they were complaining about it. (Yeah, not understanding how, how it works)	Management, parents and students all complained.

Summary. Institute experimented with introducing alternative assessment through portfolios. It had to be abandoned (Alternative assessment continued for activities with very small summative grading) as management, parents and students all complained. “the people here don't support that type of alternatives at that much. Especially that top management”. The cultural context didn’t allow for the successful implementation of alternative assessment.

Table 10.

Theme Category: Overall washback effects

Page	Line	Textual Data	Code
2	15	because we just changed our curriculum like a year ago	14 Overall Effects - Recent changes to curriculum

Summary. Recent changes to curriculum.

Appendix K: Interview Transcript: Jeffery November 02, 2017

Part 1

Steve: Great! So you're at work obviously,

Jeffery: Yes I am, yeah.

Steve: Ok, shall we get going.

Jeffery: Let's go.

Steve: Ok, hope I don't go over too much. So to start off, I thought that, umm, my title is quite a mouthful. Contemporary Communicative Language Teaching. umm, so I and I know it's not that well defined in the literature, what it is, so but I wanted, in in the study to sort of separate, sort of, more experienced teachers from those ones that aren't. And I found that in the research they are not very well separated. So that is sort of the angle I wanted to go. So first if you could just sort of speak about how your instruction differs from the traditional approaches.

Jeffery: Well, Communicative Language Teaching I think differs primarily from say Translation Method, you know, like going way way back in the tradition, you know, like all kinds of different pedagogical approaches which come and go with the seasons it seems. Umm, Communicative Language Teaching like from me tries to get the student, no matter what proficiency level that they are at to begin using the language in a real authentic kind of context or way as soon as possible. Instead of trying to teach say perfect pronunciation or to teach them grammatical structures as they used to do, you would write endless mounts of drills perfecting your grammar, before you ever spoke a single word in English. (Yeap) Right, so obviously in the modern classroom it's all about authenticity, a lot about trying to, like for us because the program we work in is an

Academic English program and not for the purpose of say settlement or Immigration.

Umm, where our focus is more narrow, to the context to the language, to the skills that they need to be successful in a university environment. (Em hem) So we try to expose students to as much of the language of those grammatical structures. The contextual, socio-cultural components of language learning, umm, and try to get them just using it as much as possible, like, I know the language classroom is always sort of inauthentic, ha, right, (by it's nature, ha) it's a cocoon isolated from reality, (yeah) in some ways.

Um, so you try to do your best to provide meaningful tasks and get them using those tasks in authentic ways. (Em hem) But, I don't know if I need to say too much more than that.

Steve: Well I think you have it covered. Probably, a key word that I hear you say is 'tasks', a lot of it build around tasks and sort of I'm hearing you saying more communication less on accuracy things like this.

Jeffery: Yeah, for example to give a concrete example: say pronunciation, uh, the goal in a modern pronunciation class is not to rid a student of their native accent. Focuses on intelligibility, can you communicate your message effectively? (yeap) Uhh, even if there are grammatical mistakes, even if there are errors in, in segmentals, for example, segmentals don't tend to be disastrous in terms of communication, uhh, super segmentals likely result in more miss communication with native speakers so there is things that you can specifically focus on to ensure that peoples message is being conveyed, (yeah, on communication, as the prime...), Yeah.

Steve: Ok, so I'll move on. Thanks for that. Umm, so Ahh, Let's talk more about assessment.

So what... what is the assessment strategy that is used in your department? Sort of, if you could give me a, a very loose idea of what it is and how it is sort of changing.

Jeffery: Sure, Umm, so initially we, when students apply to the program, Umm, Everyone is generally subject to the initial, Umm, placement battery test. So assessing reading proficiency, writing and listening and speaking the whole gambit, Umm, So and then based on those results, Umm, because our program is multi-level, from a low, say, low intermediate to, Ahh, high intermediate/advanced level like, umm. So, If students pass our highest level they are granted entry into university degree setting . So we are a program that's kind of a gate keeping program. So based on the result from this test battery we place them in one of five levels. And, Uhh, we are currently looking at modifying our placement test so we're, this is sort of in development right now. But for the last 8 years we have been using the same standardized test. (Um hem) It's not delivered, umm, it's a pen and paper test so it's not an online test. Many universities in Canada use an online test, so we may be a little unusual in that we are still using a pen and paper test. (em hem). Uhh, Now in terms of, do you want me to speak about the washback effect of that?

Steve: yeah, or could you tell me about the exiting test? Umm, specifically the final exiting test that that the gate keeping test is it a similar test? Like, how is it structured?

Jeffery: We actually, umm, we don't use, ahh, a final exit test. So based on them achieving a minimum standard in their course work at the, are final exams in most of the skills, not all of them, and so the combined total mark, if they achieve the minimum standard of what were set level then they receive a pass. (Yeap) So in in they higher them at the

university they don't care about, umm, a letter grade or a percentage grade. They just care about (a pass) P or F (yeah). So (If they gain the proficiency, yeah), so essentially, yeah, there is no, there is no summative test at the end. It's just based on their accumulative assessment throughout the term.

Steve: And that is wholly teacher driven, and the teacher decides on the testing methods?

Jeffery: Umm, well there, we do have standard curriculum for some of these tests. Like the tests are essentially, would be approved by committee.

Steve: Ok, so yeah, that whole level, that final level would share that same test, which would make up some of the grade.

Jeffery: That is correct, yes. So for example in writing, the writing instructors would get together, they would decide on a specific, Uuh, test question, and then the students would all write on the same question. Then (Yeah) same with listening, they would all listen to the same lecture material and all complete the same standard test, (Yeah, yeah)

Steve: Which is created in-house, basically.

Jeffery: Which is created in-house that is correct.

Steve: Excellent, well that is good to know. Umm, so yeah if you could continue with the washback of that.

Jeffery: So we, we find that especially the, the entrance placement test, and am sure that you will find this in the literature and in many other places. That, with placement there is quite a few negative washback effects that we find especially when students find themselves placed in a level that is considerably lower than what they anticipated. Umm, So this seems to result from, in, I don't know, a number of different factors. Uhhh, students arrive with, Ahhh, maybe an inflated belief in (Em hem) their language

proficiency , (hum hem). And when they receive, so for example, a student arrives, they write the test, they think 'Oh I'm fairly advanced', um, and they get placed very low, like say, in our level 1 or 2 (Em hem). Umm, this often results in a backlash of sort of externalizing blame. (yeah, yeap) There is environmental blame, umm, 'the test room was too cold, too hot, too dry, too loud', 'the audio wasn't, wasn't, good enough', umm, 'I was under slept' or 'I had jet lag' (yeap). Umm, I, So there is all kinds of blame, but it's all externalized, it's very rarely it's self-reflective. (Em hem) .Umm, Not 'what could I have done to improve the outcome', it's some other accommodation had to happen, um . So what results often, in that students initially on the first week of the course classwork, there is a lot of grumbling, complaining that this is not fair - 'I should not be here', 'I should be in a much higher level'. And we do subsequent, ahh, diagnostic testing in the first 4 levels to ensure proper placement, so there is additional in-house testing once the students are placed, to make sure that they are, where, where they should be. (Em hem) Ahh, It is very very rare that students will move up based on subsequent writing tests or reading comprehension tests.

Steve: And do those subsequent tests carry their own washback as well?

Jeffery: They do, ha ha, so there is another washback. Some students they, they will accept it.

They will realize that within the couple of weeks of classes that they are placed properly. (Em hem), Um, that they realize that 'no my English proficiency is not enough to be in higher levels, and certainly, 'I'm not ready to, to deal with the share weight and volume of, of course work of a university program'. (Em hem). So quite often, like our instructors were, were able to do a good job of convincing students that you need to be where you are and this in the long term will benefit you. (Em hem). But because many

of our students are very recent graduates of, like Chinese high schools, that is where most of our students are from, Main land China (yeah), Umm, they take failure very poorly. They see it as a commentary on their overall intelligence (Em hem), and so taking this this failure that is almost catastrophic, Umm, that has undermined all of their goals, (eh hem) that, the time line that they have. (Yeah, that they have internalized, what they have told their parents, I imagine, ha) Yes, and, and this, this attitude or this belief system about failing a test, or not doing as well as anticipated it serves them very poorly with language learning, because the victories in language learning are so slow. And it can be very hard to see progress, and they want to see fast progress, they want to get to their business degree. There is so much parental pressure and financial pressure, they have invested in a lot of resources coming across the ocean and settling in a new strange small city in the middle of Canada. 'I just want to get to it', 'I just want to get to the real learning right', and language learning is somehow secondary strangely, ha ha.

Steve: My experience is in, in the Middle East. And I can completely relate to all of that ha.

Jeffery: Yeah, and we, we do have significant, we have fewer Middle Eastern students that we used to but, ah, one second here. (ok) ok

Steve: Umm, so, ahh, in, your let's talk about the standardized portion of the proficiency test. Umm, in your opinion, how, ahh, appropriate is it as, as a tool to, to... In your system you have used it for part of the system, that, that you've used it for part of the assessment, but how appropriate do you find it as a tool for the gate keeping, or the passing on of the students?

Jeffery: Um I think it's generally useful and adequate, umm, you know, as with any, uhh, standardized test there is always imperfections in the system. Right? Weather it is with

your assessors, umm, consistency (Yeah, yeah, Reliability, Validity all of this, yeah, yeah). So, generally speaking, I think it's been adequate to our needs. Um, though I think that the inadequacies of the placement test have been properly dealt with mostly by the subsequent internal diagnostic testing to ensure that proper placement has happened. It does happen occasionally that you find that, for whatever reason, a student, students like their placement mark doesn't really reflect what they demonstrate in their, what they demonstrate in the classroom. That, so very occasionally you do get a student who you wonder how they preformed so poorly on the placement test (Em hem) when they are showing you something very different in your classroom. You're wondering, 'yeah this seems like they should be in our top level'. (Yeah) And it hasn't happened very often, but usually there is these anomalies. Right? (yeap, so that helps to iron it out). Yes it does, the internal diagnostics try to ensure that those inconsistencies are ironed out like you said.

Steve: And the, the combination of the standardized test with the alternative assessment strategy, do you find that this, the combination works? Like if you could speak about the alternative part or the in-house part that is not standardized. Does one balance the other or do they fight together?

Jeffery: They are complementary, they balance each other yes. Uhh, this is one area, like in terms of my position as a curriculum person I don't have as much, I'm less familiar with the internal diagnostic tests (Em hem). Ahh, that's one area of the curriculum that I have not been able to get to yet so I, in my teaching, um, I did not teach in the levels that did the internal diagnostics. I typically taught in the highest level. So once you're placed in the highest level there is no need for internal diagnostics, you just assume that

the student is placed correctly, you just assume that there is no way to demote somebody. (Yeah, ok) I can't speak with too much knowledge about the makeup of those internal tests. I just know that instructors have created these standardized assessments and that they are managed by some of the admin. (Ok)

Steve: Umm, and if you could speak about stakeholder buy in. Like how, how, you have spoken a little about this, about the students not believing their standard, so what about them buying into the more modern way of teaching?

Jeffery: Oh, yes, Ahh, I think generally speaking, It depends a little bit on student back ground, Umm. So, we do have a certain percentage of students that go to say a Canadian based curriculum high school in China. And they tend to arrive here much better prepared, acclimatized little, but more familiar with the social cultural components of learning English in a Canadian context because they had Canadian trained teachers. (Yeap)

Part 2

Steve: Um, so, I finished last night transcribing our interview, so you've given me a lot to think about. um perhaps even in directions that I wasn't anticipating but it's good. (ok) I wanted to...

Jeffery: Tell me if I'm going too far off course or umm...

Steve: No, I actually think that, that's a lot of the aim of the phenomenological study, is to sort of, give you scope and see where it takes you because it's about your experience. (Ok) And then I'm gonna line all that up with the others and see what correlates. But, umm, I wanted to sort of bring it back now more to your teaching and how assessment effects your teaching (Em hem). So, uum, so we, you, you spoke about stakeholder buy-in and

the importance you know as an overall issue, but how, in your view, do you find it important? How, how important do you find stakeholder buy-in in your practice? Yeah.

Jeffery: Umm, Well to me, it's hard to generalize, but I'm gonna make one general statement, it, that considering our student demographic, being predominantly mainland Chinese, assessment is sort of an inherent motivator for these students, (Em hem) for good and bad, Umm, so, in general, I find that no matter, in no matter what skill I'm teaching assessment is kind of the stick and the carrot, simultaneously (Yeap). Umm, it's, it motivates students to complete assignments, umm, it motivates them to do or complete tasks that perhaps they otherwise wouldn't do on their own, ahh, so there is almost a necessity in the program to have assessment sort of on an ongoing bases in order to get students to do what you want them to do because a lot of the time they are not intrinsically motivated to complete this, uhh, complete the task that is set for them. Ahh, they require some kind of mark as a validation for their work , (Yeah). Umm, so that is sort of like a general picture about assessment. Umm, I find that assessment has different impacts on my teaching, different effects on the in-classroom environment, perhaps based on the skill that is being taught or even the subskill (Yeap) within a course. So, say, you take for example, maybe a contrast might help. So you have a speaking course on one hand and perhaps writing on another (Yeap). I find that within a conversational class where they are learning sort of social-cultural skills for carrying on group discussions for agreeing/disagreeing maybe working on a bit of pronunciation, maybe doing some, ahhh role plays for specific context that they will need in university (Yeap) you often find that students are much more intrinsically motivated by that context, by learning those, that particular skill set. They see how those tasks are directly

related to their future goals and to benefiting them in the context of University culture/environment in the classroom and outside the classroom. So they really value the feedback (Yeap). They can say 'Ok, I can immediately apply this, I see how it can be apart', and they can more rapidly see improvements over time. So they are in the speaking context, I find that, that, washback can be generally very positive while like, it somewhat depends on the pedagogical approach of the teaching, like how do they provide feedback, in terms of the assessment. So, I think, feedback is a really important sort of component of assessment, right like, your assessing a student's performance. Now in the speaking environment, often the assessment comes quite quickly. There might be some immediate feedback or assessing of a student's pronunciation. So the instructors tone, umm, your attitude and general environment that you've created in the classroom, is it one that where students feel safe and secure in making mistakes (Yeap). Now, if they do, then washback is much, much different and much more likely to result in the learning outcomes that you want and the learning that your students are, are desiring. Ok, I'm going to come back, so we have the speaking where, where I said feedback often seems like assessment seems to have more positive washback effects. Writing on the other hand, you are working on really kind on, like, oral assignments with kind of very tight deadlines. (Yeah) and assessment here, in writing, I think is more highly variable, umm, (More subjective I imagine) What's that? (more subjective the way you sort of...) perhaps, like we, we have quite a few standardized rubrics that we use when we are assessing our assignments (Yeap). Umm, but weather it's very interesting to see how students absorb the feedback from your written comments from the rubrics (em hem) and again, I think here, this has a lot to do with classroom

management, how instructors explain assignments, how they explain (Yeah) the use of the rubrics, what the rubrics mean and what students need to do in order to fulfill the expectations of the assignment and the sort of distinct criteria that's outlined on the rubrics (yeah). Now if that is all been done well and students feel that, you know, the channel of communication that they can ask questions they can say 'I don't understand, what this means', 'I don't know how to complete that component of the assignment'. The channel of communication are open and explanations are provided in a clear and really supportive (yeap) way. Then washback and the potential for the benefits for assessment are great. Um, so, in my experience I was always the kind of teacher that had great high expectations of my students. I expect them to produce material and not just be, you know, mailing it in, right. (yeap) And, I never had problem with that, students would buy in to the fact that what they are learning in the class is valuable to them in the future (yeap), and that, in fact, the writing assignments that they will face in university are going to be far more complex and with multiple projects going on simultaneously, right. So, to me, a lot to do with assessment in the classroom and the results of assessment have a lot to do with the student teacher relationship, classroom management and the learning environment that the instructor creates . (yeap, I understand, I agree). Yeah.

Steve: I would would do you find that your assessment there is a cause for the students to ask for more traditional type of teaching? Like, they would, might ask for some grammar instruction?

Jeffery: Ahh, yeah that can happen so for a good example would be in writing. You're talking about grammar (um hem), ah I have very strong opinions about this. Ahh, it's interesting

that students often they come to you after they receive say an initial assignment back and the feedback and they come to you and they say 'teacher can you give me, more grammar exercises', 'Can you teach us, can you teach us, whether it's this structure, whether it's passive voice (yeah) whatever it is'. And I sort of, I look at them, 'Well, ok, but are you ready to do the work?', 'I can teach you, and I can lead you down this path, but me just presenting the material to you doesn't mean any learning is going to happen', right (em hem), 'you have to meet me half way and do the work'. And very often I find students don't want to do the work. (Yeah, they are looking for shortcuts) They want you to come to them with some grammar worksheets, and they will do the grammar worksheets, perfect them. Then you never see any implementation in their actual writing (yeah). So I think the..., to come back to your original point, it that, um, feedback or assessment on very specific things can be beneficial, but the students have to be willing to put in the work (yeah) and to be self-reflective of like their progress (yeah yeah).

Steve: So, it's a big, it's a learning curve for them and it's a challenge to, to have them towards that system. So, I can imagine it's a group effort, that all teachers need to be on board in some respect to move these students toward, where they should be in terms of thinking about grading and thinking about how to learn.

Jeffery: Yeah, I think how to learn, is a huge question for many students, umm, it that they don't have frameworks to apply to their own, uh, learning management. I think I mentioned self-regulated learning in our, a little bit last week, when we talked (yeah). They are not able to reflect on, umm, their strategies, so a lot of our students are excellent rote memorizers. But when that comes to learning the vocabulary, we know that from the

research that rote memorization of vocabulary may be a good way a good place to start but it doesn't result in depth of learning (yeah). Ahh, so, so I agree, yes teachers have to be there and be able to present students with some of this information and maybe construct their classes somewhat around somebodies ideas of metacognition, self-regulation, being able to analyze your strategies that you apply to your learning in different context and be able to, sort of self-question. Arh, is it a strategy actually working for me right now (yeah). 'Do I need to switch to something else to be able to be successful or to meet the goal that I have for myself'.

Steve: And, and these are all things that, they come in not realizing that they are going to be doing that. (Right) so um.

Jeffery: Many many of our students expect the very traditional student teacher relationship (Yeap). You have like the sage on the stage delivering pearls of wisdom that the students collect, right, and that and that is very much the Eastern pedagogical model or (yeap) or students don't have questions, they just wait for the information to be delivered to them and they studiously write it down , (yeap). And, of course the Western education model is far more Socratic in nature and, uhh, your, your statement or even a question that you ask maybe answered with another question (em hem). And students find, can find that very disconcerting (sure).

Steve: Um, if I can rewind. Next, I wanted to ask about positive washback. But you answered this, in that you were telling me how important, how, how standardized testing brings amazing positive washback. Uh, (It can yes). So, with the alternative style of testing, um, some schools are moving towards less standardized testing they are putting more

weight of alternative tests or even completely doing alternative testing, like with portfolios and work like this. What, what do you feel about that?

Jeffery: What alternative? Umm, I think within a program such as ours which is a gatekeeping program (yeap) there, one has to tread somewhat carefully with say the portfolio model in in writing, because in our program we want to get, make sure it's possible, to be as sure as possible that we are assessing language, that we are assessing language components as opposed to merely jumping through hoops (em hem) merely say, 'Ok I able to hand in X number of pages therefore I get a grade for that' (yeap), not even assessing what is happening within the document, in terms on say vocabulary, uh, grammar, uh, language structure of all kinds, um, like are they, is the form of the writing recognisable within an institutional setting (em hem), as opposed to just like free writing. Which has its place as a fluency based activity, but in terms of like assessing we have to be very careful to balance between assessing language and assessing other things that are extra linguistic. Um, the value of like a portfolio is that perhaps students see what they are working on as being personal or self-directed and it acknowledges principles of like you know adult learning. Where students have input into their own learning until there is certainly benefit there in terms of motivation and maybe learning and being able to work on some of those regulated learning characteristics that are very desirable, um, so I think there is definitely a place for alternative forms of assessment like that. It's just it has to be, um, looked at carefully and make sure that it is in balance with the learning objectives and our obligations to, um, the university over all in terms of student preparation in terms of being sufficiently ready to enter degree study (yeap).

Steve: I think the key word I hearing you say is balance (Balance yeah) Yeah. Um, if I could move on to something that I've had in my experience is with the standardized test I've had, um, almost push back from the administration. Where I seeking support for Communicative Language Teaching but what I'm hearing from the administrative staff above me is 'a focus on the test'. How many students passed, instead of how many students have the proficiency and and so I'm feeling, I felt, I have felt this pressure this washback from the administration. Have you had experience with this or do you agree with this in any way? (Ahh) Being part of the administrative team yourself, ha ha.

Jeffery: Yeah exactly, Um, I think largely within our program, I think there is an uneasy an uneasy, what is the word and uneasy dualism. Uneasy relationship between this notion of the communicative outcomes the language outcomes (yeap) and students passing. Um from the curriculum writers side. Primarily, like when we are developing materials. We are very much looking at language based learning outcomes. What will the student take away in terms of communicative language proficiencies, skills from these assignments, um, because ultimately, because we don't have a dedicated exit standardized test. Where we have sort of, we have final exams to each of the discrete courses and our highest level that contribute to the overall mark, um, student just passing, yeah they make it through the program. It's assumed that they have absorbed and meet the learning objectives to a certain degree. So from the point of view of the language program, we hope that they have learned enough, improved enough to be able to kind of survive at least within the university context . Now some other university administration (yeap) its, to be quite frank, there is the pressure just to get students into the university because it's dollars and cents (of course) international students are

valuable, right, and so you don't want there to be too many barriers to admission (em hem) um because right, not right with super competitive market in Canada and North America and the dire financial situation that many big institutions. International students are seen as a way to maintain the bottom line (yeap). So, that's one very uneasy relationship between higher university administrations, administrative like desires and the desires and hopeful outcomes of a language program imbedded within that institution.

Steve: I've actually. In presenting this thesis to my supervisor. I had to defend against that because she was speaking to me about oh it's about dollars and cents, you know. Like 'No this is about academic, um, this is about how to best provide a language to a proficiency level language to students, I'm not concerned with the dollars and cents part, that another department, sort of' (exactly). So, I always need to push that.

Jeffery: There is a really interesting book that you might be, maybe your familiar with it. Arrh, It's called 'ESL readers and writers and higher education' (oh ok, whose that by) It's an edited book by Norman Evans, Neil Anderson, and William Eggington it's a Routledge publication from 2015 (Ok), but they discuss a lot of this very topic, um. They very kind of dynamic between the large institution and the interests of the English language learner.

Steve: Oh, I will definitely look that up. Thanks. Um, if we move along to, ahh. Are there any, um, suggestions or ways that you think that communicative language teaching can be supported or better supported by the institution?

Jeffery: Like the larger institution. Ahh. That is a complex question. Ahh, to me there is an assumption. Where there is just a lot of misunderstanding or preconceived notions of

what language learning does. A lot of misunderstanding of what can be accomplished in, ahh, in four months in a language program. So, I have a lot of conversations with or I'm in discussion groups with university professors and they are mystified by how students who have you know come through our program or come in to the university with a specific IELTS mark and that they see, all they see is like deficiencies, and they are mystified as to how these students arrive here (Yeah). And I find that that this sort of a misunderstanding about how students acquire academic proficiency. That it results in a lot of finger pointing and blaming and results in a lot of spinning dialogue about how do we support these students. 'Shouldn't they be able to do this already when they arrive in first year business or second year business?', 'Shouldn't they be able to do XYZ and be perfectly, you know, capable of making a presentation to the class?' So, in terms of like providing support to communicative teaching I actually think it needs to extend far beyond the walls of the discrete English language program (yeap). I think that within university administration there needs to be a recognition of the fact that learning academic English, whether that be writing, reading, speaking vocabulary, listening to lectures and what have you takes a long time and these students require supports all along the way. Umm, and it can't just be in the form of like an academic writing center where students go and see a tutor. There has to be social-cultural components maybe even like mentors that help students begin to like navigate the terrain of a Canadian University. Umm, so, in terms of communicative language teaching, yeah. The supports need to be robust. Like I can speak to some very practical, I think all across Canada like English language programs such as ours they are housed in very different units within the universities (yeap), and so they have a very different political arrangement, different

levels of formal acknowledgement, uhh, within the institution, uhh, so there is a lot of complexity in terms of where that English language institute is housed in the umbrella of the University and how it is able to communicate with stakeholders throughout the university. To actually understand what, what happens in an English language centre . So. (Yeah I agree with all of that. Yeah.) So, I hope I answered your question there. Um, in terms of like, it's a very wide ranging question and, umm, there is no easy answer. (no) There is a lot of competing ideologies there is competing like politics and there is economics all wrapped up in the question. (Yeap, and the teachers at the bottom doing their best) The teachers in the trenches, Yes exactly.

Steve: Um, Just one final question, is just to sort of throw it to you, if there is any other points or areas about washback that you feel we have missed. (Umm) or further insights that you could offer.

Jeffery: Well there is one thing that I did think about, it terms of like our our earlier discussion about umm the placement test umm there's this kind of interesting phenomena that sometimes happens especially if students get placed in one of the lowest levels. Umm, there can be, I mentioned about how washback can be, can result in this sort of, existential crises with in the student (yeap), where there's, they are very bitter. So, some students will take this to the extreme, where they will, just a very small number, but it does happen where they actually stop coming class altogether in order to study for say the IELTS exam (em hem) they will withdraw from the program and attempt, they say that are going to study and then they go write the IELTS in hope of being able to jump levels. Very rarely works, though students persist in doing this all this has pretty negative consequences. Obviously there no coming to class, so they are short of

defaulting of four months of valuable learning experience to go study for an (I agree) exam . So, I don't know they seem, it's just a fascinating phenomenon to me. That, I think, crystalizes this deep misunderstanding within so many of our students, of the many layers of, many valuable layers that exist within coming into a language program such as ours (yeap yeap).

Steve: I always feel that too, especially with academic language it's just, 'Sure you can communicate you can buy a coffee but 'can you do something academic?', it's a whole other level.

Jeffery: It's a whole other level yeah, yeah exactly. So, umm, so looking into my notes here if there is anything else that I can think of. Yeah, so maybe I'll just finish, my last comment would just be. Like I see formative assessment like within the program. Like within the discrete skill like listening, speaking, reading, writing. Formative assessments I think students tend to value as long as there is clear communication between the instructor and the student about how these learning tasks are applicable, (yes) how they will benefit them (Yeap). So, there is like a tangible, umm, message in something that students can understand and project into the future as opposed to oh right I just have to jump through this hoop (Yeap). I don't really understand why I have to jump through this hoop. But I'll jump through it because it's worth 30% of my mark (yeah).

Steve: So what you're saying, you're using formative assessment to pull into the wider goal of improving (exactly) Yeah.

Jeffery: So, there has to be really good communication between the instructor and the student. But also between the program and the students coming in. So that students are enrolling in your program they should have a very clear understanding of what they are going to

learn, why they are going to learn, and how this learning is going to help them meet and fulfill their future learning goals (em hem, ok). Then washback in assessment can be maximized (yeap) for benefit. (Yeap, yeap, excellent, nice way to finish.)

Steve: Umm. Ok I think that wraps it up. I have to thank you for all the information you've given me. (My pleasure). One other thing. Would you like to choose a pseudonym that I could use for your name?

Jeffery: H Ha, My pseudonym, how creative can I get. arhh. How about Jeffery.

Steve: Jeffery.. Excellent No thank you for your time.

Appendix L: Interview Transcript: Gary November 23, 2017

Steve: Ok, so I know my title is a bit of a mouthful. Umm, 'Washback on contemporary communicative second language teaching'. So umm, but what I wanted to do is sort of separate it from more traditional teaching. Because I found on the research, there is actually not a ton of research on washback like I expected, so umm. And it wasn't defined especially how communicative teaching is evolving quite quickly and it's not really, I didn't find it was catching up. So I felt that this was a good avenue to go. Umm, but first sort of to begin and to give a bit of background I wondered if you could sort of speak about how your instruction differs from the traditional instruction?

Gary: Me personally, I, I've always been, interested in, I pull from a lot of areas like whether it for my research or my instruction or whatever. Umm, I've never stuck to one particular kind of approach or methodology in class . Umm, I like to look for ways to innovate or build on what exists or combine just depending on what I'm trying to teach. Umm, and I, and that has always imposed my material development as well, because, umm, I've always found that text books don't always, they're not always designed with a process, a teaching process in mind, or necessarily a good teaching practice in mind. They're done in a way that's, I don't know, sometimes they align with older research, or older ideas about how things should be taught, verses what people are actually doing, so I pull from, for example, drama pedagogy as in not how to teach drama, but how to use drama to teach for example. Or inquiry based learning or other approaches that are used in different, in different ways, even like sort of that whole cognitive idea about like, umm, for example, when we teach like, moving from a concrete concept to for example to an abstract one, when it comes to language or prepositions of time and place for example. So

I tend to pull in from a lot of different approaches to learning , umm that are proven sound across many different areas, fields and then pull them into language instruction, and see how we can make them work in that particular area. Umm, that where I, I don't know, it's I'm a bit of a mishmash of, (I agree) in terms of learning design.

Steve: I, I'm sort of a, like like, I think what I hear you saying is is you don't you're not rigid on one methodology that sort of the flavor of the month or the year (no). You sort of

Gary: And I like to experiment, too like if I see something, or I'm like, oh inspired by something that I've read or I've seen . I want to see how that might go down in my class (em hem) and you know if, and it's never a onetime thing. It might not work the first time or I my mind it may not go, I might not be meeting whatever outcomes I've got in mind for that thing but I'll try it again later with a different way, or a different group or a different, maybe not with grammar this time maybe I'll try it with vocabulary or, you know, tweak it along that way (em hem) um to see how it, how it goes. I sometimes get feedback from the learners on, if we are trying something weird or new (em hem) to see how they felt about an approach or a particular teaching methodology that I've brought in and that also helps umm not only with the teaching itself but eventually with materials design as well they are my secret guinea pigs I guess (ha ha). Yeah, yeah, I try to elicit feedback from students who actually understand that I'm not a dancing monkey in front of the class doing random things. Usually there is a, a plan or an end game in mind and (em hem) you I know.

Steve: But you, It can seem like like when you start doing um some things.

Gary: 'Teacher you plan things? it's not just you walk in and say things in English and hope that it all works out?' like no we actually, methods to the madness and stuff (ha yeap).

Steve: So, if we could sort of move on to the, umm, the strategy the assessment strategy that that's being used. If you could just loosely tell me about it. Umm. at at your place of employment.

Gary: Umm, because we're a, we are COB based we work with the Canadian Language Benchmarks which suggest that any of our, um assessments should also be, therefore be task based (yeap). Umm and they have to aligned to the Canadian Language Benchmarks which describe what a learner can do, umm, with their English. And there is different streams and different strands. On top of that though, we have obligations to, sort of academic obligations . If we want programs within the college to accept our, umm, language assessment scores and entry, you know, proven ELP essentially for nursing or whatever. We also have to have a fairly academic focus, which speaks to some of the performance expectations let's say in nursing or pharmacy, or those academic type courses. So our assessments are largely based around CLB outcomes. They are, our mid-terms and our finals are are standardized. We offer the same midterms and final across levels. Umm, I've been the primary designer or those assessments and for the rubrics that accompany them. But then our quizzes and then our projects that are offered within a level are entirely teacher based. So they could focus on a particular skill. Let's say, umm you know, skimming and scanning 'I want you to demonstrate that you can skim and scan', or a particular, like form. like 'I'm gonna test you on this particular grammar', they don't have perhaps. So they are more teacher, umm, they go with whatever the teacher is doing in the moment or whatever skill that they might be working on. Umm, eventually, hopefully leading up to, a learner's ability to complete the task that is in the final assessment. So the mid-term assessments.

Steve: Ok, and are those skills that teacher gives. Are they part of the final grade?

Gary: Yeah, the rubric for sure and the quizzes themselves are calculated. Our mid-term and our final. Umm, I think they make up about 50% something percent of the grade. Um, quizzes make up I think 15-20% off the top of my head and there is a project as well which I think is 15-20 somehow mathematically it all comes together (yeah). But yeah the quizzes are counted. They are not weighted they are not worth as much as the bigger pieces that are standardized but they are, (yeap) part of that final grade.

Steve: Yeah, so I think you're saying that the quizzes, the quizzes are more academic skills based. They are looking at the academic skills. And then sort of the final standardized test or including the mid-term as well it's more proficiency, language proficiency based.

Gary: Yeap, so umm one of the CLB standards for example social interaction umm, CLB 5 they have students demonstrate that they can write an email. Pragmatically appropriate, umm, email to, umm, either a friend, employer or a colleague or something like this. And that would be task (yeap). The rubric that assesses whether or not they were able to complete the task, whether or not they were actually able to write the email. But there are also elements on the rubric that look at pragmatics, the use of, umm, correct expressions, umm, there is a grammar piece for level appropriate, umm, grammar expectations . So for a CLB 5 they should be able to use simple tenses correctly, for example (yeap) umm ahh, and then things like punctuation and formatting so the rubric breaks down um, elements of the task (yeap), umm, holistically is the task completed appropriately and that it breaks down academically by grammar, by vocabulary and by formatting and so that would all then comprise then comprise the score. 75% congratulations or whatever it is, on that particular task.

Steve: and and for the, umm, the listening skills, and the reading skills?

Gary: Same idea, (same idea, yeap) yeah you would have a listening task, an audio, umm, for example that fits the strand of the CLB so. Presentation information that's a really easy one you have find somebody giving a presentation or, you know, having a meeting or something like this and you, we develop, umm, questions that address the CLB outcomes, the learner can identify facts and details, main idea, umm, connectors, sequential connectors for example within or organizational connectors within the audio itself, you know, therefore, consequently or whatever, or able to infer or predict content. That would be a CLB 6 for example. Ahh, so the questions would be designed to be to assess whether the learner can do, umm, all of those, meet all of those outcomes (yeap yeap, that sounds good).

Steve: So, these tests, they are created in-house?

Gary: In house yeah, cause they, umm, CLB tasks, umm, that are designed by, umm, Canadian Centre for Language Benchmarks (em hem) are holistic they don't, um, evaluate the grammar or the pragmatics or the vocabulary. They just look at them holistically which, so we couldn't, when it came to providing an ELP like an English Language Proficiency level for, ahh, in-house or even external mattering, it wasn't sufficient because we needed to be able to say academically speaking this persons got the grammatical, vocabulary skills, whatever it is to be able to go into your program and succeed. So we develop everything in-house (Yeap yeah).

Steve: Ok, so, umm. So it's mainly standardized testing, not a lot of the alternative testing. There is no portfolios or things like this?

Gary: We used to, we did. The portfolios were a hot mess. Mostly because our team, the majority of our team, umm is not quali, they don't make good tasks, they don't know how to create a performance either like it's. So the portfolios failed us and we ended up teaching to the test (em hem). Or if the students didn't do well in a test they would bully teachers into making a new portfolio task that is simpler or to just repeat the task itself until they finally got it right (yeap) um

Steve: I do like that word you've come out with, Bullying, I've I've felt that myself and that it sort of outlines the pressure that you can have from students.

Gary: Our counter parts, because we have the ESL intensive program and we have a LINC program as well. Our LINC program is doing portfolio testing right now and it's...my husband is working in it right now, it's it's such a mess the students are absolute bullies. They do nothing but test over at LINC it seems, and it's just the, you know, if a student doesn't perform well on that particular task they just put the heat on the teacher to to keep re-testing and my husband honestly feels that the majority of his job is just. He lives, his class just lives for the test and so, umm, we got out of that, the ESL testing side because it wasn't working for us (umm hem, yeap, you've got the option to get our at least. I hear that at LINC it's across country.) Yeap, and there we were, thank God my colleagues, you know, have the humility to say to say like I'm not qualified to make an assessment task that is weighted such that it, you know, and it shouldn't, you know, not without development or support or whatever. It wasn't consistent, you know, there was, no, you know, there was no way of checking . So, it's one of the reasons why the assessment development now has fallen on to just a couple of us within the ESL department, ahh,

intensive department, because not everybody else is, is confident and capable to do those final assessment pieces .

Steve: Ok, so um, with the testing that you have the standardized testing how aligned do you find it with the outcomes?

Gary: Strongly, powerfully, really really good. Um, it took us. I had to have a bit of a stern talking to. I went on mat leave after developing our first round of exams and when I came back, umm, they had the tests, the teachers had gone in and altered exams . And they were going 'It's really not working' and I'm like 'of course it's not working you changed the test ok, it no longer aligns to the outcomes'. 'You're testing things that are not actually outcomes'. Umm, so in terms of what we are supposed to be testing they're they're mapped. We actually have maps for each exam that show which test items align to specifically which outcome (yeap yeap).

Steve: I always find outcomes can be kind of difficult because it's kind of like. 'Can write a sentence', like you know, 'have very good communication'. or something like this. it's quite.

Gary: The CLBs aren't that vague. The CLBs are really specific so that's, and we are lucky in that regard that the CLBs are written in such a way that, you know, 'Can write a paragraph' that is not what is. It's really great itemized 'can do' statements and so it's (em hem) helpful for us as as designers or developers to be able to have that level of clarity, so (yeap yeap)

Steve: Um, well you've answered that one (sorry).

Gary: You now it's funny, we actually had to map grammar outcomes to the CLBs . The CLBs hint at particular grammar forms or vocabulary or, you know, phrases and things that

learners should be able to use. But they don't specifically, very explicitly provide a list of ability. I actually had, we ourselves internally actually had to create grammar and, umm, pragmatics maps to align with CLB tasks and CLB outcomes. (Yeap, Ok) which has helped as well on the rubrics.

Steve: So, you mean like points of grammar that they might pass?

Gary: Well for example, if you look at the CLB four they are supposed to be able to give for example sequential instructions, (yeah) you know, in order. So when it comes to grammar what you need to be able to do in order to utter an instruction (Ok) you need to be able to have imperatives for example right, you need to have certain sequential time markers, first, second, third, next, after that, which also implies that you need to be able to do time causes in a compound or complex sentence and so we actually had to go through the outcomes and look at which grammar forms were implied or almost explicitly, you know, within a each, umm, each task or within each outcome within the CLBs. So we actually have a grammar map now that, that, internally mind you, that accompanies the umm outcomes that we have. Which has also helped with our rubric development, and is also helping, you know, I'm not just teaching this one thing over here it has to happen, um um, at this particular CLB level and they, you can build and scaffold on it. Or spiral it even throughout the different levels so.

Steve: Do you find that that has an effect of of encouraging teachers to go back to more like start teaching grammar. And focusing their classes around a grammar point.

Gary: Um it has, what it's done is actually um yeah not exactly, luckily no. Like grammar is included as part of a lesson perhaps as a pre-task or a post-task analysis for example if if a teacher is doing an actual task cycle (yeap) the grammar might appear in a pre-task or a

post-task analysis but it also helps the, umm, it's helped us anyways target or identify or agree upon which grammar forms should be offered at certain levels and must be, and then there is the nice to be, so then if I'm teaching a CLB 6 for example, I have the understanding that my colleague has covered something already at CLB 5 or CLB 4 and so a learner won't progress up into a 6 unless they have demonstrated a certain degree of competency with that form or there is an expectation that they have covered it, so that I can build, so if they are good with, ahh, simple present simple past whatever I can maybe work on to perfect tenses or, ahh, these other things (yeah) so it's actually helped us organise a little more though it doesn't necessarily make us grammar um dependence. But, we also sometimes provide lists of the forms to the students at the beginning of the semester saying, 'you're responsible', you know, for these forms. We have on-line grammar checks through Pearson now, through our Moodle, whatever. So they can actually access the chapters themselves if they want to do self-study as well (ok). So when the assessment actually comes they see on the rubric like, umm, must demonstrate mastery or control or developing control of this particular form, which is already identified right from the very beginning. The learner knows that that's one of the expected, umm, things that they have to be able to show by the end of semester right, so, (yeah)

Steve: So if we could sort of move on the teaching to the test. That's sort of what you're, umm, I'm hearing it's not too much of a problem, the way you have it set up.

Gary: The students want it and this is, the issue is that the teachers prefer not to. Umm, I can say collectively we want to be able to teach how to communicate well in English. What the students want and ask regularly is 'Is what you're teaching now teacher on the test',

‘no’, ‘then I don't want to learn this’ (yeap). And this is where we get arguments or, um, students don't buy-in, they fight, they check out mentally, mentally check out whatever it is. If it's not on the test many of them have no interest in learning it . Umm, and if we as a group I can say with a great deal of confidence that we don't want to teach that way . Um, the exams are there to provide a snapshot of where that learner is at that point in time in terms of proficiency but our overall goal and mandate is to provide language instruction, um, and intercultural and all of this so that learners can use language in the workplace or academically or, you know, whatever the next step will be. And ‘that is not to teach you what is on the mid-term, it is not to teach you specifically what is on, a final exam, that is not what it is’.

Steve: So to bring the students to the wider goal of.., yeah.

Gary: Oh they and we could talk ourselves blue in the face they they don't have the same goal as we do when it comes to the classroom and so it's a battle . Like ‘teacher what’s on the exam’, (yeap) it's like ‘I don't care what's on the exam’, right.

Steve: Do you find that they have an inflated, ahh, value of of when they evaluate themselves, they actually feel that they are much better than what they are doing in the test?

Gary: Absolutely yes, they, yeah and that's also, umm, people, oh, I'm having this fight with a lot of learners this year who are not um achieving what they would like to achieve because they think they are awesome and I like ‘Well you're not demonstrating to me that you can do these things’, you know, and that's not I have to. ‘You know at the end of the day these are the outcomes that we have, that you have to show me you have to demonstrate to me that you can do’, ‘well I can do that’ ‘well then why why aren't you

doing' right (em hem). It's a lot of them thinking that they are better than they are or they they negotiate for marks on the test, cause it's a negotiation, 'I give you, I give you this mark' rather than, um, (you earn a mark, yeah) you earning it or whatever it is right (yeah) so it's a constant fight, I mean I've had colleagues go on stress leave because of the abuse of the students in this regard. The relentless bullying and hostility and comments it's never ending. The the lines that are crossed are (yeap), you know, just mind blowing sometimes.

Steve: And I think that that highlights just how high stakes things are for these kids for the young adults.

Gary: And a lot of ours are funded, they have limited government funding (uh huh) to take their ESL and so for them they think 'if I go to the next level that means I am that level', I'm like 'no it doesn't, like you could be a CLB 1 in a CLB 8 class it doesn't make you a CLB 8 it doesn't mean your better just because you're in that class. And we are not going to put you there, because we are not going to give like a... specially like our credibility is certainly on the line it took us a lot of time for our external, internally and externally for people to be able to accept our CLB scores over IELTS scores, that's a fight (yeap). So um, It is intense over here so I guess that students just are not on the same page, umm, don't care to be on the same page and it's, um, really stressful (yeap yeap I understand).

Steve: Umm, what about from not so much sort of indirect washback from above from administration, even though I guess you're part of that, even above, like, um, from the university structure and from sort a lack of understanding of where ESL or academic English fits in to a university structure. How does that effect, come all the way back to the classroom?

Gary: Our program to be honest with you is serving too many masters. Which is really I think, umm, made it difficult for us to actually do our jobs well. Ah, part of the pressure from the, whether it's the administration or whatever, I, we what to have laddering, internal laddering, we want to have some and so does the institution. It's part of the providing a quality learner experience is that somebody should be able to come into our ESL program and they go smoothly efficiency into a nursing program, let's say. You know, that's the way it should be they shouldn't have to have an external test, theoretically to be able to go into this thing. So our administrators our leadership want this. Our international students come in, they don't want it to be these other things that have to happen, it should happen in-house but, umm, they don't have an understanding of what good teaching practice is they don't know what our tests should or should not look like. Um, they don't know what good assessment is in ESL, um, the fact that we are doing CLB. The CLBs are never, they are not supposed to be used for high-stakes entry, like that is not what they are designed for, it is explicit, that is not what they're known for. Um, task, like the stuff that we are doing. We have these community workplace schools and now we also have this academic goal that we are supposed to be academically prepared to go into nursing or pharmacy or whatever and it's really watered down what we are able to do in the amount of time that we are given, um, to do it in. And, um, we are not doing anything well, we are doing most things moderately effectively but, um, and our text books don't align, ha ha. So, um (even though the text books have written on them nicely you know communicative approach, you know this is what we need and the advertising is amazing). The power of PPP (ha ha). So we are not doing anything, um, to the best of our ability really, and the students feel the heat because they have, um, these governmental funding

deadlines, timeline, you know, where it is going to expire. Ah, we have pressure from within to be able to provide effective language instruction for them to ladder in. We have literacy learners, we have refugees who have never held a pencil before in their lives, who were not ever going, you know, so yeah we are serving too many masters. Including our own institution who have little understanding and often times little respect for what it means to be an ESL professional and what it means to be a good ESL program. We are not good at what we do because we are combining literacy instruction, workplace ESP, you know, English for Specific Purposes and academic, English for Academic Purposes all within the same classroom and it doesn't work.

Steve: Yeah, too many, too many stakeholders with their own agenda.

Gary: I think they need to go away, ha ha.

Steve: That is what I've always said in my classes (Give us more money and leave us alone) Yeah, tell me what you want and go away, ha ha.

Gary: It's hard to be accountable to them. I used to be the associate chair for my program and I sat in meetings where we were just getting screamed at (em hem), you know, and it's just ahhh.

Steve: Do you find that also from the instructors of the university program saying your students you can bring to us are not prepared.

Gary: Oh my God yes, yes, there is so little respect from them for what we do. And as language instructors even within the field we are not even considered professionals like they are. Because, you know, we are teaching language which is apparently hippy dippy. And I'm like 'we all have a master's degree thank you for coming'. But, you know, it's even professionally we are not considered on an equal level our program isn't taken seriously

because we are foundational and our learners language proficiency is always called into question. Um, you know we are not act.. we are not strictly an academic program for goodness sakes , 'you know, we have all of these other influences going into our programming our curriculum development and our assessment so no we are not making you happy either', they scream at us, they scream. Those meetings are really fun (sure).

Steve: Do you think the, basically your saying they don't have an understanding of just how advanced academic language is. And it's not just you can go, I can order something at Starbucks therefore I speak English, therefore...

Gary: It takes learners CALP, to learn CALP twice as long as to learn BICS if not three times longer, right. You learn your basic interpersonal communication skills within like five or six years of being within the country that you're in. CALP like the Cognitive Language Proficiency takes twice as long if not more. If you are a literacy student right or if you've never had that academic experience, you know, how long did it take for us to learn. From kindergarten they start us off with show and tell. That is an actual academic skill, presenting information within the socio-cultural context that you're in, right. They don't have that. It takes twice as long to get. 'Well, they have been here for four years, why can't they do it?', 'Cause it's not, it's a skill set that takes a heck of a lot longer to learn' (em hem, yeah). Even our navigators, we have a system of what are called navigators. They are assigned to a student from the second that they enroll into the college and they are designated to advise the student on what they should be doing, and which road or path they should be taking. They keep telling our ESL students that they should be trying to get through ESL as fast as they can (Yeah). That they should be trying to jump levels. And I'm like 'shut up, like stop telling them this' (yeah), you know, It's not helping right,

cause they the students the navigators said I should try and skip the next level and I'm like 'why would you want to do that?' (em hem). So, yeah, largely a gap between what is realistic and what their expectations are, so. (you can't power study a language, its..) No, it's like math, figure out memorized formulas like [sarcastic tone]. So yeah, very big disconnect.

Steve: Umm, there was actually a very interesting presentation at the last um conference about teaching, giving teachers, ahh, mainstream teachers the awareness of language principles, so they could understand it. They are still teaching English in their class..

Gary: Well on of the this I, I was in a class once with some, um, some preservice high school teachers who had opted to take this intro to ESL methodology and they had this attitude 'well I'm teaching science, it's not my job to teach that to teach English. And I lost it. I said that yes it is, I said that 'you are teaching everybody in that room how to communicate in a way that is expected within the field of science, right, the terminology the when your doing scientific reports, how to report on your results or talk about your experiment'. Like that is language, 'You're building academic language proficiency for everybody whose in-house first language or second language'. 'It is your responsibility to teach them how to communicate about science in a way that is expected in English'. 'It is your job to do that so you need to know what that means, right, not just for a second language learner but for anybody whose in their..'. 'It just might be easier or faster for the native speaker to pick it up than your non-native speaker'. 'But yeah you're part of that, um, specific language learning process and if you don't recognise that, then your only serving a certain number of students in your room and your choosing to not teach a certain number of students in your room' (yeah). So that was a soap box I went there but

it was just (no I agree). That was the attitude that was prevalent among the, the, umm, K-12 or these other, you know, teachers, you know, um, teachers about what they felt that their job was that their role was with these, um, non-native speakers of English in their room. It's prevalent.

Steve: I agree with it, that I've found. I've found that students are almost trained to blame themselves on their short comings.

Gary: Absolutely yes, we'll if they are not blaming the teacher then I, they are blaming themselves so. ESL teachers will take the hit. But you're right the self-depreva.. they beat themselves up. like it's my fault, well, no maybe you don't have good partnership between, you know, whoever is instructing you, like it is a partnership in a sense . Um, a learner can't be expected to know all the principles of language learning, they don't, that's not their job to know how it works. They need a good mentor, they need a good facilitator who can be a part of that process for them . I want to develop learner autonomy and a good, um, science instructor should also want to develop learner autonomy, but that's you teach that, um, in whatever way that you're doing it so that a learner eventually can take responsibility for their own learning or not learning but it doesn't happen (and they need input that they can understand , so).

Steve: It's amazing that as soon as I open up the the question of assessment it goes like so far and it goes in all directions. (I can't wait to read your paper man) It's gonna be hard to put together (I'm going to send it to all of my leadership people,, just read this please.) oh great. I should do two, one in academic sort of language and one in more simple sort of ha ha (plain language so it's like here kids ha ha). Um, if we pull it back to assessment,

we talked a lot about the negative washback so the positive washback of the standardized assessment.

Gary: I mean, we know, I mean, knowing what the gaps are from when our students go from our program from to the next is awesome. Or within the business community cause we've developed whole programs, um, and therefore assessments within them, for ESP, more specific purposes workplace English. Is good to know what is actually happening when our learners are in those, um, whether it's the workplace or an academic program it's nice to know what the gaps are because we want to be able to address them. Like 'oh we weren't even testing for that' do you know what I mean, like, um. Now we can see if they can do it, right (em hem). Um, or roll it back and looking at our outcomes and saying 'well our outcomes will never actually meet the thing that you're doing so do we need to develop another program for it'. Which is, which is possible. An online one off course or something like this. Or do we need to look at, um, what we are assessing and make sure that that thing that we want to see happening is getting plugged into our extraction and therefore into our assessment so we can actually say yeah, we tested for it and the learner is demonstrating that they can or can't do it and make sure then that the people that are coming out of our program and going into yours have the level of readiness or preparedness or keeping validity to manage what is being asked of them. That has been very helpful. I mean we don't know what we don't know. And if you're upset about learners who can't do things then tell me what they can't do alright, or tell us what is working well and we'll we'll keep assessing for that thing, um, getting the feedback after we developed that new assessment has been really good because we stopped getting, ah, there was less screaming than ha ha than before about learners being ready or not ready.

So that's been better, you know, communicating about, um, what they want and whether or not we can account for it.

Steve: And students like, you've mentioned that they, it's on paper. So you can't argue. They say I can do this but you say we'll look no you can't. Do you find that the washback with the students is quite positive in that you can...

Gary: We'll yes and no there are students who are like 'I don't understand, we don't need a test'. I'm like 'yeah you do. Because if we don't give you this test it means that you have to take IELTS (em hem) in order to get into this program', 'Oh', you know what I mean. So we have two different types of students. One who like they really love the test, they want everything to be taught to the test the whole thing and others who don't, they find better value in just getting feedback rather than having a test and I'm like 'like we are stuck between a rock and a hard place guys', 'you want to be able to go directly into this program from ESL you want to have some sort of certificate of piece of paper that says that your capable. But at the same time you don't want to have the test how are we going to do this? Right, (em hem) right, in a way that is satisfying all of your needs, we can't'. Again serving too many masters too many ideas. Ideally, we'd just be handing out feedback left right and center (yeah). But then everybody would have to take IELTS (yeah), nobody wants to take IELTS. So nobody's happy.

Steve: Yeap, Why why do you find that that nobody wants to take IELTS?

Gary: It's money, it's well number one none of the students think that the can pass IELTS and they are probably right. (yeah). And it's expensive. And with IELTS it's as much about the English as it is about knowing how to take IELTS (yeah) like how to play that game, right. And so it's for many of the students, they are fully aware that they are going to take

IELTS prep courses in order to be able to manage that test and they are right. And most of our guys because of the strict nature of the IELTS test itself are not able to pass it compared to a CLB test which has the task as opposed to the multiple choice or whatever right or whatever so.

Steve: So do they feel that the CLB is easy it's an easy it's easy, it's an easy way sort of?

Gary: They perceive it as such, but it is not . (yeah, yeap) They are never happy, we have never been able to make the students happy with, um, which is where I guess that a lot of the.. I mean they're very pleased to spend an entire day bullying a teacher, um, and, you know, to change a test, to change a mark, to, to just scream, rant, and rave and we do have student advisory panels (em hem) that are ESL leadership, where there is a representative from each class who comes forward. All they talk about is tests, you know, all that talk about is tests, the teacher doesn't prepare me for the test. What they really mean is that the teacher it not teaching to the test (yeap, Yeap).

Steve: But they are getting listened to aren't they.

Gary: They are getting listened to, what we can do with the information I don't know, but you know. The other thing they complain about is the text books. You know, we don't have enough time to finish a text book. 'No we don't'. The textbook doesn't align with the outcomes, 'no it doesn't', you know, And the teacher doesn't always use the textbook, 'no she doesn't or no he doesn't, because it's not good enough right' .

Steve: Um, so let's move to some solutions that that you've found, that in a perfect world, ha ha.

Gary: We want to stream, literacy learners for example, we really need to stream them. Um, learners who are bound for workplace, not academia, we want to stream them, Ah, learners who are bound for academics, we want to steam them, ah, because then we've,

you've got then you can tailor everything to it's intended outcome and to the body that's in the room, right, which is, um, ideally, ah, that would be ideal right. Um, there would be more time in order to teach and to assess. Ideally, learners would have input at some point along the way on content curriculum outcomes and assessment to a point , to a point but, um, for us anyways streaming would be magical. Um, at [our institute] of the things that is theoretically supposed to be changing is we have a new curriculum framework policy thing that's going to be launched. It's just been developed it's supposed to change the whole process of assessment and curriculum development so that it's not done in stages and it's not done in silos where it's a more organic process within all stakeholders within the institution or the community itself, so that it's not like 'Hey Gary we need to develop a test', 'Ok now that you've developed the test now you are going to meet with the intercultural person' or, you know, it's like all of those people will be at the table, (em hem) from the beginning of the development piece itself. Which I think it is going to change.

Steve: I'm glad that you have brought that up because it's been one of my issues in my previous employments that the curriculum experts go into a room and close the door and out comes the curriculum. It's like..

Gary: Well yes and that is what happens with us and then money disappears but there is still work to be done and it gets done off the side of the desk after that and people are losing their minds. In our case, what often happens is that a manager often comes to the developer and says 'we've decided the things that you need to develop please go and make..' And I'm like 'where was the subject matter expert in this conversation and and then these train stops along that way that everybody be on the same train at the same time

developing the piece or, you know, so yeah, this theoretically on paper, it has changed because now we have this new understanding of how we are going to look at development and assessment, um, we also just assigned colleges in Canada's Institutes, Canada's Indigenous protocol, which means the way in which we assess also must change to adopt an indigenous paradigm of teaching, learning, instruction and assessment. So that is going to be a new master at the table [yeah]. So, um, which is good, but at the same time it is adding another (another dimension) another dimension to it so (yeah).

Steve: I quite liked, um ahh, who was I listening to, I can't remember who it was not, talking about the, ahh, IELTS the outcomes were so British orientated and they were working at changing the ones for Canada to make it more equality and saying that immigrants, like why should they be tested on their knowledge of literature of the dominant culture.

Gary: We, oh my God yes, we developed a, um, our very own EAP course because, um, as one of the ways to address the laddering assessment issue and it's now a in lieu for English [level 1] so that, um, if an immigrant requires an English [level 1] as a either academic requirement lets say for whatever U of A. They don't have to take that, they don't have to read Hamlet, um, they can come into the EAP course and do 'It' and if they get the right scoring or percentage then they don't have to do Shakespeare. So, we have the exact same thing (cool) yeah, like it's not relevant, it's totally not relevant oh yeah.

Steve: Um so um, I think we have covered a lot of ground. (sorry I know) No, it's great, though I will have to slow your voice down when I transcribe though, ha ha (I know I know). Um, are there any things that we haven't covered that, that sort of come to your mind about washback instruction?

Gary: I don't know like not off the top of my head. Like your questions definitely get me going but like it's something I've never, I mean I don't sit there and think about it very often mostly because I'm in the trenches, um, reflecting on it is really hard. And I think, I think that that is maybe a missing piece too, is that there is not enough reflection in the institution or departmentally on the effect of all these masters of the of the washback of the student expectations too. Our instructional team brings it up at meetings actually quite regularly but leadership often just throws it's hand in the air and I feel like were chasing our tails. We have the same conversations all the time. About how we'd like these very powerful systemic changes so that we don't have these, um, problems anymore so that it is better for the students. It's not a healthy environment for our students, right, not because all they want to do is learn about the task. It's not healthy for our instructors because we are not doing our jobs well and so therefore we are not serving our students very well or serving the institution well and we don't have enough time to have very good reflective meaningful conversations about it. Our leadership doesn't seem interested in asking the questions or finding the answers to the type of questions that you're asking me today that are really important. Umm, and I think that is a very crucial, critical missing piece to what is happening at least with our institution, possibly within many others (em em definitely, yeap).

Steve: Ok that's good. I think that about wraps it up, thanks for your input, it's good. It will be very interesting to delve into it and pull out the themes. I think that many similar things that you're bringing up are definitely, a lot of the agitations are similar (It wouldn't surprise me). I will be nice to get this down formally into a study. Thank you for your time.

Gary: Thanks for contacting me, when I saw what you were doing I went yeah I would talk about this. Cause somebody needs to be doing it, somebody needs to be chasing this and, you know, um, helping the field out so, yay (for sure. oh thanks).

Steve: Oh, one more thing, um, can you choose a pseudonym for your name if you'd like. (A female or male), you can choose (Can I be Gary). Gary sure.

Appendix M: Interview Transcript: Jaden November 29, 2017

Steve: So, first to sort of start off and to give us some sort of background to this study. I know that my title is quite a mouthful. Contemporary washback on contemporary Communicative Language Teaching. So if I could just get an idea of your style of teaching and then we will move on to sort of how assessment effects that style of teaching. So just give a brief overview of your style of teaching.

Jaden: Umm, so I teach at [institute] and I think it is [deleted] institute in Canada (oh really). I teach in all the programs. Right now I teach in their graduation student preparation program where they, um, students who finish their bachelor who are going to apply for graduate studies in their masters or PhD so that's my students right now.

Steve: Ok, you're teaching English to get them up to graduate level?

Jaden: Um, kind of, their English level yeah. Um, Right now, it's interesting, I usually teach business writing. I teach them how to write a research paper, how to write a research proposal as such (yeap). But right now I'm actually teaching IELTS (Oh, with the same set of students?) Yes, with the same students. (What score are you trying to bring them up to?) 7.5 (Ok, yeap), um, yeah so in that case, in my current situation there is not much communicative teaching, we are just doing prep . So, but when I teach research writing or I teach four skills or a bridging program I target, I use, authentic text, so I bring what is interesting for the students into the classroom. For example, I take, um, give the students a sense of ownership to the program (em hem) for example, umm, I get students to bring their own material. I model what kind of things I'm looking for. I get them to model, um, the materials from the class, I get them to create student lead discussions every week (em hem). For example, they would lead a discussion for a given topic that they like to

discuss in their class. And also, um, it is very student focused, where we do a lot of things like, um, role-play. So, these are students that are coming to Canada. They just, like when I see them, they have just arrived, like one day before (yeah). There is a lot of acculturation that needs to take place. So we do lots of things, we do role-play, we do needs assessment and we make sure that students will be able to function in universities in Canadian context at the graduate level. In their countries is, there is not group work, there is no mediation of any sort. So I need to focus on that to be able to make sure that students can function in that, can be able to function within that context of masters of PhD program where they have to work in a small groups or work in pairs to be able to do collaborative assignments and activities as such.

Steve: So, I hear you say, perhaps lots of tasks, you get them to do. You get them to um role-play and lots of things to acculturate them to expectations in Canada. Um, imagine that these things are not what they are expecting, when they come to this country. And having lots of pushback on that.

Jaden: There is no push back because a lot of my students is, my students are from China and I think that common perception is teacher knows best and they decided to come to Canada because of the change in teaching style.

Steve: Thanks good to know, so, um, perhaps when you don't do grammar focused lessons and rote memorization of vocabulary. What? They don't seem to to complain?

Jaden: No, they don't, um, for example, for grammar. I actually have the students teach me a grammar point. In day one I get them to write something, and I look at their writing and I pick up two grammar points that they, uh, they are systemic, that they have problems with and to teach the class. And I get them to teach the class on those two grammar

points. I get them to make the exercises. They are just grammar exercises or editing exercises where they actually have to find a text and they have to purposely find those two grammar points that they do (yeah) and so their, so they take owner .. I think that number one, this test is directly relevant to the mistakes that they make. and number two, all these students you know, especially from, a lot of places, you know, they have been studying English for 10,12,13,14 years (Yeap). And those people, um, before they finish their bachelor they, and then they study English for 14 years. So, they have already been taught grammar. What they have problems with, is that internalizing those lessons, right. Which is why they can teach it to somebody else, right (good and you can get that across? that that is what's necessary?) So, I one thing I do in the class, I tell them the reason, my reason behind why I do it (em hem). Students have to be an active participant in the classroom to .

Steve: So lots of reasoning with them? for for what needs to happen. and that is how you get buy-in for (yeah) Ok, um, so the assessment, what is the assessment sort of if you could tell me loosely that's being used. Well, firstly in the gate-keeping program and the program just before they enter the undergraduate program and then for the one that you're doing now.

Jaden: Well for the gatekeeping program the assessment is, um, we actually only have one standardized assessment. The exit test is anything that we deem appropriate for the level and for the student needs, for example we have standard listening test which is a 20 minute of a university lecture and they have, you know, gap fill, multiple choice stuff like that (sort of IELTS style), pardon (kind of IELTS style?), No, because well, no, because IELTS only has a maximum of 3 words right, you know, also long sentence with

two questions and paragraph questions and in IELTS there is no synthesis or, um, and synthesis or analysis it's actually a purely a listening task, right (em hem). So, in the class, in the gate keeping course I'm more interested in, are they, not just about do they have the language skills but do they have the language and the academic skills to be successful in the university.

Steve: Yeap, yeap so you're assessing both academic skills and language proficiency, general language proficiency.

Jaden: For the gate keeping course and for the, my current IELTS course I teach just IELTS (yeap, ok that's very nice).

Steve: So, with the gate keeping course, is that test. It's just one standardized test for all of the teachers that is developed in-house, is that correct?

Jaden: Yeah, it's like two or three or four different versions of it (em hem, ok).

Steve: And what um, is that test change the way you would teach or would like to teach in any way?

Jaden: Um well, [pause] it's difficult to say. I was in the committee who made it (yeap, ok) right. I was in the committee who made it and my PhD is in assessment (em hem) and so because my PhD is in assessment . We'll I don't think I told you about my background I am an IELTS examiner trainer too. (no you didn't so it's good to have you on board) So, I am an IELTS examiner trainer, I've been doing IELTS for like since 1992, (em hem) and I've been [unclear] I don't actually quit. Because I have too much on my plate. Um, and I'm doing my PhD in assessment (oh excellent, can I ask you your topic) So, my topic is, [personal conversation] That is kind of what I'm interested in.

Steve: But washback is a, do you think with those automated systems, that's what I worry about is the washback that comes from that, because once you start isolating small areas that a computer can test. You can hone in onto that, a teacher can and a student can.

Jaden: I think because I am aware of those issues when I was designing the test for our needs. Because the needs that we had in the, in the class was not just about language skills it was about more about, are they able to function in an academic background (yeah). So, I mean, I was creating the test by analysing the target language use domain like looking at, um, interviewing professors within the university and different faculties. And we identified that and we identified what we, though were would be good types of class judging that feedback from professors (em hem) and there was a lot of feedback, back and forth. It was just too difficult like maybe as you know it, it was too difficult for the student [unclear] and as such. And we, because there is also practically of these tests, you know, into ease of marketing and to ease of assessment for your also looking at not just the language ability but communicative ability right (Demonstration of critical thinking, there, yeah). And this applies to a test that we create that is not so much like an IELTS test or a [unclear] test and test is not just a test it's also, the test is not just about that topic at that time because it is scaffolded with what we've been doing in the class. So, we've been studying a theme, so when we a. so a test is on facial recognition, so for two weeks before the test, just like how they would do it within the university. In a university class they wouldn't just give you a topic they, you don't know, about and so go and here's a test. We build up to that point. (yeap) alright, um, so, so the design of the test, they are all multiple choice questions, we don't actually go over multiple choice so there, um, we added how to do a multiple choice question how to a true or false and now give them

questions in the class we cover those, um, we have those in the class for the test but we believe that part of the test construct is to be able to mimic what they will see in their stages at a university level (Yeap).

Steve: So you're doing tasks that happen at university and then from that graded their academic ability. Um, so, are there any sort of alternative assessments that are part of the summative grade? (No) how do you feel about alternative assessments in general?

Jaden: Um, I think it sounds great, but in theory, but it's difficult when you have so many students with so many. There is very little standardization (em hem) like for example, um, I had a teaching literacy workshop the other day, um, and the teacher was saying that you could use poetry or painting or things to assess their language ability right. (yeah) But a lot of those things are very subjective (yeap) and a single rubric might not be able to encapsulate all the different representations of alternative assessment. (yeap) So unless it was a standardized alternative assessment it kind of defeats the purpose of it. (em hem) Supposed to do it in a classroom setting where it is shaky.

Steve: Yeah, I'm hearing a lot of that where that the alternative assessment your letting go a lot of positive washback. If you'd agree with that. Um, so sort of to continue on, um, if I could talk more about the program that your using IELTS 7.5. (yeap) to get them up to that level. So you're saying you're doing a lot of test prep. Are you doing a lot of academic skills work as well?

Jaden: No actually, the class is split into two, one is academic communication and one is IELTS prep. I only do IELTS prep and that other does the four skills.

Steve: yeah ok, that's fine and, um, the, do you feel that the institute, you've spoke about you have a lot of communication with the, the teachers in the graduate courses. Are they on

board, are they happy with the level of students coming in are they able to work with them at their level, once they enter the program.

Jaden: No, um, this is why that test was revamped last year and this is why we did, so we had dialogue, dialogic process between the professors of the different facilities, because we keep track of all those students who enter the university through the program and we have seen the trend that their success has been dropping (em hem), and this is why the course was just revamped, this session the course was revamped for that 7.5 level .

Steve: Ok, do you feel that, do you feel that they have an understanding of just what it takes to learn language.

Jaden: No, well I, where are you from (New Zealand) ok, well I live in [Large city] it's the most multicultural, supposedly the most multicultural city in the world. (I'm in BC now) Oh ok. So a lot of professors are, they are not native speakers either. (yeap) Right so I think they have an understanding, um, so I think there are some aspects that they are more lenient with their language skills. If they can understand what their student is trying to communicate then they are fine with that. Even if they are all systematic mistakes and there's patches that they can't understand. What they have a problem with is the, um, the academic skills themselves. About, can they synthesize information are they just regurgitating what they, you know, what they heard. Are they understanding the key, are they only being able to identify key words in the text based on the question types (em hem) and be able to just copy the whole thing and being able to get the points, as such, (em hem) Right, so it's more of the communicative intent of the curriculum and the task design itself that I think people are more concerned about, are they able to, are they able

to complete with the students, with the students with a Western style of education, and be able to discuss ideas in that level. (em hem, for sure).

Steve: Even, if you look at their vocabulary, it's compared to a native speaker. I mean how do you, How do you compare the two, that what the feeling I get. Um, so if we move back to communicative language teaching. How do you feel it could be supported on an institutional level, what's do you feel it's being supported enough? Do you feel that, um, it needs more supports?

Jaden: Um, I think part of it, I mean our institute is going towards more and more standardization, standardization of tests, standardization of curriculum, standardization of even homework assignments, um, there is. I find that there is less and less academic freedom. Because it's easier to have 10 teachers teaching exactly the same thing, then it's easier for assessment of both the teacher and the students (yeap) and I think that works a bit against, um, communicative language teaching because you don't have the freedom to do what you want based on the students' needs and desires , (yeap).

Steve: Could this be something to do with such a large institution that that needs to be a semblance of control so they tend to limit teachers ability to..

Jaden: Well, if you're teaching credit courses, even if you're taking like four, I don't know, four different sections of the same course. Every teacher teaches it totally differently. The assignments are not going to be the same. (yeap) And so it's, my feeling is that if they trusted their instructors who had academic freedom enough. (yeah, Do they trust?) We'll when I see more and more standardization I don't see it happening like that, but, their justification is that we have so many new teachers and that the new teachers need to be

on board. And it's on board and pretty much easier if everything is standardized (yeah) and that's the justification (yeap).

Steve: Is there training? to to help bringing these teachers up during the summer?

Jaden: No, (Oh, ok) Because we work in [City] our low season is the winter, so we drop by more than 50% in January, February and March, April (oh ok) it's so cold. Because of that we have a lot of turn over. I think we have more than like 100 teachers right now and only 19 is full time and like another is part-time. A lot of turnover in the part-time sessionals.

Steve: So, I'm sort of hearing that because of this control, because of this standardization. It's good for the new teachers like they are saying. But for the ones who have experience, for the ones who have knowledge and a higher academic background get a little bit trapped. (Yes) so it's hard to envisage how you could move forward in that setting, That's partly why I've chose this topic because I've felt that frustration in being sort of, you know, you do what I need to do. Ok, ok what else have I got here? So, while I read through my notes are there other areas of washback that concern you that I haven't brought up?

Jaden: Well because a lot of my students are Chinese, testing in a way has positive washback because I guess it's that the students is familiar with that type of extrinsic motivation, right, like some students like tests (yeap) like they, if their score is a 10 out of 10 they. Like some students are motivated. And I think it has a lot to do with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (em hem) of assessment, um, and it depends on the class a lot of the students are not, you know, are not intrinsically motivated, you know, their parents told them that they needed to study, they needed to do a masters or they needed to do a bachelors and if you know anything with the Chinese system is that they could get into a job if they went to a good Chinese university than [unclear] anywhere else, (but) because

of, they didn't the scores that the needed for their university entrance exam their parents decided ok next best thing is for you go get a [unclear] English and have a degree outside of the country. So some of them are lacking that intrinsic motivation and the tests provide some extrinsic motivation (Yeap, something they can get their hands on).

Steve: So that would bring me to the point of bringing their focus back to wider goal of actually learning English rather than their fixed goal of just passing the test. Do you find that that is quite difficult to lead the students towards a wider goal all the time?

Jaden: Um, sure that happens for the final test. But for the test that I'm allowed to design was a smaller test for what I am doing inside the class. I think they are more motivated because they, um, they are using what they learned in the classroom in a meaningful way that is immediately identifiable for them, um, the goals and to see their own progress of whose in the classroom, (yeah) like I mentioned with my grammar presentation. I don't let the students. I I design, you know, sometimes some teachers use the same test over and over again. but I always change the test depending on the topics of the assessment current events, you know, and because of that there is, those are our subject test and they have the meaningful for students contact at that moment and they can relate it back to language learning. So, that I think they feel they feel a sense of achievement. Most of the time they are saying I, that they see that I am being inclusive of their needs. and the topic that they might be interested in (yeah) and so in that positive washback also. (Yeap, so because it's meaningful, therefore it's engaging for them, um, because it's well aligned to the test they can see that the wider goal is met as well as the immediate goal of the test. (So I think you're telling me that it all needs to come together.) Yes, you can't do one without the other right, if the test is good but the students don't know why they are doing

the test or the students don't notice the goals of that test, what the test is doing, then it doesn't work because it doesn't motivate the students. There is no, ah, the students don't have the realization that there could be a positive washback to testing (yeap yeap).

Steve: Do you have a mid-term tests as well?

Jaden: No, we'll no, I have bi-weekly, every two weeks I have a test, (Yes, but that's not summative. That's just part of the class?) Part of the class, Well it is progressive so it's all part of their final score. (Yeah) right, um, so it' summative for the language points that we've been using for those two weeks (Yeah, Yeah).

Steve: So, um, I've had experience with that where we've had two mid-terms and then a final so, what ends up happening is it just becomes test-prep. Because there is no time for anything else. Um, how do you feel about mixing a little bit of a little bit of alternative assessment with a standardized test? I would say it's the most common form is to have say 20%, 30% classwork and then the rest on this final test.

Jaden: Um, I think the position of the test in my class is 20% of the final and everything else has class so, um, so in the class there are homework assignments and there are I think, there are four homework assignments and four tests, because we are an 8 week program. (yeap) So with the test that I construct myself sometimes, you know, it doesn't have to be a test. Or I just need to understand that they understand the points of those two weeks. So sometimes I do a class crossword puzzle (yeap).

Steve: And that's not, sometimes, I fear that that is sometimes a way for a border line students to find a a way, to find an avenue to bully to push to get over that line. And do you have experience with this, or do you worry about that? (About boarder line students being able to) to use the alternative assessment side to push their grade up just to get through?)

Jaden: No, because I don't have the freedom to push their grade through because all the scores that they see, they see almost immediately so as soon as. Like the students can calculate their scores on average. So there is no pushing through of students (Ok, Ok) right alternative assessment like if I do a crossword puzzle is it for like a vocabulary test. It is still mainstream test presented in a different way. (Yeah, Yeah) It is not an actual engaging their skills in an alternative method. (Yeah, It's not a subjective grade, yeah) Yes, so there is no subjectivity in the test except for when there is synthesis for an argumentation for when I am grading their style of language use, which is all subjective right. You know, It's a normal idea which is all subjective. So yeah, there is no alternative test and I think that the management looks, you know frowns on alternative testing because they are more worried about students comparing their assessment techniques and complaining about it.

Steve: Yeah, yeah, and also what I'm hearing you saying is that it is a good thing. So you're removing as much subjectivity as possible, allows or creates a situation where where washback is minimized or at least negative washback is minimized.

Jaden: I understand that sometimes when you produce negative washback you also produce that positive one right. (Right, yeah, so it's a balance)

Steve: Um, what would you like to see sort of to change in your place of employment? In terms of testing.

Jaden: I would like to see less standardization. I would like to see more teacher adjustment, more respect for teachers expert judgement that would allow students to pass. Because even when assessment says that a student passes, you know that this student is not going to do well, (Yeah) at university or sometimes when a student passes numerically, you

know you see what I mean right. Even if they fail then you think that they, you know that they have the motivation and they are able to excel. Because if our mandate is not just about language it's about academic readiness to enter university I think teachers should be allowed to select their expert judgement in those cases and I think because of over standardization that we losing some of that (em hem, no trust for the teachers to do what they need to do). Like for example, in the past like if a student is bad in the final exam then a teacher could give them, you know, the test is only written once right, a different test and say oh that student just had a bad day (yeah). But now, no, the student has to get, go to the manager, you have to get approval, you know, and it's it's a whole bunch of, you know, is a long chain of different people to go to and talk to before that happens, you know, (yeah).

Steve: Yeah, so um, yeah so greater support for the teachers, greater trust of the teachers. I imagine support for what the teachers are doing would be quite important as well.

Jaden: I think that professional development of how to make a test, (em hem) you know as something as simple as, you know, if you want to allow teachers to make tests you need to have a standardized understanding of what a test, you know, the test construct. (em hem) and be able to understand inference and validity argument for why a test is valid or not valid. um, (is it reliable and all of this, yeah) or the practically of the reliability or the or be able to assess the target use of the language domain and be able to even understand something like, you know, what is the meaning of a test specification. But there is no professional development provided to teachers (em hem) and even managers themselves I don't think they understand um how much work it takes and at one person cannot do, create a test specification for a test, it has has to be done in a consensusive in an

interpretative way and it takes a lot of time to create a single specification for one expert test right. So I think they just don't understand. (No, and they wouldn't want to invest the money if they don't understand, Yeah, or the time)

Steve: Ok, I think that pretty much wraps up what I wanted to talk to you about unless you have any other points to add.

Jaden: I don't think so. I'm on a lot of flu medications, unless you have more questions.

Appendix N: Interview Transcript: Tim December 05, 2017

Steve: So first if you could just give me an outline of your teaching style. Of sort of what it's like, what you do just sort of generally and how it relates to Communicative Language Teaching. As a sort of a background.

Tim: Oh so you want to know how, what I basically do inside my classes?

Steve: Yeah, sort of like, just just so I can line it up and say all of these teachers are communicative language teachers. All I want you to say is something formally that says I'm not a traditional, I use textbooks kind of thing.

Tim: Ok. I've been teaching for quite a while, quite some time now, (yeap) I started formal teaching back in 1990. Bilingual school in [home country] and uh uh, it's 100% communicative or that was. Then I moved down to Saudi Arabia where as you know we worked together, (yeap) and it was a basically communicative student and I mean really students centered methodology. However when I got here to the UAE. The [Company] final assessment called the IELTS and the teachers basically prepared their students for the IELTS exam. So in that sense I personally didn't break my tradition as being communicative but I was forced to modify my teaching strategy or my approach so we could actually prepare students for the IELTS exam. So the only communicative aspect the IELTS had was the interview Again, it was an artificial where students were brought through a series of topics and were asked a series of questions regarding flying eating going to a restaurant, what do you think of this, what do you think of that. (yeap) and we fell back into the grammar teaching because as you know the IELTS has a huge grammar component (yeap) so and we prepare them for the writing, but again it was artificial because they had to be prepared for this kind of task 1, task 2, kind of writings. (yeap) so

it becomes very artificial really. and I can't help it because the institution it linked to the IELTS and the IELTS is linked to that and so your forced to do as they need (em hem). Though I make it as communicative as possible. I mean when I teach grammar I don't teach the simple present as such. I do present situations where you tend to, you know, to repetitive actions, you know, I work everyday, uh, 'do you brush you teeth?', 'yeah, I brush my teeth'. 'But are you brushing your teeth right now'. 'Oh, no teacher you're not you're sitting in the class'. (em hem). So I do try to make grammar as communicative and a, I would say, functional as possible. But anyway I'm constrained by the needs of the classroom, anyway.

Steve: And you feel the pressure from the students to always pull it back to the test?

Tim: Well, yes because that's what they're, that's what the will be tested on. And it's not just the students it's the institution as such . So now we changed we dropped the IELTS and now we have a new state designed test called the [name of test] (oh really). So but it is basically like a placement test. It's just like an IELTS there is no interview though. (Ok) so the, the language portion of it, the spoken language, the spoken aspect of it is gone. So we only do reading, writing and basically grammar and vocab. And the vocab is the maximum is like a C1 the European C1 and that is about as high as the vocab goes. So all the grammar and all the reading and all the writing is based around that vocab maximum C1.

Steve: So, now with the new test, it's becoming even worst that IELTS in that it is limiting you further.

Tim: Exactly. So as the teachers as such we are all. Basically, teaching for the test. So what we have done is, we go around looking at the students taking the test and we try to remember

the kinds of questions we can see . Because we don't have access to the test itself. We can see the kinds of questions and obviously most of us have been teaching for a while so based on that we say ok we have got these kinds of questions, we got this kinds of questions. We've got multiple choice questions on this type of grammar we've got ta ta ta. So we design something exercises drilled based on the kinds of questions they are going to get (em hem). But we are not teaching English as such do you see what I mean we just preparing the students for an exam.

Steve: And is it, does it come. Does anyone. Like are they worried that English is not really being taught it's just teaching to a test.

Tim: No. We worry ourselves because we know we are not doing it. (but it doesn't seem to go above) exactly. You kind of fall in that triangle. There's the institution that has some objectives and you have you're own objectives, and the student has his own or her own objectives. So you are kind of pulled. you know the usual thing. But then the final exam is [exam name] so, you know, you have to prepared them, you know, whether you like it or not. I mean that's what they are going to see (Yeap)

Steve: Well um, Ok so are there any advantages to the [test]? like positive washback?

Tim: Well I guess, the only positive thing is like maybe 60 or 70% of the new comers are actually passing the levels, now I don't know whether they have a higher level as they are coming from high school now than the did before or it's really us actually succeeding, you know what I mean (yeap). So I don't have, I don't have the limits to tell you whether it's us or it's that they have a higher level that they had before (yeah).

Steve: Ok, so if you compare this with the, the. It's good to sort of speak to you because you've got the two extremes from here and [previous place of employment [OPE] so [OPE] was totally opposite.

Tim: Well, I'd rather go for the [OPE] thing. (Yeah) for many reasons, um, I think you do more justice to the reality. I mean it becomes more authentic teaching the the skills in learning would allow them to confront random interaction, you know what I mean, (yeah) well the students here don't seem to be prepared for that. You break the norms and you break away from what they are used to, they are completely lost, (yeah) So [OPE] I think we were process deve.. we were assessing process (yeah) so I think it's a more, it's a better way of doing it because it's. I mean the student learns a lot more , yeah. You see what I mean, he can be. Basically, that's what I see they can, they confront a random interaction which is what really happens in real life (Yeah) I mean you go to the classroom you find somebody and he goes 'yeah, what's up?'. So, that random interaction in more developed in the students centered communicative processes assessed that the product we are trying to produce here. Yeah. I think it's artificial, like when they write right now they just memorize certain, what they have to do in the, in the introductory paragraph in the body one and body two and then the conclusion. Most of the language is just memorized. It's artificial.

Steve: Do you find, that with the [OPE] that sure the the teachers that know how to teach in that way, they are fine. But then was this gap where teachers could come in and sort of not know what they are doing and just not being able to assess what level they are at all sorts of problems like this?

Tim: We'll that's true. So in the process, what your mentioning what you really need very experienced highly qualified teachers and I don't mean qualified by having degrees, by actually knowing what they are doing. (yeah) So I was really really happy at [OPE] when I was teaching because that is the way I think people actually learn . (Yeah, I'm the same as you, I I miss that). Yeah, I miss that too because I didn't even in fact prepare classes, I mean we, I just worked on what I saw. Authentic needs of the students (yeah) so I start interacting with them, I find what their problems are and I develop something based on that as we go along.

Steve: And I found that you could get them engaged in what, you could find topics that they liked and you could just go with it.

Tim: Exactly, Yeah. They could develop their own curriculum in a sense. 'This is what we need, this is what we will work on', (yeah) over here very thing is prescribed, I mean we have a textbook which are lousy by the way, because we've been innovating we've been using this online e-texts. And we are at the crest of the wave. So they are experimenting with us so they give us this lousy books which are basically being piloting by us (oh) when we have 6 students who need to pass an exam. (oh no) and that thing is on blackboard, excuse my language anyway, so these things all work on blackboard so we have, (ha ha) yeah I know, the listenings don't work the interactive portions doesn't work. Oh so, do you know what I mean, we are testing the books for this publishers, (em hem) so this guys want to be, you know, be at the crest, you know, of the wave. (yeah) so we're being guinea pigs. It's a whole bunch of this that come up with that. But anyway basically we are almost back to the same old grammar. (yeah) we can't do grammar translation

because we don't speak Arabic but (ha ha) but if we could that's what we would do to keep employed, you know what I mean. (ha ha one step away from that, oh dear)

Steve: So what about Ok, I think it is more interesting to talk about the to talk about the [OPE] system and I think, what about buy-in in the [OPE] system? Like getting students to believe that this is how you learn. and it's not just through grammar exercises.

Tim: Well, I think that you don't really need to convince them. I think that after one or two weeks they realize that they can actually understand and they can actually produce something so it's more like a demonstration of method. The student, realizes that he is actually learning (yeah) so. He is not spending time to memorize a script and spit it out like a parrot. He can actually see his language developing, his skills developing (yeah) so he's actually looking for interaction. He's almost asking you Ok so I have a problem here what can I do how can I solve this (em hem) you see the way that [OPE] is taught the student knows what he wants to say he is encoding language he wants to say what he has in his in his mind, he just doesn't know how to do it. But he knows what he wants to say (yeah) in our system here the student is decoding language you give him a piece of language and he has to decode it understand it and then spit it out again (yeah) and that makes it very, very difficult so I think the real way is that you encode. That is what [OPE] was doing. You encode (yeah) you know, you know what to say you just don't know how. So what you do is facilitate it by a saying, you want to say this, this is how you say it. So he doesn't need to understand. He knows, he understands what he is saying (yeah, yeah for sure) see what I mean, it's all the way around its flipped completely backwards. (no I totally agree) so I, so that is what I learned after going through the whole thing. One is encoding language and the other one is decoding language. Most

people teach, getting the student to decode what you are trying to explain to him, you see what I mean (yeah), so this perplex in the class this monster is talking to me in a language I can't even understand and he expects me to understand me I can't do that. (yeah) Do you know what I mean, and the other one he doesn't need to understand what he wants to say (yeah for sure) he knows what he wants to say. (I totally agree, I've never thought about it like that, but totally agree) Thanks that way I see it.

Steve: Do you [OPE] was set up that all the teachers taught the same way so the students got to go through that flow and they always had the example of the class before to build on. But what is happening in a lot of places that I talk to is each teachers in a silo. and they do what they do. So even if you do teach a very communicative method it's gonna be from the beginning. Do you feel that you really need that everybody on board?

Tim: I really don't know. (Ok) are you talking about that we need to have everybody teach the same way?

Steve: Umm, yeah, everybody like with the [OPE] you can have one teacher saying this is what we do, we have grammar translation and the next class up they say...

Tim: Oh Ok, I see what you mean. Oh no no obviously do to the encoding thing everybody needs to work in the same way. You all need need to be on the same page. (yeap) at least in the approach, the methodology has to be uniform that that I agree (yeap) but the problem is you know to have enough teachers who actually know what they are doing, you know, that understand. It's like teaching with a silent movie (yeah) you see what I mean (yeah) that student understand what's happening. He doesn't know how to say it but he knows, he understands the movie immediately. So what you need to do is teach him how to say what he understand in his mind (yeah) see what I mean, (yeap) so he doesn't

have to decode anything he is just encoding. So that, I think is the best way to learn (yeah for sure) because you know what you're saying.

Steve: Um, well what about the, institution, like do they really know what it is. Like the management and then the teachers (no) where they feed into. Do they need to know?

Tim: Just think about this. There was oil well right now [Capital city] took over very thing it's been centralized. There is new management now. and everything that was centralized by [Capital City]. Now we don't write a single test. We don't write a single test for the students, we don't mark a single test except for the writing that come random. They put them up on blackboard and then you might be marking from another another country, do you know what I mean. So we don't do anything, the assessment are not, we don't assess our students in any sense. That's it [Capital City] has centralized everything so basically they give them a grammar placement test and the end of every cycle which we have every 6 or 7 weeks and you prepare them for that (wow) so it's basically vocab, reading writing test. (yeah) it's like a placement test I think. They use that same exam for all the levels and according to your score. you wind up level 1 or level 2 or level 3. But I think that is what they have they have a placement test, so it's something like another little [test name] (yeah) or another TOEFL kind of you know it's a ranking. I think it's a placement test. So that is what we have.

Steve: So but students obviously, so who ever passes and [capital city] and [city] when they pass and they go in to do their academic courses. What are the teachers saying? are they saying they speak enough English. Are they complaining? What are they saying?

Tim: Oh no they have, they continue. They have to continue with academic speaking academic writing umm etc. etc. because there level. Right now the education department I think is requesting, It's still requiring 6.5 IELTS.

Steve: Oh so they start their undergrad course but they are also doing a language course at the same time.

Tim: Yes they continue. Yes, they call it general studies. So the engineers have to take certain subjects in general studies. So one of them is for example is academic speaking (Yeap yeap) so they have to practice debates, they have to learn to take notes from a video or from a lecture and then they are quizzed on them. So they do continue their English studies after the foundations level.

Steve: If we go back to [OPE] I remember that we had a um a teacher that was doing the graduate courses give us a meeting as he basically yelled at us and told us we don't know how to teach and that the students aren't good enough at their English Do you remember that meeting? (No exactly, but what was the point?) The point was he was telling us we don't know how to teach English and the students aren't prepared. Um do feel that um at [OPE] that the students that the teachers above were aware of of what level we brought could bring them up to and their journey in English and sort of how far they had gone?

Tim: I think there is a problem with this I mean. What really matters is if you assume that the student is highly motivated ok (yeap) you know he actually engages the 400 or 600 or 500 hours of English he takes at the college level (yeap) What you need, you know, research tells us you need between 700 or 1000 hours (yeah) ok, If you're really 100% engaged if you divide that by man hours 8 hours a day it ends up being 4 months. Understand me. If you divide 8 hours up, you know like, 8 hours a day it's what it's 100

days (yeah) 1000 days whatever it is. 100 120 days. It's 4 months, so how much, you can not go beyond the human compacity (yeah) you know to speak like I do you need like 15000 hours of English, and I'm not a native speaker of English, so obviously. But you need, It's proportional to the amount of time in input. (yeap) assuming you're highly motivated and you actually want to learn the language (yeah) so you can't go beyond that, beyond human capability so I think, I think sometimes you over estimate what students show be able to learn in a year in a two year academic course at university we need to I don't know what 500 hours (yeah exactly) I don't know how many hours you actually do (yeah) you know what I mean, 20 hours a week I don't know how many weeks multiply that. I don't think it goes beyond 400 or 500 hours. So what can you expect (ha ha exactly) sometimes we over es.. we don't over estimate we over expect their level of English, you know, it's proportional to the number of hours and the motivation etc etc.

Steve: We'll it annoys me because I personally I think that they just say just do a course and why can't you speak? It's silly.

Tim: It's a question of development in humans, it develops (yeah) so people here have been trying to speak English for 40 years and they still can't say I went they still I go yesterday. they still you know the simple present tense (yeap) just for 40 years. We don't know, you know, nobody really knows what the solution is. (no, just yeah exactly)

Steve: Ok no that's awesome Tim Thanks I think I've go enough. It's good.

Tim: We weren't talking about washback really.

Steve: We'll we are it's sort of it's more indirect washback.

Tim: I think it is. I think it basically, is that um, when someone pushes you to take an exam. A student well you have certain expectations. (yeah) you expect the teachers to meet those

expectations so obviously teachers modify their way of teaching, their approach to teaching they they betray their own way of understanding of how they should learn to simply meet both the management and the student. (yeah, the pressure is enormous) We are assessed by the students and by the management, see what I mean. So we end up modifying our own way of teaching to to meet the needs. I mean it's a socio-economic triangle.

Steve: Well that's true. That's what I'm kind of doing that this topic because that hopefully that I come out with something A piece of paper that teachers can just put on managements desk and say you know read this sort of thing.

Tim: So I think you should go for. I don't know, what we as teachers do regarding the problem. I mean we are in that triangle expectations of the students regarding given examples you know x and y characteristics. How can I break away from, you know, my own way, you know. I can't explain it. I know what I need to do as a teacher for you to learn. So how can I meet your expectations given my whole knowledge and at the same time I'm keeping management happy and eventually they will keep paying me to keep doing my work. (ha ha) so it's a tricky, it's a tricky little thing. (it is) it's complicated (yeah). Most of us just end up betraying ourselves basically. If they play rock and roll I dance rock and roll. If they play tango play tango. (It's a job at the end of the day, we all need the job so, of course)

Steve: No, I think that in a round about way the other people have said similar thing, so it's good so it's all good.

Tim: If management would actually understand. We need somebody who knows language teaching at the top. (yeah) You know that actually .

Steve: Don't you think though that there is very few teachers that know how to teach properly anyway.

Tim: I've been teaching like 50 years for God sake and I'm yeah exactly [personal story]

Appendix O: Interview Transcript: David Dec 08, 2017

Steve: So I understand that you are at a very large institution. Um, if we sort of first start off with, ah, sort of a background of your class. Sort of, if you could walk me through, without giving..

David: Just my class not the whole program right?

Steve: Yeah, I'm more sort of giving, to start off to give a background of your teaching.

David: Well in [institution] basically I work for the foundation program (yep) but within the foundation program we have three sub-programs. We have the academic writing program, I'm a part of the, actually, I am the coordinator or facilitator for that program, for the 2 writing courses (em hem) this program serves all the colleges here which use English as their medium of instruction. We prepare them for research writing, presentations (em hem), just like an academic program in North America. Academic writing for undergraduates (yep). So this is what I teach, I teach the advanced level, writing 2, and, umm, class capsize usually 20 to 25 (yeap). We have been fighting for 15 but it didn't work, and we teach basically them. We have summary writing, response writing, and then at the end of the semester they submit a term paper (em hem) a mini research paper (em hem) and, with a presentation (em hem).

Steve: So um, unless they pass your class they cannot go in to the academic programs?

David: Ah, because I am academic writing 2, if they pass their writing 1 they can take some classes in the college, they are allowed to do that, (yep). Then they are waiting to pass our course to take other classes. So there are some prerequisites (yeah)

Steve: And alongside with your writing there are other classes with a, a academic, um, um reading I imagine, or.?

David: All the other classes other than us, other than my sub-program, one of the other sub-program is basically teaching all the colleges or other major which are in Arabic, because now the University has and Arabic streams and this is our biggest stream. (Ok, yeah that's good).

Steve: And how does the assessment work? What kind of tests do you do?

David: Um, well we have a standardized testing, so we run our test our stream, and well, all our tests are writing based and the rubrics are not holistic rubric . (Not?) No we don't use holistic rubrics, (Ok) they are divided into different elements as you know. (yep, can you give me an example of one element?) Yes, so we have content, so we only look at content, then we have organization, we look at their paragraph structure (em hem) then we have the AP or research and documentation element where we look at their citation, referencing, paraphrasing, integration, (yeah, but not direct, you don't assess grammar or vocabulary directly) Oh yeah, we have one element which is grammar, that is what I was going to say, grammar and vocabulary (sorry) where we look at their mechanics. (yep) like this in general.

Steve: Yep, put it under mechanics, Yep, ok and there is only one test at the end of the semester or there, um, mid-terms as well?

David: So there are mid-terms as well and there are some in class tests, quizzes and in our course in my course specifically we don't have a final exam because of the research paper but in writing one they have a, they have two in-class tests which are equal to mid-term exam and a final exam.

Steve: Yep ok excellent, um, two mid-terms and a final and the, the stuff that you do in-class the in-class tests do they, are they, do they make up part of the final grade?

David: Yes, everything is included in the final grade (yep, yep ok)

Steve: Ok, so let's move on, now I have a good sense of the background. Um, if we move on to direct washback. Um, do you find that the test forces you to do things in a different way that you would normally perhaps normally do things in a class?

David: Um, the only thing that we had to do differently and we keep changing on, because we just changed our curriculum like a year ago . There was a different type of testing before, there was a different, now a new team (yep). So, then, well the only thing is that we consider giving them more input time or teaching time to be increased (em hem) We didn't have to change our test much, because of this (Ok). But we did have to add like extra days of teaching, so to prepare the student better because most of them are coming from Arabic medium background (em hem) they need that extra time of input.

Steve: And you talking input as in speaking and reading?

David: No, no writing also, so for example, you know, last time we did a summary test where the students the students were supposed to read an academic article and then summarize. (yep) so then after the test, we all looked at the grades and problems and issues we had to review the rubric a little bit more (em hem) but the test itself was ok, then the other thing, we had to add like an extra week of teaching them summary, preparing them how to write summary, (ok, ok) so basically the curriculum effective than the test itself (Yeah ok).

Steve: And with the language components of the the mechanics, how to you tackle that in-class?

David: Ah, well we assign them a lot of practice and then we show them how language is assessed, how that element is assessed (Ok) and then practice the thing, we need a lot of practice (yep, ok, no that's good)

Steve: Um, so if we could look at, sort of, indirect washback, so (em hem) things like student pressures how they, they might want to, ah, um, go in a certain direction to get, like a shortcut to get a gooder, better grade, is there any of this kind of pressure?

David: Um, well in our course, no, because it's the structured type of writing and they will have to go through that practice and training so, I don't think so. But there are other tests like only grammar tests, they are shortcuts, but not in my program.

Steve: What I'm sort of getting at is perhaps, students wanting to memorize phrases that they can just plug in.

David: Oh yes that is a possibility yes. (em hem) but they can memorize again, they can memorize some phrases to how to, that they could use possibility in summary writing or linking phrases, not more than that, (ok so) only article (Yeah) because they would summarize (yep)

Steve: Do you feel that the tests helps avoid a lot of that?

David: Yes. (ok)

Steve: Um, and pressure from perhaps other teachers what they are doing in their classes, pressure from um the departments above you that you're feeding that students into, are they saying we want a higher level of writing, this is not good enough, um what are the pressures that you are feeling?

David: Pressure from the management that there are logistic pressure on us because they are more worried, our management, top management is more worried, and they are not from a linguistic language teaching background that's the other thing, they are from sciences (Yep) or business background, so the pressure we face from this type of management, number one right now, we are suffering actually, is that we have to have multiple

versions of our tests, because there are classes which are on a Sunday and Tuesdays and there are classes which are there are classes on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursdays.

(Sorry you have to have monthly?) Multiple version of this (oh, multiple versions, Yep) that is one problem for us because they we have to go through a lot of things readability, to many factors to make sure the, there is some reliability there in the test. (Yep, and you feel that they don't, because they are not from a language testing background, they don't understand what) They don't understand anything, we actually, it was very tough for me because I am the person in charge for exams, so to convince them to allow us to have a common mid-term exam day. So that they are can go and write a two hour exam, they didn't want that, logistic pressure is, is, a lot on us . (Do, do you feel that, sorry continue) No, but I'm, to answer your question more directly. Pressure about proficiency or the level of the test itself, not that much because they don't understand anything there. (em hem) So they give us that type of comment. But at the end of the day if there are too many passing with A grades then we do have to write a report and we do have to do a program evaluation, why there are too many As and vice versa as well. If there are too many F grades there (yeah).

Steve: Do you think that management has a good sense of just what it takes to learn a language?

David: I don't think so, (yeah) we had been lamenting about that, (yeah) it is very difficult to cope with those things. (yep, you not alone that other people that have participated that seems to be one thing coming through)

Steve: Um, what about teachers from the graduate courses do you do you communicate with them in writing the exams in preparing the curriculum?

David: In preparing the curriculum we did a need analysis, like in the colleges and we met other stakeholders like some of the organisations outside of [institute] and we considered their feedback input and then we design our curriculum. So we did talk to a lot of people outside of our program.

Steve: And are they happy with the level of students coming through?

David: Yes they, as of right now, they are happy (em hem) because we are giving them sort of the skills they need to use when they go to the colleges like writing reports they need all these skills they are learning now and writing like a project or a short thesis they need all of these things. So we are just aligning basically our curriculum and assessment to the college needs (yep).

Steve: And your finding they are getting, yeah, like you're saying the academic skills, um, critical thinking and all of these skills have managed, you're managing to build them up.

David: Yes, even the articles we select for our assessment we try to address the major we are serving like sometime we go to business major, medical sciences. So we try our best. (yep) like bigger learning outcomes in terms of their course (em hem).

Steve: Now with, um, your testing, because it's writing and you use rubrics. Do you find that there is a lot of subjectivity? I imagine there is subjectivity but do you find that that allows a student to then in-turn argue and push for a higher grade?

David: Yeah, sometimes it does because you cannot control that event at all but what we do here is we do a lot of learning sessions or moderation (Yep) with articles and then so like we take sample papers and then we grade them and then we discuss together. So we try our best to be on the same page but sometimes of course there are issues with students (Of

course) we introduce a second grader or third grader. (Yeah, of course) an extra marker, yeah) It's in control it's like on or two every semester, which is good (yep).

Steve: So, you're working as a team and you're able to overcome those issues.

David: Before, every test or before any graded element we meet for an hour or sometimes more than an hour and we grade sample papers use the same rubric and we discuss each element of the rubric to make sure. And that is the other thing, we try our best not to make a lot of revisions or changes on the rubric for at least more than a year, three to four semesters.

Steve: Now isn't a question like with you have standardized testing. Would you personally like to see more alternative style testing, portfolios um other kind of things that are alternative come in?

David: We did have portfolio. But it didn't work well enough in our context. Because of the culture I think (Yep) so we had to give up on that and we had, we have some online elements as well (yep) we have readings, journals blogs, we do a lot of other alternatives as well but the weighting is low because some people, the people here don't support that type of alternatives at that much. Especially that top management (em hem)

Steve: So you had yep, Can you so you said perhaps the culture so you're talking the culture of management? the culture of the students?

David: Students as well because in the high schools here as opposed to North America they don't even learn any Microsoft skills, so software skills at all, they don't even know how to use a Microsoft word. Some of my students, they don't even know how to login (em hem) to their blog. (ok) So there were issues with technology and they were not able to. It was

easier actually to come up with a portfolio but for most of the students and parents they were complaining about it. (Yeah, not understanding how, how it works)

Steve: Um, Ok I think I've pretty much covered what I want to cover with you, um, are there any points that you wanted to bring up that interest you with washback?

David: I think, it's all the same things that we all agree upon. (Yeah) nothing new at this time, Ok.