EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCES IN LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION:
AN ECOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF A PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

A Dissertation
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by
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Abstract

Language teacher education (LTE) has received increased attention over the last several decades. Language teacher educators, university researchers, classroom teachers, and future teachers have contributed immensely to existing knowledge on how language teachers learn to teach. Researchers and practitioners have finally acknowledged that future language teachers are not “empty vessels” and enter teacher education programs with experiences that influence their future teaching practices. Even though these publications have made important contributions to the LTE field, there are still many research areas to work on to advance language teacher education practices. One of these areas is the role of field experiences in the education of future language teachers.

In the 1970s there was a strong call for the inclusion of early field experiences (EFEs) in teacher education programs that prepare future language teachers (FLT). Even though many LTE programs have responded to this request, not many research studies have been published on their role in LTE programs. To address this research gap, this dissertation presents data collected during a Pilot Early Field Experience (PEFE) specifically designed for future teachers interested in world languages teaching. John Dewey’s theory of experience guided this research study, which was designed to learn whether the PEFE could be considered an educative experience in the development of FLT. For this purpose, I analyzed the data according to the ecological approach, examining field experiences in order to gather details about several aspects of the PEFE (structure, content, context, and relationships). Results suggest that the FLT shared some common experiences during the PEFE, but their individual experiences differed from each other, making it difficult to determine whether the PEFE itself was educative or not. The PEFE’s ecological aspects played an important role in identifying this outcome. Therefore, before determining the educative value of a field experience it is necessary to first explore its ecological aspects.
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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the loving memory of my Mamá Julia, whose strong spirit guided me to finish my dissertation and who called me her “doctorcita” many years before I embarked in the journey to become one.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

This chapter starts with an overview of the major issues that led to the problem guiding and purpose of this research study. It also includes the research study background, questions, significance, limitations, researcher’s stance, and definition of terms. The chapter ends with an overview of the dissertation organization.

Research Study Overview

Supervised field experiences in language teacher education have been strongly encouraged for many decades (Lange, 1983). As early as 1922, Laura B. Johnson, a high school and college foreign languages professor, made a strong argument for what she called “participation experiences” in the education of future language teachers. Johnson’s article is valuable because early on she pointed out the need to coordinate partnerships between universities and schools that could result in participation experiences. According to Johnson, these partnerships could be under the guidance of foreign language teachers who provided teacher candidates with the opportunity to observe, be small group leaders, and teach an entire class. She argued that it was through participation and not mere observation or mimicking inservice teachers’ activities that “practice teaching experiences” could be developed and be meaningful. Through participation the future language teachers entered the practice teaching experience as learners, observing the students, the teacher, and the classroom activities. They could also participate as group leaders and teach to a group of students. Purin (1928) also advocated
observation and practice teaching experiences that could take place “either in the university demonstration school or in any other schools that were available” (p. 18).

Many scholars, like Johnson and Purin, who were commonly associated with language teacher education continued to include practice teaching experiences in their recommendations for language teacher education programs and presented evidence of the type of experiences that were already taking place (Aspinwall, 1937; Freeman, 1941; Freeman, 1949; Guerra, 1939; Paquette, 1965; Pillet, 1970; Solano, 1932; Wolfe, 1973).

However, very few of these scholars mention the need to include practice teaching experiences or field experiences, as they are now called, as early as possible in the program of studies of future language teachers. Among the ones who did include Early Field Experiences (EFEs) in their discussions were Herold (1977), Wing (1975), and Jorstad (1975).

Herold (1977) mentioned the need to expose future language teachers to the “realities of the classroom at an earlier stage” with the purpose of finding out if “they are suited for teaching or dislike it,” and if it was the latter, then “both time and money would be saved” (p. 621). Wing (1975) cited several examples of EFEs that were part of exploring teaching courses (University of Maryland, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of New Hampshire) and foreign languages methods courses (the Ohio State University, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Hunter College, and the University of South Carolina). She explained that “these early contacts provide a taste of the realities, pressures, and constraints of the teacher’s role before the student is required to make a major commitment to teaching” (p. 307). Students at the Florida State University also described their EFE as “the highlight of their on campus education and
considered it a major preparation for student teaching” (Wing, p. 308). Both Herold and Wing supported EFEs, but they did not provide an argument in support of EFEs that connected directly to the field of language teaching. It was Helen L. Jorstard’s publication, *Pre-student teaching experiences in second language teacher education programs* (1975), which gathered many of the arguments already given in the general teacher education literature and applied them to language teacher education field experiences.

Jorstard (1975) made a strong call for the inclusion of field experiences before student teaching in teacher education programs that prepare future language teachers (English as a second language/foreign language/bilingual education). She mentioned ten reasons for the inclusion of early field experiences at the beginning of the language teacher education program. These ten reasons were to: 1) give the future teacher the opportunity to reflect on his/her wish to become a language teacher; 2) help to relieve the anxiety of prospective teachers; 3) guide students to become aware of the role of language teaching in the school curriculum; 4) take this opportunity for future teachers to observe different interactions in the classroom; 5) give future teachers an idea about school/community relations; 6) get future teachers acquainted with resources available in the library to teach languages and get familiarized with school resources and services; 7) receive preparation on human relations behaviors; 8) start building his/her philosophy of teaching; 9) take this as a period for self-analysis on his/her strengths and weaknesses; and finally 10) make the transition to the student teaching experience smoother (pp. 2–4). Many of the above reasons or rationales are mentioned in the literature written on Early Field Experiences (EFEs), yet reasons 1, 3, and 6 are specifically directed to the
education of future language teachers. In addition, EFEs in LTE programs could also help students to connect the theory that they are learning on first and second language acquisition courses with what they see in their field placements (Brown & McGannon, 1998; MacDonald, Badger, & White, 2001; Pillet, 1970). Nevertheless, the placement of future language teachers in schools earlier in their programs of study also presents several challenges. Schick and Nelson (2001) gave some examples:

... some students do not have the proficiency to function in classroom in their first or second year of language learning. Furthermore, the extension of secondary foreign language certificates to P-12 settings requires that preservice teachers be provided with internship experiences in elementary, middle school, and high school classrooms (p. 303).

These two challenges cannot be disregarded and may prove challenging, but efforts should be made to provide experiences that could further the language proficiency of future teachers and expose them to P–12 settings in which they could decide on the grade level at which they would like to teach. With the approval of the ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers, language teacher education programs are now required to demonstrate that they include “field experiences prior to student teaching” in their curriculum (ACTFL, 2002, p. 2). These are the reasons for taking time to study EFEs, which are already part of language teacher education programs—to learn from these experiences and ensure their quality and usefulness in the education of future language teachers.
Research Study Background

The larger context of teacher education and language teacher education strongly influenced this research study. The language teacher context is presented in chapter 3, but several closer contextual influences were major players in the development of the field experience that is the focus of this dissertation. These influences were the status of world languages teaching in Pennsylvania, Penn State’s teacher education program, the beginnings of the newly developed World Languages Education program, and the ECE Centers where the FLT were placed.

World Languages Teaching in Pennsylvania

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s position on world languages is full of contradictions. On the one hand, the governor has been “actively recruiting international business” to establish in the state, while the state curriculum does not include foreign languages as a high school graduation requirement (Pytel, 2007, www.suite101.com). The Pennsylvania Code (2008, 1 Pa. Code §4.24 & 4.25) does stipulate that all high schools in Pennsylvania need to offer at least two world languages for their students. However, only those students planning to go on to higher education are usually required to have from two to four years of language classes in high school. If they do not fulfill this requirement they then need to enroll in college-level foreign language classes (Pytel, 2007). For this reason, approximately 200 out of 500 school districts in the state do require one or two consecutive years of world language study as a graduation requirement (Kolega, 2009). Nevertheless, at the state level the State Board of Education has rejected the inclusion of world languages as a high school graduation requirement.
because doing so will necessitate the hiring of 2,683 additional foreign language teachers, which would cost school districts $114.5 million. Further, only 300 new foreign language teachers are certified each year in Pennsylvania (Chute, 2007). Like many other states, Pennsylvania has a shortage of foreign language teachers. Sixty-one percent of school districts in Pennsylvania have reported difficulties hiring world languages teachers (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania & Governor’s Commission on Training America’s Teachers, 2006). This situation resembles the situation around the country, as 73% of the school districts in the United States have also reported a need for foreign language teachers (Grard, 2007). The same justification has been given in response to the non-approval of *Pennsylvania’s Proposed Academic Standards for World Languages*. The proposed standards were developed by experts in the field in 2002; they have been reviewed time and time again and never either approved or incorporated into the core courses in Chapter 4 of the Pennsylvania Code. The State Board of Education has argued that implementing the standards would require all students to achieve proficiency in a second language before graduation and there are not enough teachers in the state to accomplish this goal (Chute, 2003). Moreover, since the establishment of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act, the teaching of world languages has been affected in Pennsylvania. In the 2001–2002 school year, approximately 5,000 fewer students in grades 7–12 enrolled in world languages (Kolega, 2009). It was the first time in twelve years that foreign language enrollment decreased due to the cutting of exploratory language programs and “guidance counselors advising students to enroll in remedial reading and math instead of foreign language” (Keatley, 2007, [http://www.nclrc.org/](http://www.nclrc.org/)). In subsequent years the enrollment actually increased from 401,335 (2003–2004) to 405,467
(2005–2006), but data for the 2006–2007 school year showed a drop to 401,835 (Kolega, 2009). Nonetheless, this has not stopped new FLES programs from being developed. The PA Code also stipulates that world languages instruction be initiated at the elementary school level. In the last few years, with the help of state funding, the number of schools offering K-6 FLES instruction has grown from 70 school districts in 2000 to 215 in 2009 (Kolega, 2009). With these new programs, interest in teaching FLES in Pennsylvania has been active and indicates that world languages teacher certification in the state is from kindergarten to the twelfth grade (K–12).

To certify K–12 world language teachers, the Commonwealth requires prospective teachers to: 1) attend state-approved teacher education programs, including a student teaching or intern experience; 2) the Praxis I and Praxis II assessments and/or ACTFL proficiency tests,iii and 3) all application materials verifying that all certificate requirements have been met. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education website, the state certifies world language teachers in the following languages: Chinese; French; German; Greek; Hebrew; Italian; Japanese; Latin; Portuguese; Russian; and Spanish (www.teaching.state.pa.us).iv These different languages teaching majors are offered in different universities across the state, not all of which have K–12 language teacher education programs. Even though the world languages teacher certification in Pennsylvania is from K-12, most LTE programs in the state prepare teachers for secondary education. This was the case at the Pennsylvania State University.
The Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) has always been instrumental in the preparation of new teachers for the state of Pennsylvania (Eisenmann, 1990). In the last years, due to the influence of new research studies, practices, and policies, the teacher education programs in Penn State’s College of Education have been redesigned. One of the major changes is that students must meet several requirements before requesting entrance to the major of their choice during the spring semester of their sophomore years. The entrance requirements include a GPA of 3.00 or higher; evidence of completion of 80 hours of volunteer or paid education work experience in an educational setting with children at the education level they planned to teach; qualifying scores on the PRAXIS I – PPST for Reading (172), Writing (173), and Mathematics (173); a grade of C or better in all specified courses and early field experience; completion of an early field experience; complete core education courses and additional credits stipulated by their major of interest; 48 semester credit hours in basic English courses, three credits of literature, and six credits of quantification courses; and approval of an academic advisor or professor-in-charge of the program. Another aspect that has become extremely important is that during their first field experience prospective teachers are introduced to Penn State Teacher Education Performance Framework (2002, available online at http://topaz.educ.psu.edu/educ/cife/student-teaching/). The performance framework is a tool to assess future teachers’ development throughout their entire teacher education program, and complies with national standards for teacher education (NCATE and INTASC). From the beginning to the end of the teacher education program, the
performance framework guides the content and evaluations of the required coursework and field experiences. The performance framework includes four areas with its indicators of performance that the prospective teacher needs to submit evidence of the knowledge they have acquired throughout their teacher education program. These four areas are: *Planning and Preparing for Student Learning* (7 performance indicators), *Teaching* (5 performance indicators), *Analyzing Student Learning and Inquiring into Teaching* (3 performance indicators), and *Fulfilling Professional Responsibilities* (4 performance indicators). By the end of the student teaching experience the future teachers should be able to present evidence in all performance indicators, usually through electronic teaching portfolios and summative/formative evaluations. Each teacher education program has adapted the general performance framework to the specific knowledge of their field, and the *World Languages Teacher Education Program* (WL ED) was not an exception.

In the spring of 2004 Penn State’s administration approved the newly developed *World Languages Teacher Education Program* (WL ED) with its own performance framework (see Appendix A, PEFE course materials). This was an important step towards “giving a house” (Espinosa-Dulanto interview) to language teacher education programs at the university. Before 2004, world languages teacher education majors (Spanish, French, German, Russian, and Latin) were housed under the *Secondary Education Program* in the *College of Education*. As a consequence, students graduated with a degree in secondary education with world languages options in Spanish, French, German, Latin, and Russian, even though, as it is already known, Pennsylvania’s teacher certification in foreign/world languages includes all the grades from kindergarten to twelfth grade (K-12). All of this changed in the fall of 2004 when the newly developed
World Languages Teacher Education program started offering courses under the WL ED abbreviation for the first time; from that moment on WL ED became officially a K-12 teacher education program in the College of Education.

The first official WL ED cohort or group of students enrolled in the fall of 2004 on the initial block of courses in the program. The first block of courses, WL ED 300W and WL ED 295A, became the entrance courses to the WL ED major requirements. One of the two courses in this block, WL ED 300W (Foundations of Second Language Teaching), is designed to provide students with “basic concepts and principles in first and second language acquisition and teaching” (PSU Blue Book available online at http://bulletins.psu.edu/bulletins/bluebook/). This theoretical course complements WL ED 295A (Early Field Experience for World Languages Teacher Education), which is an early field experience with a seminar component for future language teachers “to be exposed to children and focus on language acquisition processes and have the opportunity to plan, design and deliver second language related activities” (course syllabus). These two courses’ overall goal is to provide future language teachers with basic theoretical/methodological knowledge and hands-on experience that they could continue to develop as they go on in the WL ED major. The majority of the students needed to take this block of courses to request entrance to the WL ED major, but others who were already accepted into the Secondary Education program were also required to take the block to acquire basic knowledge that they needed to continue with the program requirements.

As the instructor of WL ED 295A (WL ED Early Field Experiences), I witnessed many of students’ reactions to these two courses. These reactions—some positive, some
negative—led me to implement some changes in the early field experience during its pilot phase (Fall 2004 and Spring 2005). Therefore, it was important to record what happened during this pilot phase of the course, in order to learn from the experience of introducing this early field experience within the newly developed WL ED program.

ECE Centers

Three early childhood education centers (ECE Centers) welcomed the PEFE students in spring 2005. Two of the centers are located on campus and the third one is located in the town where one of the participants was originally from. The ECE Centers on campus shared the same vision about the curriculum, since they believed in an emergent curriculum or a curriculum that emerged from the children’s interests. As one of the ECE Center directors once explained to me, every classroom changed its teaching themes depending on the children’s interests at the moment. For example, if the students were interested in dinosaurs, the teachers looked for resources to use in planning several activities around that theme. Through engagement in that theme the children could learn basic science information, numbers, and more. The location of the two ECE Centers on campus made them ideal places to explore new themes since the children were exposed daily to the university campus and activities. Many college students attend these centers everyday for observations, volunteer/paid work opportunities, and field experiences. Future teachers from many different majors (e.g., Kinesiology, Music, Arts, Early Childhood) are placed every semester to gain field experiences in these centers; thus, the children are in constant contact with college students. The majority of the children come from highly educated households since their parents are staff, college professors, and
graduate students from the university. This fact also makes the children attending the
ECE Centers on campus extremely diverse. A great number of the children are
considered international or ethnic minorities. The ECE Centers on campus embrace this
fact every day and encourage parents and teachers to engage in the different cultures with
the children at the centers through displays, talks, cultural celebrations, and special
themes in the classrooms. Even though the majority of the teachers do not speak a world
language, they make many efforts to incorporate different languages into these cultural
activities. These two centers are among the first early childhood education centers around
the country to earn accreditation from the National Association for the Education of
Young Children (NAEYC) and they train personnel from other centers to go through the
accreditation process. The cost to attend these centers varies according to parents’
income, but unless they receive some type of financial assistance the tuition is usually
above $600/per month. This tuition cost and other financial resources from the
government and private institutions permit the centers to have many different educational
materials available for the children.

The third ECE Center is located in the town where Jocelyn lived and attended a
branch campus. The center is also NAECY-accredited and is well-known in the area
because it is sponsored by a non-profit organization. This sponsorship permitted low-
income families to enroll their children at low or no cost to them. The children, unlike
those at the ECE Centers on campus, barely represent different cultural groups since they
are Caucasian and very few come from African American or Asian backgrounds. The
curriculum at this center is organized according to learning skills that children need to
have before they enter a kindergarten classroom. Therefore, each hour the children have
specific activities to practice, like the days of the week, numbers, vocabulary practice, etc. Its physical structure could be a little daunting at first, because it is a four-story building all in brick, with no green area. But, the teachers do their best with the few resources that they have and the inside of the building with its colorful art work displays by the children make the ECE Center a welcoming environment. The center receives very few college students, but when I approached them to receive Jocelyn they welcomed the opportunity with open arms, as they love the idea of having someone incorporate Spanish in at least one of the classrooms.

Research Study Problem and Purpose

Teachers are not empty vessels waiting to be filled with theoretical and pedagogical skills; they are individuals who enter teacher education programs with prior experiences, personal values, and beliefs that inform their knowledge about teaching and shape what they do in their classrooms. (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 401)

Language teacher education (LTE) has received increased attention over the last decades (Bernhardt & Hammadou, 1987; Crandall, 2000; Schulz, 2000; Velez-Rendón, 2002). University researchers working in conjunction with classroom teachers have contributed immensely to the existing language teacher education knowledge and practice (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Freeman & Richards, 1996; Guntermann & ACTFL, 1993; Richards, 1998; Roberts, 1998; Tedick, 2005; Tedick & Walker, 1995). These and other researchers and practitioners have acknowledged that future language teachers are not “empty vessels” and they enter teacher education programs with experiences that could have an effect on their future teaching practices. Even though these publications have made important contributions to the LTE field, there are still many research areas to work
on to advance language teacher education practices. One of these areas is the role of field experiences in the development of future language teachers.

Egéa-Kuehne (1992) argued that preservice field experiences are “one of the most neglected areas of inquiry in the field of foreign language” (p. 29). Some studies have described student teaching experiences at the graduate level (Egéa-Kuehne, 1992; Harrington, 2001; Raymond, 2000; Velez-Rendón, 2000), but very few have studied their role as part of undergraduate language teacher education programs (Feyten & Kaywell, 1994; Hall & Davis, 1995; Irving, 1977). For example in Feyten and Kaywell’s study (1994), they described an early field experience that occurred in the semester before the student teaching experience. The content of the field experience was directed towards helping secondary education majors to become “reflective practitioners” (p. 50). Of the 54 participants, 14 were foreign language educations majors and the other 40 were English education majors. The preservice teachers were required to attend 2–3 weekly seminars on campus, complete 18–36 hours of classrooms visits, and write journals after each classroom visit and four more on their general impressions up to a specific point in time (p. 53). The seminars consisted of class discussions on assigned articles on topics mostly related to reflective practices and individual/group oral presentations on seminar topics. In their field experience the preservice teachers were assigned five tasks: classroom teacher observation; case study on student(s) school life; individual tutoring; small group work; and whole group teaching. The researchers’ data included pre-post self-report forms on the preservice teachers’ conceptions of teaching, journals on classroom significant events, and journals on the five tasks. After analyzing the data, Feyten and Kaywell concluded that “over the period of the practicum the preservice
teachers became more reflective” as they moved their focus from their own concerns/fears/excitement to the students they were teaching and on reflecting on how to become effective teachers (p. 59). Only once is a quote from a preservice foreign language teacher distinguished from the responses mentioned: “I think of the wonderful language students I will try to mold. I see students enthusiastic about learning and a class full of fun and knowledge. I see lots of activities and a student who is really wanting to learn” (p. 56). This expression reflected what the researchers called “blind optimism and desire to conquer the world” at the beginning of the practicum (p. 56). It would have been interesting if they had paid more attention to the responses of each group of preservice teachers (foreign languages/English) to make these results more significant for LTE. In addition, this study does not explain how the field experience was connected to the rest of the language teacher education program.

The above study may be evidence of the rare existence of EFEs designed specifically for future language teachers. The EFE that Feyten and Kaywell described is an example of a generic field experience in which future language teachers are required to engage that is usually planned for education majors—both elementary and secondary education majors (Evans, 1986; Killian & McIntyre, 1988; Kleinsasser, 1994; Stahler, 1996). This was the case for our students before implementation of the World Languages Teacher Education program. Despite this, there are examples of research done on EFEs for Social Studies Education (Passe,1994; Wade 1995), Science Education (Maxie, 2001; Mueller & Skamp, 2003; Seiforth & Samuel, 1979), Technology Education (Kuetemeyer & Udofa, 1986; Skeel, 1989), Mathematics Education (McDiarmid, 1990; Mewborn, 2000), Physical Education (Silverman, 1998; Stewart, 1986), Music Education (Bergee,
2006; Emmanuel, 2003), and Special Education (Epanchin-Colucci, 2002; Maheady, Harper, & Mallette, 2001; Prater & Sileo, 2002). However, LTE is rarely included in the research done on EFEs. I sought to fill this research gap through this research study, which focused on learning from the introduction of an EFE specifically designed for future language teachers who attended a newly developed language teacher education program. This dissertation focused on the field experience itself and not on describing the future language teachers learning-to-teach process, because I agree with Spielman (2006), when she argued that “studies examining these issues can be very valuable, but they tend to do little to position students’ experiences and learning either in the teacher education program in general or in broader socio-political geographies” (pp. 34–35). This research study positioned the early field experience at its center, and acknowledged the influence of the contexts and relationships that surrounded it. Moreover, studying the field experiences structure, content, contexts, and relationships could be one way to learn whether teacher education programs promote future teachers’ acquisition of the further experiences needed to grow in the learning-to-teach process.

**Research Questions**

The process of searching for the research questions for this study took a long time due to many events that occurred during its development. I became professionally and emotionally invested in this research study and I had to distance myself from the data for some time to analyze it as accurately as possible. Nowadays, as I look back, I can identify the right moment when the initial research questions were developed.
The first set of research questions came from a conversation with Dr. Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto after the final WL ED 295A seminar in the fall 2004 semester. Thanks to the course, at least one or two students were considering teaching a world language in an elementary school (FLES). The rest of the students thanked me for the opportunity to expose them to working with children, because if they had not attended the WL ED 295A field experience requirement they would NEVER (they really emphasized NEVER) have considered teaching world languages to children. I told Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto that we had to study the students who were at least considering teaching FLES and those who were not after going through the course. She agreed with me and after a while we started talking about the possibility of studying this “phenomenon” as my dissertation research. Consequently, my initial research questions were: Did the early field experience make the future language teacher consider teaching world languages in the elementary grades?; what reasons did the students give to consider or not teaching FLES?; why did these students select WL ED as their major?; and what previous experiences they had that made them take this decision? I later on learned that I was viewing WL ED 295A as an intervention.

Freeman (1990) perceived an intervention in practice teaching as “based on the view that the student teacher can be helped to teach more effectively through the input and perceptions of the teacher educator” (p. 105). I must admit that until I started this research study I thought of WL ED 295A as an intervention to motivate students to at least consider teaching children world languages, and change their “secondary education” mindset. Nonetheless, my “intervention” perspective changed when I started interviewing the students enrolled in WL ED 295A during the spring of 2005. As I listened to their
experiences during the semester, I noticed how the course did not necessarily encourage them to teach world languages to children. The intervention still needed a lot of work and even some fine-tuning if it were even to attempt to convince the students to teach languages to young children. I felt extremely hurt when the students told me that there were some aspects of WL ED 295A that were not working correctly, and when not only one, but almost all the students repeated more or less the same problems, I had to recognize that they were not the reason for this situation. Therefore, I had to start listening carefully to the students’ concerns about WL ED 295A and not only focus on why they didn’t want to become FLES teachers. Second, I had to take a deeper look at the WL ED 295A intervention, and analyze the planning of its structure, its content, context in which it took place, and what actually happened with the children and the teachers when the future language teachers were in the classroom. As a result, my research study focus began to change and the research questions needed to be reframed.

Stake (1995) argued that many times our research questions change in the research process. He stated that “the initial research question may be modified or even replaced in mid study by the case researcher. The aim is to thoroughly understand. If early questions are not working, if new issues become apparent, the design is changed” (p. 9). This is what happened in the process of conducting this dissertation research study. It was imperative to be flexible and replace the initial research questions after the issues that emerged during the individual and group interviews with the research study participants. The overarching research question that now guided this research study was:

What can be learned from the implementation of an early field experience component into a language teacher program?
The following supporting questions also directed the analysis of this research study:

What was the rationale behind the implementation of a pilot early field experience planned as a part of the curriculum for the newly developed World Languages Teacher Education program?

How did the pilot early field experience structure, content, context, and relationships influence its planning and implementation?

Could the pilot early field experience be considered an educative experience in the education of future language teachers?

What implications do early field experiences have (if any) for the field of language teacher education (LTE)?

This dissertation study attempted to find answers to these research questions by implementing an early field experience as part of the World Languages Teacher Education program and looking at all possible ecological characteristics (structure, content, context, and relationships) that may influence its planning and implementation. By looking at these aspects, which may have provoked different reactions from the future language teachers, the main goal was to learn more from the experience of implementing an early field experience in a particular language teacher education program. Moreover, it enabled exploration of the implications of including early field experiences in the education of future language teachers for the larger language teacher education field.

**Research Study Significance**

A research study on the planning and implementation of an early field experience into a language teacher education is significant for a number of reasons. First, as Zeichner
(1987) argued, research studies on the role of field experiences in teacher education need to look at all ecological characteristics (structure, content, context, and relationships) rather than isolated aspects of the experience. It also adds to the growing research on language teacher education by looking at an early field experience specifically designed for future language teachers. This study sought to stimulate discussion among researchers and practitioners in language teacher education that might lead to more research on early field experiences and thereby address this research gap.

Moreover, practitioners may use the results of this research study to enhance the knowledge base on the role of field experiences, especially early field experiences, in preparing future teachers. This is extremely important to language teacher education as it should find its right place in the teacher education field. Practitioners may also look at the experiences of planning and implementing this field experience as a model (positive, negative, or both) for other language teacher education programs seeking to include early field experiences in their curricula.

Additionally, as teacher education programs are attacked by policy makers it is important to listen to these critiques and their call for change in teacher education practices. However, it is also necessary to conduct research on current practices and share the results with policy makers to show evidence that teacher education programs are evaluating their performance and seeking alternatives to prepare the new generation of teachers. Nonetheless, as Goodlad (2002) advised, teacher educators and researchers need to “keep a wary eye on policy makers whose intent is to mandate what works best in teaching” without enough knowledge on the issues surrounding teacher education and who seek research to backup their own ideologies (p. 220). It is also essential to make
policy makers aware of the fact that they need to give all areas of teacher education their rightful place. It is not until teacher education practitioners, researchers, and policy makers work together that language teacher education will be included in general teacher education research publications, program reforms, and funding resources.

Research Study Limitations

This research study was limited to future language teachers enrolled in the World Languages Teacher Education program (WL ED) at Penn State. Most specifically, this research study included students enrolled in WL ED 295A during the spring 2005 semester. Graduate students enrolled in the TESOL masters program in the Department of Applied Linguistics were not research participants.

Time was one of the biggest limitations in this dissertation research study—I was finishing my doctoral coursework and still had to attend classes. Moreover, in my role as the course instructor for the PEFE and its seminar, I had to teach, supervise, respond to e-mail messages, meet with the students, and grade the different requirements. This was one of the main reasons I was unable to collect data from the mentor teachers at the placement sites, and make thorough site observations of the FLT during their early field experience.

Another limitation was my access to the students during the data analysis process, because they had already graduated from the university and I didn't have their new contact information. This limitation made it difficult to use member checking to validate their responses. In addition, after reading all the interviews I noticed some questions that
required clarification, but without any contact information from them I could not request further answers.

Researcher’s Stance

One of Rosaldo’s (1993) biggest criticisms of the old style of doing ethnography was that observers used to portray the “natives” as objects of study and make sure they represented the image of the detached observer when they wrote or presented their studies. These so-called detached observers were not able to make the world visible, especially because what they observed and presented was only the surface of the different cultures they studied. In contrast, recent qualitative research seeks to “locate the observer in the world” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 4). The observer is then a participant in the world, not only a mere passive presence. For example, in Rosaldo’s view, “the observer is neither innocent nor omniscient…it is a mistake to urge social analysts to strive for a position of innocence designated by such adjectives as detached, neutral, or impartial” (p. 69). Rosaldo added that “even when they appear most objective, thought and feeling are always culturally shaped and influenced by one’s biography, social situation, and historical context” (p.103). Moreover, he doubted a researcher could be innocent when he or she had lived among the people they were studying, particularly if they were what Behar called native researchers. Behar, like Rosaldo, argued against “depersonalizing one’s connection to the field” (Behar, 1996, p. 25). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) called this new wave of research the fifth moment; the researcher is no longer the detached observer. S/he has become a participant observer:

Epistemologies from previously silenced groups emerged to offer solutions to these problems. The concept of the aloof observer has been abandoned. More
action, participatory, and activist-oriented research is on the horizon. The search for grand narratives is being replaced by more local, small-scale theories fitted to specific problems and particular situations. (Denzin & Lincoln, p. 17)

As researchers have become aware that they are part of their research, new methodologies have started to emerge in the field. Still, the journey has not been easy for these researchers. They are called “journalists, soft scientists” and their work has been labeled as “unscientific, exploratory, and subjective” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 7). However, I knew I could not be a “detached observer” when I decided to conduct research with my students, because I was taking Goodlad’s advice to teacher education researchers “to be very active, highly visible participants in the renewal of their teacher education programs in their respective institutions” (2002, p. 220). This is the reason I conducted research on a pilot early field experience (PEFE) that I was teaching as part of the newly developed World Languages Teacher Education program.

After four years of working with future language teachers I became an insider, a native researcher who questioned her own environment and who wanted to contribute through research to the knowledge base of language teacher education. Therefore, I consider myself a native researcher because I was part of the planning and implementation of this early field experience at the same time that I was conducting this research study. As such, I knew well the structure, content, context, and relationships that are essential elements in the ecology of field experiences. Moreover, as a native researcher I came into this research with my own professional and personal biases. For instance, it was extremely difficult to listen when future teachers criticized an aspect of the early field experience that I had planned. However, I also felt that I had created a trusting relationship with them, so that they could be very honest when they answered the
research questions. The future teachers also wanted to make sure they were responding to the questions. For example, Jason was very concerned that he was not giving me “good” data and said several times during the interviews: “Does that answer your question?,” “I seem very negative, I don’t mean to.” I reassured him that I needed to listen to what he had to say, and that what he called negative was actually constructive criticism that could help to improve the early field experience. In addition, I recognized that my personal background influenced this research study because I always felt that when I was prepared to teach English as a Second Language I was not given enough practicum experiences to help me “practice” what I was learning in my coursework. Therefore, when I began this research study I wanted to search for a rationale to include earlier field experiences that could help future teachers in areas in which I had not received enough education.

Hollins and Torres-Guzmán (2005) critiqued researchers who “did not discuss how they handled the tensions associated with the dual role of researcher and teacher educator” (p. 502). As the course instructor and researcher of this pilot early field experience I needed to recognize my role and bias in this research study at the forefront of this dissertation. As Rosaldo, Behar, and others have strongly argued, it influences the entire research process.

Definition of Terms

It is essential to define different terms that are mentioned throughout the narrative of this research study. These terms are listed below with corresponding abbreviations and definitions.
**Field Experiences:** Field experiences are teaching experiences that expose future teachers to hands-on teaching experiences and connect what they are learning in their teacher education programs with teaching practices. Cruickshank and Armaline (1986) made a distinction between what they called *pre-professional* and *professional* teaching experiences. Pre-professional experiences are those that serve to acquaint future teachers with children, classrooms, and schools to give “direct, first hand experience,” which could help to add and/or build teacher education programs of study. Cruickshank and Armaline added that these types of experiences offer the “pre-professional knowledge of what it is like to be a teacher”; as a result, students can make a more educated career selection (p. 36). Alternatively, *professional experiences* occur after the teacher education candidate has been accepted into the education major of his/her choice. According to Cruickshank and Armaline, the purposes of these professional experiences are to teach students to become *students of teaching*; to facilitate the development of the notion of the teacher’s role and of the school in the social group; to comprehend a classroom and school program; to give students the “opportunity” to practice what they have learned; and to ascertain the sufficiency of the subject matter knowledge acquired by preservice teachers and how much of it future teachers are able to make learners attain (p. 36). Early field experiences are usually considered pre-professional teaching experiences.

In the literature on field experiences, different words are used to designate these teaching experiences throughout many decades. Some of these words include, but are not limited to, practice teaching, practicum, pre-service experience, internships, clinical experiences, and supervised classroom teaching experiences. Several of these words
would also be used to refer to field experiences in this dissertation whenever they are mentioned in the context that they were used in the original literature cited.

*Language Teacher Education (LTE):* Velez-Rendón (2002) pointed out that the field of second language teacher education is by no means an integrated field (p. 458). As indicated by Velez-Rendón, the field of second language teacher education includes three other subfields with “their own orientations and set of practices” (p. 458). These fields are English as a second language (ESL) teacher education, foreign/world languages teacher education, and bilingual teacher education. For the purpose of this research, I prefer to use the term *Language Teacher Education (LTE)* whenever I refer to the entire field that prepares teachers to teach ESL, foreign/world languages, and bilingual education to avoid confusion among the use of terms like second, world, foreign, and bilingual.

*Foreign/World Languages:* The use of the terms “foreign languages” and “world languages” will be used interchangeably throughout the dissertation to refer to languages other than English in the United States. The word “world” has been used in more recent literature and has been adopted by many teacher education programs including the one presented in this research study. Dr. Sandra Savignon once argued that the word “foreign” implies that languages aside from English are considered the “other,” “different,” “exotic,” which perpetuates the notion of English as the only universal language accepted (conversation with Dr. Sandra Savignon). “World” includes all the languages and gives a global perspective on the learning of languages. However, foreign language teaching is still the most common term used to refer to the teaching of
languages other than English in the United States. Most of the literature reviewed for this dissertation used the word “foreign.”

It is also important to mention that languages are also categorized into different labels, which are used in this dissertation. Some examples are: Classical Languages (ex. Latin and Greek), Modern Languages (ex. Spanish, German, English, French), and Less Commonly Taught Languages or LCTs (ex. Japanese, Chinese, Russian, Arabic).

**Foreign Languages in the Elementary School (FLES):** These programs offer foreign language instruction at the elementary level (PK-6). Some are part of the regular curriculum (Gilzow & Rhodes, 2000), while others are “special” programs designed for a specific day of the week (Ernst-Slavit, Wenger, & Statzner, 1998) or as an afterschool offering (Irving, 1977). FLES programs have gone through different periods, according to Lipton (1998). She identified 1898–1958 as a period marked by the presence of few FLES programs across the nation. The second period, from 1958–1978, started with the passage of the National Defense Act (NDEA), which allocated funds to foreign language teaching and stimulated a “peak activity” in the implementation of FLES programs (p. 75). In the 1970s many FLES programs were eliminated for many reasons, including funding difficulties, lack of careful planning, shortage of qualified teachers, and others (p. 80). The last period, which started in 1978 and ended in 1998, but is still essentially ongoing, “is often called the resurgence or renaissance of FLES programs” (p. 81). FLES programs have received the support of researchers, parents, educators, and policy makers who have become advocates of early language learning. Nonetheless, there is still a need for qualified FLES teachers, as states that include Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Maine,
Massachusetts, North Carolina, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Vermont make foreign languages a requirement in their elementary school curriculum programs (Lipsky, 2005).

*World Languages Teacher Education Program (WL ED):* This refers to the newly developed *World Languages Teacher Education Program* which is commonly called WL ED program. The WL ED program offers courses towards the Pennsylvania K-12 Certification in World Languages in the teaching majors of Spanish, French, German, Russian, and Latin. In addition, a number of students enroll in some courses in the program, such as WL ED 300W and WL ED 295A, with the purpose of meeting the course requirements for the *Pennsylvania’s Program Specialist: English as a Second Language Certificate* (usually refer to as ESL certificate).

*Future Language Teachers (FLT):* To avoid the exclusion of particular students who could become ESL teachers, I called the students enrolled in the WL ED program Future Language Teachers (FLT). In the literature review and in some chapters, this term is used interchangeably with teacher candidates, future teachers, prospective teachers, and preservice teachers.

*Pilot Early Field Experience (PEFE):* WL ED 295A was a Pilot Early Field Experience (PEFE) because it was the first official year in which the early field experience was implemented as part of the newly developed WL ED program. The PEFE was designed to expose student teachers to initial knowledge of language learning and teaching. The course was divided into two main components: a weekly seminar meeting and a field experience at three different early childhood centers. The early field experience itself lasted approximately ten out of fifteen weeks of the university semester.
The FLT were asked to commit a minimum of two hours per week to attend their pre-school placement.

_ECE Centers:_ ECE stands for Early Childhood Education. The students enrolled in the PEFE were placed for their field experience at three early childhood centers—two on campus and one off campus. Here, the centers are called ECE Center #1, ECE Center #2, and ECE Center #3, respectively, to protect their identity.

_Case Study:_ A qualitative approach to in-depth research on a particular phenomenon, which occurs under important circumstances or as a bounded context.

**Chapter Overview**

The literature review in chapter 2 is divided into two sections. The first section offers a history and policy review on EFEs and LTE. The second section explains the theories that guide this dissertation research study and connects them to research studies on EFEs and LTE. These theories serve to explore and evaluate the different aspects of the incorporation of field experiences in teacher education program and includes Dewey’s theory of experience (Dewey, 1938/1997b) and an ecological approach to the study of field experiences (Hersh, Hull, & Leighton, 1982; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998; Zeichner, 1987). Chapter 3 explains why qualitative research was used in the research design and describes case study as the research approach used to conduct, present, and analyze the research data. In addition, it provides descriptions on each of the research participants. Chapter 4 analyzes the research data on the PEFE planning, taking again into consideration the ecological characteristics of structure, content, and context of the WL ED program and the PEFE as planned by the professor-in-charge and the course
instructor. Chapter 5 includes narratives on the ways in which the FLT incorporated their world languages in their ECE classrooms. It also provides examples of the relationships that the FLT developed with people involved in the PEFE, such as mentor teachers and students. Moreover, it explains the challenges the FLT faced in implementing the content into the ECE context and how their characteristics and relationships affected their thoughts and performance during the semester. Chapter 6 includes a discussion of the conclusions of the research study that takes into account ecological characteristics, examination of the PEFE according to Dewey’s theory of experience, suggestions made to improve the PEFE, and implications and further research on early field experiences for language teacher education programs.

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1 In publications before the 1960’s field experiences are commonly called practice teaching experiences.
2 ACTFL = American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages; NCATE = National Council for Teacher Accreditation
3 The Praxis offers language content test in only four languages (French, German, Latin, and Spanish. Students majoring in any other world language need to take the ACTFL test.
4 In 2004, the State Legislature added American Sign Language as a World Language (Kolega, 2009), but it is not listed in the teacher certification areas.
5 40 of these hours must be spent with diverse students (i.e. special education, urban, or at-risk groups).
6 INTASC = Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium
CHAPTER II

Literature Review

This literature chapter is divided into two parts. The first part of this review is a history and policy review on LTE and early field experiences. The second part focuses on the two theories that frame this research study: John Dewey’ theory of experience (Dewey, 1938/1997b) and an ecological approach to the study of field experiences (Hersh, Hull, & Leighton, 1982; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998; Zeichner, 1987). Several examples of research conducted on early field experiences and LTE contribute to illuminate each aspect of these theories.

Part I: History and Policy Review

Language Teacher Education in the United States

In her literature review on language teaching in the modern U.S., Bernhardt (1998) took into account the broader social and historical contexts in which language learning and teaching are located to describe how language teaching has never been part of the mainstream curriculum in the United States. This literature review section follows Bernhardt’s language teaching time periods, but will also identify other significant sociohistorical and political developments that could help to understand past and current issues surrounding the trends on LTE throughout the last century. One common trend in the time periods is that many of the issues on LTE from the 1900s are still being discussed nowadays (Schulz, 2000).
Throughout the years, the importance of language education in the United States has been either promoted or disregarded completely (Watzke, 2003). Stern (1983) characterized language teaching history as a cycle of “claims and counterclaims” (p. 30). These arguments and policy influences have affected tremendously language teaching (Birckbichler, 1994; Reagan & Osborn, 2002; Tedick & Walker, 1994). Tedick and Walker (1994, p. 302) referred to this situation as “the problems that plague second language teacher education.” These five problems are: 1) lack of acknowledgement on how first and second languages and cultures are interdependent; 2) how language arts fields have separated and excluded themselves; 3) the negative view of language as an “object”; 4) a constant and static focus on methodology; and 5) the failure to put into practice the connection between language and culture (p. 302). Scholars like Elizabeth Bernhardt (1998), Elaine Horwitz (2000), Renate A. Schulz (2000), and H.H. Stern (1983) have found evidence that these problems stemmed from the approaches used to promote language learning and teaching since the establishment of the United States as a nation. These approaches have focused on learning the language of the “other” for the economic and political advantage of this country (Reagan & Osborn, 2002). This argument may be one of the reasons why LTE has not received the consideration it deserves in the general teacher education field.

As an example, during the *Early America* (1620–1800) period there is proof that the founding fathers were divided in their opinions in favor and against language teaching. Benjamin Franklin considered it a waste of time for those seeking “economic security” (Bernhardt, 1998, p. 41). His opinion against teaching languages other than English is reflected in his opposition to the establishment of German schools in
Pennsylvania. On the other hand, Thomas Jefferson believed that Latin and Greek needed to be preserved. His education proposals included modern languages and classical languages (Greek and Latin) teaching as part of the curriculum (p. 42). Jefferson viewed foreign languages as serving a function as a tool to be used in the future. Another influential figure during this period, Noah Webster, had a very “utilitarian notion of language study,” and viewed it as part of vocational training. Moreover, Webster also believed in John Adams’s view that for the union of the States, there was a need of a “standardized or common language”—in this case English. His dream did not materialize, but English did become the language that, as Webster had once predicted, is the one that all men and women in United States speak (Bernhardt, 1998, pp. 42–43).

This “opposition of forces” also confirms how language has been tied to “the question of nationhood” since the early days of the U.S. nation (Ibid., p. 43). The extent of language teaching during this period of opposition of forces is still in question.

The *Early Modern United States* period (1800–1920) is the second period that Bernhardt identified and its most important historical development was the establishment of the first system of free public schools in the United States—the common school. Bernhardt was unable to find any evidence that foreign languages were included in the common schools curriculum. The religious school system did provide instruction in other languages, because these schools were attended by immigrants, but foreign languages in general “were not supported by the public school system” (Ibid., p. 44). It was not until almost the end of the century that foreign language teaching was given a role in the education of children due to the recommendations provided by the *Committee of Ten*. The *National Education Association’s* (NEA) formed the *Committee of Ten* in 1890 “to
examine the secondary school curriculum” (Bernhardt, 1998, p. 45). After completing their task, they made recommendations in nine curriculum areas, which they emphasized were of *equal* value. These areas included Latin, Greek, modern languages other than English, mathematics, physical sciences, natural history, history, and geography. One of their recommendations regarding foreign languages was that German and French should be taught as part of the high school curriculum. However, teachers were not being adequately prepared to teach these and other foreign languages at the beginning of the 20th century. Until almost the end of this second period there is little mention of the role of LTE and its influence on language teaching in the literature. It seems that during this time period language teachers received very little or no training to teach languages, because “during the early 20th century, the belief was still prevalent that teaching was an art and teachers were born rather than made…. Little if any formal teacher training was required, and FL teachers were basically self-made” (Schulz, 2000, pp. 495–496). However, a look at the articles published in the *Modern Language Journal (MLJ)* when it came into existence in 1916 give more information on how language teachers were “self-made.”

During its first years the *MLJ* provided a professional space for practitioners, especially language teachers and supervisors affiliated mostly with secondary schools and colleges to write articles about their practice and provide suggestions to improve the field of language learning and teaching (Coleman, 1925; Johnson, 1922; Johnston, 1918; Kayser, 1916; Lantolf, 2000; Price, 1920; Schulz, 2000). One of the most interesting examples of how foreign language teachers used to acquire the knowledge needed to teach languages is present in Carl F. Kayser’s article (1916), which provided a rationale
for teacher associations and a journal dedicated entirely to modern language teaching. Kayser confirmed a lack of sources that could “equip” modern language teachers with professional knowledge before they start teaching. Nonetheless, teachers made efforts to get this professional knowledge “all alone by themselves” and/or “as a result of common effort” (Kaiser, 1916, p. 3).

Serious modern language teachers, here and there, began to band together, they formed organizations. They met to discuss with one another the problems that confronted them and were of common interest to them. The weaker learned from the stronger, and the stronger increased their strength and clarified their views by presenting them to others, and perhaps by being forced to defend them before others. (Ibid., p. 3)

The Modern Language Association (MLA) founded in 1883 was an example of a national effort to gather the professionals to discuss the issues around language learning and teaching. These efforts were not sufficient and Price (1920) lamented that due to the effect of World War I (1914–1919) on FL education, the “special preparation of modern language teachers” was as it was twenty years before (p. 346). This situation started to change in the third period identified by Bernhardt, the Middle Modern United States (1920–1958) which was shaped by other historical events that influenced language teaching practices for decades to come.

The third period of language teaching, Middle Modern United States (1920–1958), started and ended the same way, with war victories for the United States in World War I and the start of the Cold War and World War II (Bernhardt, 1998, pp. 47–48). Additionally, in the middle of this period, the United States suffered an economic collapse (1929–1941), commonly referred to as The Great Depression. Teachers as other workers went through very difficult times, because their salaries were reduced (Schulz, 2000, p. 519). These events did not stop the attention that foreign language teaching had
started to receive at the end of the second period and Bernhardt identified two “key
influences” to the field at the beginning and at the end of the third period: These
influences were the Coleman Report published in 1929 and the Army Specialists’
Training Program (ASTP) of 1942. The Coleman Report suggested modifications to the
foreign language curriculum. The report recommended that foreign languages be taught
through reading literature written on the language. Additionally, it suggested a three-year
language requirement for all high school students and that only “superior” students
should be allowed to take modern language classes (Bernhardt, 1998, p. 48). An outcome
of these recommendations was the development in 1931 of the “Syllabus of Minima in
Foreign Languages” for high schools in the state of New York (Zeldner, 1963). The aim
of this syllabus was that students enjoy reading in the foreign language. The syllabus was
implemented to the point of becoming “the bible of every foreign language teacher” in
New York schools (Zeldner, 1963, p. 246). The approach to teaching languages through
reading left as Bernhardt called it the “Coleman’s Report reading legacy” which virtually
“ensured monolingualism for a few generations” (p. 49). The second influence to the
field of language teaching was the ASTP (Army Specialists’ Training Program) of 1942,
whose primary focus was the need to communicate in the foreign language through
conversation.

The U.S. Army criticized the traditional approach followed in schools and
universities of teaching languages through reading. According to the U.S. Army, the
reading approach had failed to prepare soldiers to use foreign languages and had
especially neglected the oral component of language teaching (Angiolillo as cited by
Bernhardt, 1998, p. 49). Armed Forces during this time needed to be able to communicate
“with allies and enemies” in their language, especially German and French. Therefore, with the help of well-known linguists, the Army developed a language teaching program that consisted of intensive foreign language practice—ten hours, six days a week. This program was called the Army Specialists’ Training Program (ASTP). Since its inception in 1942, the ASTP has focused on the oral component of language teaching and later on the language learning process via the written form. This program was also the precursor to the audiolingual method or linguistic approach to language teaching, through which languages were taught using oral exercises that were practiced over and over during the 1960s and 1970s (Horwitz, 2000, p. 528).

As language teaching approaches were in the process of developing during this third time period, foreign language teachers and teacher education programs were strongly criticized. Even though in 1925, Coleman reported that the majority of higher education institutions offered “courses for teachers which deal with the methodology of the various modern languages” (Coleman, 1925, p. 72), two years later the results of a national survey did not present a good picture on the status of foreign language teacher education. Taking into account the data from this survey, Purin concluded that the training of foreign language teachers in both teacher colleges and liberal arts colleges was “likely to remain utterly unsatisfactory” (1928, p. 15). This was due to the fact that these institutions were only requiring 14 to 25 hours of preparation in the foreign language for teacher candidates who had studied the language for two years in high school (Ibid., p. 16). The requirement should have been from 30 to 40 hours to at least have a “decent preparation to teach” (Ibid., p. 16, author’s emphasis). Therefore, Purin did not believe that these institutions were good sources for qualified foreign language teachers.
Moreover, Solano (1932) made a strong critique of a common practice during this time of hiring teachers at the high school and university levels without preparation on a foreign language major to teach foreign languages classes. These teachers were “murdering” the language and presenting a bad example for those that they were teaching (Solano, 1932, p. 170). Solano was concerned that those students who were majoring in a foreign language to become teachers were taught the language through “book” methods and instruction was commonly offered through talking in English with “little attempt to teach pronunciation or conversation” (Ibid., p. 170). These college instructors were also giving future language teachers poor practice in grammar and reading in foreign languages. Therefore, Solano argued that future language teachers were going to perpetuate the bad practices through which they were taught by their former teachers. Though these critiques were very strong, Solano also provided details of the implementation of reforms in a foreign language teacher education program. This foreign language teacher education program emphasized training teachers on all aspects of language teaching. In addition, it included a “practice teaching” experience before they graduated as foreign language teachers. Through this curriculum the emphasis was on “constant practice in the use of the language” (Ibid., p. 166). Solano reported that the results of this program was that their “girls” had acquired a “standard” (credible and good) pronunciation “pleasing to the ears of the natives of those countries” and that they knew how to teach language classes at all levels of proficiency. An additional aspect that Solano emphasized in her article was that this and other foreign language teacher education programs should encourage future foreign language teachers to have “helpful” travel abroad experiences. By helpful, she meant that the travel abroad could not be “a tour” with other English-speaking
individuals, but it had to be an immersion experience under the direction of an educational institution abroad through which the student learned more about the country, its language, and its culture. The travel experiences would guide future foreign language teachers to be open to other cultures and broaden their “mind and intellect,” because they had to go into the country without a superior feeling and criticizing everything that was different from what he/she was accustomed to in the United States (Ibid., pp. 170–171).

In 1940, the National Teacher Examinations (NTE) program began to assess the knowledge of teacher candidates in all fields. The NTE were first administered by the American Council on Education; from 1950 on, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton, New Jersey, took “full responsibility for preparing, administering, and scoring the examinations” (Quirk, Witten, & Weinberg, 1973, p. 90). The NTE included “the Common Examinations, which offer subtests in Professional Education and General Education, and the Teaching Area Examinations (TAE), which measure understanding of subject matter and methods in 24 areas” (Ibid., p. 90). Approximately 559 foreign language teaching candidates (270 French, 74 German, 67 Spanish, and 148 Latin) took the NTE in 1940 (Spaulding, 1941). The results demonstrated that the candidates were “superior in those subjects having a large verbal or linguistic factor…, but had relatively lower scores in Reasoning, Mathematics, and Science” (Spaulding, 1941, pp. 362–363). These initial testing scores also showed that the quality of knowledge varied among the language areas and Spanish candidates seem to be the ones that were receiving a “less adequate” general preparation and content preparation (Ibid., p. 363).

Another issue discussed during this time period was the importance of preparing “good” teachers to teach foreign languages in the elementary schools (FLES). Many
communities had started offering FLES programs across the nation and the number of elementary students receiving instruction in foreign languages had grown from 5,000 in 1941 to 250,000 by 1955 (Rosenbusch, Kemis, & Kerry Moran, 2000, p. 306). Manuel H. Guerra (1956) was concerned that there were not enough teachers to address this demand and that teacher education programs were not preparing teachers for the specific needs of FLES programs. In addition, Guerra viewed the future of foreign language study as being “shaped in the elementary school classroom” and “what a better investment in this future than a good FLES teacher!” (1956, p. 12). Other prominent scholars during this period, such as Fliess (1950), Johnson (1922), Parker (1935), Price (1920; 1933a,b; 1934 a,b), and Reynolds (1952), also argued for improved LTE practices. They published articles in the *Modern Language Journal* on topics related to LTE, such as the inclusion of participation experiences, study abroad experiences, foreign language methods courses, foreign language teacher certification, inservice training, and graduate-level courses. There is a lack of evidence about the number of these scholars’ recommendations actually put into practice; however, these publications prove that even in this era where the *Coleman Report* recommended teaching languages through reading, and the ASTP focused on communication skills, practitioners were implementing changes and working towards improving LTE practices. They were aware that individuals who wanted to become foreign language teachers needed more than reading and pronunciation to teach languages successfully and encourage others to become language teachers.

The last period that Bernhardt identified was the *Late Modern United States* (1958–1997). The time frame of this period could be extended to the year 2000; it was different from other periods because of the linguistic and learning theories that dominated
it. During this moment in time, proficiency or communicative approaches to teaching were developed. The era started with what some historians called the “golden age” of foreign language teacher development with the passage of the National Defense Act (NDEA) in 1958. The motivation for this act was the Soviet Union’s launching in 1957 of Sputnik, the first space satellite, which resulted in U.S. competition for technological superiority. This event resulted in language teaching becoming “vital to U.S. national defense” (Schulz, 2000, p. 505) in conjunction with mathematics and science. Foreign languages initiatives received large amounts of federal funds for teacher education. Rivers (1975) described these main changes as a shift in the educational emphasis in foreign languages “from the mechanistic to the humanistic as foreign language teaching was no longer seen as the inculcating of certain skills, but as part of the formative education of a human being” (author’s emphasis, p. 23). As a consequence, the NDEA funded language institutes starting in the summer of 1959, which began what still can be seen today as the “greatest mass re-training of language teachers in the history of American education” (Cioffari, 1962, p. 62). These trainings included workshops on the Audiolingual Teaching Method (ALM), which as previously explained had its roots on the ASTP and included the use of the current technology of language laboratories in which students listened and repeated oral drills recorded on audiotapes. Another aspect attended to by the NDEA was teacher certification. It financed a national survey conducted by the Modern Language Association (MLA) on state certification requirements (Gillis, 1961). The survey’s main result was that states were not requiring “that its public school foreign language teachers be able to speak the languages they teach” (Gillis, 1961, p. 61). This was proven with the fact that no state required an oral
examination for foreign language teacher candidates; New York had even offered a written examination to demonstrate oral competence. The states’ education boards believed that it was the responsibility of the universities to certify that the future language teacher was competent on the field. Another area of concern during this period was the “lack of well prepared-teachers” for FLES classrooms, which had led to a decline in the number of schools teaching foreign languages in elementary grades (Rosenbusch, Kemis, & Kerry Moran, 2000, p. 306) and “hostile attacks” on the “disappointing results” (O’Cherony, 1966, p. 121). Several scholars blame this situation on the lack of FLES-specific methods courses, FLES practice experiences, and no additional certification requirements to teach FLES (Fryer & Michel, 1970; O’Cherony, 1966; Otto, 1969). Their positions were backed by a survey of FLES Teacher Certification Requirements conducted in the spring of 1968 (Otto, 1969). Despite these data, some hope for certification requirements was coming; the survey also reported that most states were in the process of adopting new requirements and standards to evaluate foreign language teacher candidates. One of these requirements was the “newly developed MLA Foreign Language Proficiency Tests for Teachers and Advanced Students” which as usual were financed by NDEA and developed by MLA and the Educational Testing Service (Schulz, 2000, p. 502). All of these efforts needed to be evaluated to assure that not only teachers were certified, but they were qualified on their foreign language (Andersson, 1963). During this period teachers were complaining that the audiotapes, microphones, and headphones required for practicing oral drills proposed by the audiolingual method were not the answer to problems in foreign language teaching. Teachers were upset to the point that some were even considering retiring or taking sabbaticals, because they did not have
the necessary training in the “new” technology and the equipment did not work, many
times becoming an obstacle to language instruction (Zeldner, 1963).

As a result, in 1964 the MLA initiated the Modern Foreign Language Teacher
Preparation Study. The MLA started discussions through regional, state, and special
meetings/conferences with individuals and associations inside and outside the foreign
language profession and conducted a series of surveys on Undergraduate Teacher-
Training in Liberal Arts Colleges, Undergraduate Teacher-Training in Schools and
Colleges of Education, and Modern Foreign Language Methods Courses in
Undergraduate Teacher-Training Programs (Paquette, 1964, 1965). These meetings and
surveys led to the publication in 1966 of a document that was divided into two sections.
The first section was called Qualifications for Secondary School Teachers of Modern
Foreign Languages and included seven areas that future teachers needed to be qualified
to teach languages: 1) understanding conversation; 2) speaking with a native speakers; 3)
4) reading and comprehension; writing; 5) foreign language and English linguistic
contrast; 6) foreign language and English cultural contrast; 7) awareness of
communication purpose of foreign language, how to attain this goal through teaching,
and relating it to others areas of study (Paquette, 1966, p. 343). Even though these
qualifications were very clear, it also stated that they were “flexible” and that it permitted
“necessary experimentations and innovation which must precede professional progress”
(Ibid., p. 340). Lange (1983) stated that these “seven areas became the basis for most in-
service and preservice ‘training’ of the sixties” (p. 375). The second section was based on
“qualifications” and was called Guidelines for Teacher Education Programs in Modern
Foreign Languages. It was “intended for use by colleges and universities planning or
conducting programs to prepare teachers of modern foreign languages and for agencies which certify or license graduates of such programs” (Paquette, 1966, p. 340). The guidelines recommended that teacher education programs have admissions requirements; evaluate previous language experiences and administer proficiency exams; provide instruction on all seven areas of the qualifications; including supervised teaching experiences in different contexts and proficiency levels; hire foreign language experienced staff to teach and supervise; have foreign language teaching materials and facilities available; coordinate “carefully selected” study abroad experiences; and evaluate the teacher candidate’s competence in all seven areas (Paquette, 1966, pp. 343–344). Through these qualifications and guidelines the MLA confirmed that it was one of the main professional organizations that defended the study of foreign languages and worked to implement quality preparation programs for future teacher (Bernhardt, 1998). Additionally, Freeman, Solano, and other scholars’ recommendations to prepare quality foreign language teachers to improve foreign language learning were included in this study. Another result of this study was that the MLA organized in 1967 the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Its purpose was to establish a “separate teacher-oriented organization” (Bernhardt, 1998, p. 53). From that moment on ACTFL has played a major role in the efforts made in improving language learning and teaching practices.

As the 1960s came to an end, the 1970s were a time of massive immigration at the international and national levels. This decade saw the emergence of movements like English Only that opposed language and cultural diversity in the United States (Bernhardt, 1998, p. 54). Due to these events, “the division between foreign and second
language learning increased. Second language learning gained prominence and foreign language learning received less attention and was decried for its elitism” (Ibid., p. 54). The division was reflected in the lack of attention given to the impact of the “guidelines” during this decade. Even though Pillet (1970) referred to the guidelines as a “milestone” in foreign language teacher education, he accepted that “progress has not been accompanied with complacency” (p. 14). This outcome may have been due to the fact that many of the suggestions provided in the guidelines were tied to NDEA funds. As Schulz (2000) explained, by 1968 it was replaced with the Education Professions Development Act (EPDA), which gave less support to foreign language teachers (p. 506). This lack of resources and specific guidelines gave birth to “eclectism” in language teaching methods through which “teachers began to mix and match strategies, techniques, and activities from every conceivable methodological source” (Strasheim, 1991, p. 105, author’s emphasis). Teachers started to believe that there was no perfect method for teaching languages. This variety in language teaching methods was also reflected in the publications that presented changes in teacher education programs (Lange, 1972, Wing, 1975); teacher certification (Freeman, 1971; Joyaux, 1975; Mueller, 1972); competence-based or performance-based teacher certification (Eddy, 1975; Moskowitz, 1976); study abroad (Barrutia, 1971); and different methods to prepare future teachers that included microteaching (Altman & Ramirez, 1971; Clifford, Jorstad, & Lange, 1977), team teaching (Orwen, 1971), and student teaching experiences (Wolfe, 1973). LTE programs and state certification requirements in the 1970s were also moving towards establishing a set of competencies in areas such as the “use of the language, knowledge of cultural heritage, competence in choosing and using techniques to teach and evaluate the four
skills, and some areas of specialized training such as individualizing” to determine future language teachers’ preparation to teach languages (Wing, 1975, p. 300). Nonetheless, there were many aspects of LTE that needed to be improved. Herold’s *Gaps in the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers* (1977) addressed many of these themes and summarized the responses of “thirty-nine foreign language teaching authorities” who addressed the “gaps” they thought that the LTE field still had in the 1970s (p. 617).

After reviewing the answers given in a survey, Herold (1977) concluded that: 1) “the main gap in teacher preparation is where it has always been at the college and university level, where the forces of resistance to curricular change seem impregnable” and some programs were not meeting the Guidelines established in 1966 by the MLA; 2) programs were not providing future teachers with a balanced curriculum through which they were educated on different areas, and avoided favoring one area of studies over another (ex. literature over humanities); 3) there was a lack of strong theoretical bases to teaching approaches; 4) methods courses were “not being practical enough” or they were a “potpourri” of themes that were not related to the teaching of foreign languages; 5) a need existed for training college instructors and future teachers on the use of audiovisual resources for foreign language teaching; 6) emphasis was given to implementing teaching methods and not to preparing clear objectives for what needed to be taught, and as a result if the teachers felt that the methods were not working they resorted to teaching as they were taught; 7) future teachers needed to observe language teachers who adapted their teaching style and discuss different teaching techniques; 8) teacher education had to teach future teachers to use individualized instruction, not teacher centered approaches; 9) future teachers had to be prepared to deal with “human considerations” like “group
processes/group dynamics and affective aspects of student behavior”; 10) teacher candidates still lacked language proficiency in the language they expected to teach; 11) travel abroad had to be included as a requirement to address the gap “in the teaching of the small ‘c’ culture, which included “ways of thinking and acting, contemporary life, history, environment” and learning more about the people who are native speakers of the language under study; 12) future teachers had to be familiar with diverse textbooks and instructional materials; 13) student teaching experiences and other forms of practice experiences needed to be well-planned, continuous, and supervised by “experienced instructors” with a background in foreign languages; 14) discussions around what “good teaching” was could be conducted through the analysis of videotapes of preservice/inservice teachers; 15) a specific criterion for foreign language teacher certification needed to be developed at all schooling levels and inservice teachers had to be evaluated by their students and other education agencies; 16) teachers should be allowed to experiment and innovate through discarding the “book method” and designing their own programs “with an eye to the aspirations and interests of the community”; and 17) a “central organization” similar to ERIC had to be developed in the foreign language profession to identify needed research and assign it to individuals with the desire and resources to conduct it (Ibid., pp. 618–622). For all these gaps to be addressed, Herold (1977) recommended establishing more five-year bachelor programs rather than the typical four-year ones. Herold’s and other publications in the 1970s supply evidence that the issues that were present over the past decades had not been resolved or advanced enough for scholars to stop discussing them. Additionally, it was not until 1979 that foreign languages became the focus of national attention again. This was due to a report
presented by President Jimmy Carter’s Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies.

President Carter’s commissioned report, *Strength through Wisdom*, emphasized the importance of functional, oral skills in foreign language, which are “vital to national needs” and rejected “the reading aim in the same manner as the ASTP had” (Bernhardt, 1998, p. 54). One of the members of President Carter’s commission, Congressman Paul Simon, confirmed the above statement and gave plenty of importance to the need to speak foreign languages for economic and security reasons. In his book *The Tongue Tied American: Confronting the Foreign Language Crisis* (1980), Congressman Simon compared U.S. foreign language learning with that occurring in other countries and presented a gray picture of why he considered that being a monolingual nation was not helping the country’s economy and security. He hoped that the work of the Commission would lead to improvements in this situation. As a consequence of this report, ACTFL developed oral proficiency scales and foreign language programs in schools, while universities across the United States conceptualized their curriculums according to this new emphasis on oral skills. Nonetheless, the emphasis on oral language also “contributed to the rift between language teaching and literature teaching” (Bernhardt, 1998, p. 54). The report was just the beginning of a new stage during Bernhardt’s last period. Over the last two decades of the century, research reports, position papers, and standards for students and teachers on language learning and teaching were published.

The results and recommendations of many national reports on education issues were made public during the 1980s and 1990s. Part of the response to these reports was the emergence of standards across all curricular areas—foreign/world languages were not
an exception to this movement. Wing (1984) stated that even though most states were 
still modeling their standards after the 1960s’ “qualification and guidelines” statements, 
there were three “new trends in FL teacher certification.” The first was teacher 
competency assessment. About 36 states were administering “standardized examinations 
in basic skills, professional knowledge, and subject matter content” (Wing, 1984, 
www.ericdigests.org) to teacher candidates. Some of these examinations were an element 
of competency-based teacher certification (CBTE), which presupposes that successful 
teachers need some specific characteristics that could be named through observation of 
effective teaching and demonstrated before granting teacher certification (Wing, 1984). 
The second trend was the re-examination of FL Teacher certification requirements 
throughout all states. With this in mind, the ACTFL and the Northeast Conference on the 
Teaching of Foreign Languages appointed a Task Force on Teacher Education to review 
teacher education programs and certification requirements (Wing, 1984). They noticed 
that some states like New Jersey and Wisconsin had already adopted new standards for 
foreign language teacher education programs. The third and last trend was the 
development of a foreign languages proficiency evaluation. This proficiency evaluation 
was influenced by the 1980s “Proficiency Movement” (Strasheim, 1991, p. 102). Wing 
noted that ACTFL and ETS collaborated on the development of *ACTFL’s Provisional 
Proficiency Guidelines* (1984), which included a working model to describe and assess 
performance in speaking, listening comprehension, reading, writing, and culture. In 
Scebold and Wallinger’s words, the “*ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* initiated a 
revolution that continues to unfold” (2000, p. 1). Scebold and Wallinger also argued that 
the proficiency guidelines in conjunction with the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)
“provided a useful framework for assessment” (p. 2). There is evidence that ACTFL’s proficiency guidelines were used in the development of many state tests and some states even implemented an oral proficiency requirement for those candidates seeking teacher certification (Jarvis & Bernhardt, 1987; McFerren, 1988). The proficiency guidelines were also used to develop ACTFL’s Provisional Guidelines for Foreign Language Teacher Education (1988). The guidelines focused on three areas: personal development (liberal arts courses), professional development (education courses), and specialist development (language courses, technological applications in foreign language teaching, and study abroad experiences). The language-specific teacher organizations (usually refer to as AATs) adapted the provisional guidelines to each foreign language teacher education (Knop, 1991, p. 58). The trends in teacher certification and the new guidelines consolidate Lange’s argument (1983) that even though in the 1980s there was still not a “complete consensus” on the curriculum content of teacher preparation program, there was a “growing consensus” (p. 377). Lange (1983) argued that the profession was reaching consensus on the importance of language skills; cultural knowledge; general courses; education courses; methods for teaching foreign languages; practicum experiences; and competency-based teacher education to develop future language teachers. Even though some agreement had been achieved, teacher education programs received an added pressure to educate more foreign language teachers. It was expected that by 1993, 69% of states would have a foreign language teacher shortage (Draper, 1989, p. 264). Therefore, it was imperative to recruit more foreign language teachers.

ACTFL reaffirmed in the 1990s that improving LTE was one of its top priorities (Schrier, 1993). The organization not only wanted to ensure that there were enough
foreign language teachers for schools around the U.S., but also that teachers were highly qualified to teach foreign languages (Strasheim, 1991). For this to happen the *Guidelines for Foreign Language Teacher Education*, which were still considered “provisional,” needed to be developed (Knop, 1991). Birckbichler (1994) reported that the provisional guidelines “unfortunately, have had little impact on the profession or on foreign language policy” (p. 188). Strasheim (1991) suggested that ACTFL efforts to develop the provisional guidelines needed to involve language specialists, professional associations, state licensing commissions, teacher education programs accreditation agencies, and teachers from all grade levels and types of schools. These efforts should lead foreign language professionals to speak “with one voice rather than many and so that the foreign language profession can be proactive rather than reactive, in the creation of policy that effects its future” (Birckbichler, 1994, p. 188). Moreover, Strasheim considered that efforts to improve LTE should not focus so much on extending the time “required from them… but the quality, validity, of the instruction that exists first.” (Strasheim, 1991, p. 106). The effort to develop LTE guidelines would have to wait a little longer, but in the meantime *The Praxis Series: Teacher Licensure and Certification* assessments replaced the National Teachers Examination required for teacher certification in the states. The Praxis Series include the Praxis I, which measures basic academic skills, and the Praxis II, which measures general and subject-specific knowledge and teaching skills (www.ets.org). Nowadays, the PRAXIS offers subject-specific exams for French, German, Latin, and Spanish. Other language certification areas need to take the ACFTL test. Another event during the 1990s that influenced the language teaching profession was the publication of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning for the 21st Century* in
This document has become one of the main publications in the field of foreign languages education and has served as the basis for many other projects.

When the Goals 2000: Educate America Act were passed on March 31, 1994, a new era in education started as the education system had to submit evidence to the federal government that students were receiving the best education possible. Goal #3 required that “students leave grades 4, 8, and 12 demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter” in different knowledge areas including foreign languages (http://www.nd.edu). As a result, the Standards for Foreign Language Learning for the 21st Century were published in 1996 and addressed five overarching goals (commonly refer to as the 5 Cs) needed to learn a language: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. These goals are interconnected and, as Scebold and Wallinger explained, the Standards for Foreign Language Learning not only summarizes “the current knowledge in the field,” but also “provides a cogent rationale for the inclusion of foreign language education in the core curriculum” (2000, p. 2). The Standards for Foreign Language Learning is considered a resource for teachers who seek to know “how to best connect foreign language education to other disciplines through interdisciplinary studies and the related focus on content-based materials and instruction” (p. 2). The publication of these standards was a big step towards developing a common knowledge base for the foreign languages teaching profession.

In addition to the Standards for Foreign Language Learning, the 1990s witnessed the publication of several books dedicated entirely to LTE practices and research. Some of these books included Richards and Nunan’s Second language teacher education (1990), Guntermann and ACTFL’s Developing language teachers for a changing world
(1993), Freeman and Richards’ *Teacher learning in language teaching* (1996), Richards’s *Beyond training* (1998), Roberts’s *Language teacher education* (1998), and Johnson’s *Understanding language teaching* (1999), among others. These books have contributed specific ways to develop the LTE field into one with its own knowledge and research base. For example, Richards and Nunan’s book “marked a major opening in teacher education in the field” (Freeman, 1998) as it opened up the discussion for applications of many teacher education themes (ex. action research, classroom relationships, the practicum, supervision, self-observation, and practices in the field) to language teaching. Freeman and Richards’ book *Teacher learning in language teaching* (1996) was “the first formal collection of research on teacher learning in the field of language teaching” (p. ix). As the new century approached and the LTE knowledge and research base continued to grow, ACTFL and AATG (American Association of Teachers of German) representatives finally started conversations in 1998 with NCATE to develop specific guidelines for accreditation of LTE programs. The reason why it took until the end of the 1990s for language teaching organizations to partner with NCATE was “money,” because a procedure needed to be in place to come up with the necessary funds to pay for NCATE membership dues on a continuous basis (Scebold & Wallinger, 2000, p. 5). ACTFL considered it necessary to partner with NCATE to come to an agreement on how to best educate future language teachers. As Schrier (1993) predicted:

> at the turn of the century foreign language teachers will not only be in demand, but the new teachers, because of their numbers, will have the ability to influence generations of language learners as no other cohort of teachers has done before them. (p. 110)

Without knowing it, the new generation of foreign language teachers would have to face not only a past of language learning/teaching approaches full of contradictions, but a
present and future where the struggle to make a place for foreign languages in the core curriculum is still an ongoing issue.

Two major events have influenced tremendously language learning and teaching in the 21st century. These two events were the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 (9/11) and the signing into law of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2002. Therefore, the current period on language teaching and learning could be called the Post 9/11 United States and NCLB period (2001–present). The current administration’s War on Terror in countries like Iraq and Afghanistan started right after the September 11, 2001 al-Qaeda terrorist attack in which four commercial passenger airplanes hit three government buildings (each of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and The Pentagon) and a last plane crashed in a rural town in Pennsylvania. Brown (2005) pointed out that “our post-9/11 mania and the war in Iraq have heightened the level of awareness regarding Americans’ international incompetence” (p. 277). This level of awareness have started a new period for the teaching of foreign languages, a period characterized by the emphasis on what is commonly referred to as Critical Languages (CLs) or languages that are in a lot of demand due to the current political situation. Former President George W. Bush started in January 2006 the National Security Languages Initiative (NSLI)—”an interagency effort coordinated by the White House to increase dramatically the number of U.S. residents learning, speaking, and teaching critical-need foreign languages” (U.S. Department of Education & Office of PostSecondary Education, 2008, p. 1). The CLs included in the NSLI are Chinese, Russian, Arabic, Korean, and the Indic, Turkic, and Persian language families. According to the U.S. Department of Education and Office of PostSecondary Education report,
Enhancing foreign language proficiency in the United States: Preliminary results of the National Security Language Initiative (2008), the four agencies directing the federal initiative are the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Defense, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. The thirteen NSLI programs cover all levels of instruction and work/professional programs. At the LTE level, it includes scholarships to study and teach abroad for preservice and inservice teachers. U.S. Senators Dick Durbin and Roger Wicker introduced on February 2009 legislation that could create a study abroad program for undergraduate students. The legislation was inspired by the work and vision of the late Senator Paul Simon, and it was named the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act. The legislation could create “a program that encourages nontraditional students -such as low income students and those who attend community college- to spend part of their undergraduate careers studying abroad, especially in less traditional locations” (http://durbin.senate.gov). If the legislation passes it “would authorize Congress to appropriate $80 million annually for the foundation,” which would then provide scholarships of about $7,000/each to 500,000 college students to study abroad (McMurtrie, 2008). Teacher trainings and cultural exchanges to prepare teachers to teach CLs in the United States are already taking place. For example, on April 19, 2006, a teaching abroad initiative was signed with the Chinese government (Zhonghua, 2006, www.chinaview.cn). These programs are supported with federal funds and they resemble what happened during the Middle Modern United States era when the U.S. Army developed the ASTP language program to prepare their soldiers to communicate when they were stationed in other countries.
Another major development that has influenced the field of foreign languages education in the 20th century has been the federal education act known as *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*, which was approved in 2002 also under former President George W. Bush’s administration. Byrnes (2005) described NCLB as “the most talked about educational policy documents in recent memory” as it has sparked both support and rejection from teachers, parents, policy makers, and others concerned with how to best educate the new generations (p. 248). NCLB’s main goal is “to raise academic achievement in the nation by requiring schools to assess all students on specified content areas and report progress toward proficiency” (Rosenbusch, 2005, p. 251). The four key measures (accountability, testing, teacher quality, and scientifically based research) are what have raised many concerns around the implementation of NCLB. States need to: 1) meet accountability requirements through “state-defined Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)” on a period of four years or they run the risk of being “subject to restructuring or reconstruction” plus losing their federal funding; 2) develop and administer and implement annual state standardized tests that measure the proficiency of students in the majority of the core subjects; 3) ensure that students are receiving the best education from their teachers through a state-required plan that ensures that all teachers are “highly-qualified” to teach their “core content area”; and 3) base their educational decisions on scientifically based research, which could lead to the assignment of federal funds to be used for research based programs like Reading First (Rosenbusch, 2005, p. 251). One positive aspect of NCLB is that foreign languages are included in the subjects listed in the act as “core academic subjects.” Nonetheless, foreign languages “are not included in the most controversial aspect of the legislation, namely its testing program” (Byrnes,
Bussone (2005) asked an interesting question regarding this aspect of the legislation. She wondered if foreign languages were among the core subjects being tested “would we pass the test?” (p. 262). This question remains unanswered as standardized tests for foreign languages are not required under NCLB and it is an evidence that in this new century foreign languages are “still left behind” (Keatley, 2007). The fact that foreign languages are left behind is reflected on the cuts in FLES programs, time for foreign language classes, language teaching positions, and language programs in schools that are occurring due to the need for more time to prepare students for state standardized tests (Rosenbusch & Jensen, 2005). Rosenbusch (2005) suggested that a national coalition of language organizations be organized to work together to “provide support for the profession as it addresses the NCLB Act and new policy issues” not only from a defensive position, but “taking a leadership role in defining the future of teaching and learning languages in the U.S. schools” (p. 259). This coalition may not work unless, as Glisan (2005) has suggested, it is accompanied by a grassroots project coming from the bottom-up “to help foreign language teachers become more involved in the profession and thus become more aware of its direction and the negative effects of the NCLB on our own national agenda” (p. 270). She provided evidence that those teachers who are part of language teaching organizations such as ACTFL and who work in urban school districts are more familiar with the Standards for Foreign Language Learning, than those who are not part of any organization or are located in isolated rural school districts. Therefore, there has to be an effort from language teaching organizations to prepare teachers on “how to advocate on behalf of their discipline” (p. 270). It is the teachers “who are in the best position to advocate on behalf of language instruction and to defend language
programs” (Glisan, 2005, p. 268). Therefore, Glisan suggested not leaving “foreign language teachers behind” as a consequence of “top-down language initiatives” and having “a real team effort—that is, more intensive and goal-oriented collaboration between and among language organizations, state-and district level FL supervisors, department heads, as well as the formation of FL teaching teams” (p. 271). Until this coalition is formed there is still work to be done in LTE programs.

LTE programs have started to change due to the influence of NCLB and the National Foreign Language Learning standards. Programs have made an effort to include “standards-based” teaching in their methodology courses. Nonetheless, LTE is still behind on its inclusion of standard based teaching as “college-level L2 instructors have reacted more slowly than their secondary counterparts in the adoption of the National Foreign Language Standards as the accepted means of content delivery” (Wilbur, 2007, p. 80). This may be “attributed to the fact that the profession is still evolving into Standards-based teaching and not yet considering the claims we want to make about what students can do and then identifying the sources of evidence needed to support these claims” (Wilbur, 2007, p. 79). However, LTE programs have to demonstrate that their candidates do pass the standards to become language teachers. On October 19, 2002 the ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers, which were prepared by the National Foreign Language Standards Collaborative, in conjunction with ACTFL, were finally approved by NCATE. Even though ACTFL had already prepared teacher education guidelines in the past, this was a new milestone for LTE because as it is stated on the standards website, “this is the first set of foreign language program standards to have been developed by the profession and approved by
NCATE” (http://www.actfl.org). The ACTFL/NCATE document is comprised of six standards which “address both ‘candidate performance’ regarding learning outcomes as well as ‘unit capacity’ in terms of the components of teacher education programs that support candidate learning” (Bott-VanHoutten, Hoyt-Oukada, & Scow, 2003, p. 3). These six standards are organized around six themes: 1) language, linguistics, comparisons; 2) cultures, literatures, cross-disciplinary concepts; 3) language acquisition theories and instructional practices; 4) integration of standards into curriculum and instruction; 5) assessment of languages and cultures; and 6) professionalism (standards document available online at www.actfl.org). Since 2004, LTE programs that go through NCATE’s review are required to base their program report submissions on the 2002 standards. At the moment, only time would tell how much standard-based teaching LTE programs would implement and how it may influence language teaching at all levels of instruction.

In conclusion, the approaches used to promote language learning/teaching in the United States have been directed to learning the language of the “other” for the economic and political advantage of this country (Reagan & Osborn, 2002). These approaches have also affected LTE, but it is interesting to note that throughout the years practitioners have repeated frequently the need for future language teachers to be prepared in all language skills and sociocultural knowledge. Outside groups have focused on teaching one skill, such as language or culture, over another. As Pennycook (2001) argued, “we need to investigate very carefully whose interests are served in different language policies” (p. 212). The history of language learning/teaching and LTE in the United States demonstrates these political decisions, because during each of the eras mentioned above different languages and strategies have been emphasized according to the political events.
As Bernhardt (1998) and Watzke (2003) have suggested, this trend does not seem to have an end in sight. Even though time has witnessed many changes in the LTE field and some arguments have been made throughout the decades by practitioners such as Freeman (1941), Rivers (1975), Johnson (1922), and Solano (1931) have become a reality; many of these changes have not been supported by research. One must agree with Schulz’s (2000) disappointment that “we are still discussing many of the same issues that were discussed more than 80 years ago, and we still have not found solutions to many of the problems that plagued the development of FL teachers” (p. 516). Even among all the policies influencing the field, there is a call for research that makes connections with theories that could help to look at current LTE practices and verify what works or not to educate quality teachers. One practice that needs to be explored further in LTE is the role of early field experiences in the education of teachers. General teacher education literature have already given special attention to early field experiences, these publications could provide LTE programs with some tools to develop quality field experiences for future language teachers.

*Early Field Experiences*

Field experiences have been part of teacher education programs’ curriculum since the first normal schools (teacher preparation institutions) were established in the late 19th century. As early as 1904 Dewey called for field experiences that do not follow *apprenticeship* models that “perpetuate the current types of educational practices” and encourage pre-service teachers to become *students of teaching* (p. 30). Dewey (1904) called this model of teacher preparation, *laboratory*. Some teacher education programs...
have followed Dewey’s laboratory experiences vision (Goodman, 1985); while others have not been able to prove that they have had a positive influence on pre-service teachers’ development as teachers (Scherer, 1979). A reason for these research results may be found in the pressures that teacher education programs have received and are still receiving from policy makers and accreditation agencies to prove that they are preparing highly qualified teachers. It is probable that in their haste to end the outside pressure, teacher education programs have not planned their EFEs carefully and teacher education practitioners/researchers continue to be divided on their support for these experiences.

Teacher education and the development of field experiences

The tangible need for elementary teachers was a big concern when common schools (former name given to public schools) opened at the beginning of the 19th century. This urgent call for teachers was one of the biggest reasons for the establishment of the first public “normal school” (training schools for teachers) to prepare elementary teachers for the common schools. The first normal school opened in Vermont in 1823, however it was not until 1829 that the first state supported normal school was established in Lexington, Massachusetts (Adler, 1984, p. 5). One of the goals of these first normal schools was that future teachers “practice in the classroom those principles they had learned in lecture” (Hersh, Hull, & Leighton, M. S., 1982, p. 1812). Many additional normal schools were opened in other New England states and it did not take long for other states to start theirs; by 1890 the majority of them had adopted the above goal and more than half of these schools included in their curriculums practicum experiences with children (McAllister 1962, as cited by Hersh, Hull, & Leighton, M. S., 1982, p. 1812).
Liberal arts colleges started preparing high school teachers and school administrators at the end of the 1800s, but did not offer any type of field experience as a requirement to become teachers (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990).

Due to the strong ties that normal schools had with the common schools it was a common practice for teacher training programs to include a number of practical experiences. After reading the early writings of two normal school leaders at the beginning of their careers, Fleniken concluded “that at the dawn of formal teacher training in America, teacher educators believed in learning by doing and utilized practices known to us now as peer teaching, simulation, and student teaching” (cited in Nichols, 1989, p. 178). These forms of teaching practices were considered apprenticeships, which as John Dewey (1904) described, had a practical purpose, as they shaped and supplied teachers with the tools needed to perform in their profession. Some of these tools included classroom management techniques, lesson plan writing, and instructional materials development. The apprenticeship model of preparing teachers provided future teachers with “practice work” or “skill and proficiency in the work of teaching” (Dewey, 1904, p. 9). At the beginning of the 1900s, Dewey proposed another type of experiences, which he named laboratory experiences. He defined laboratory experiences as “practice work use as an instrument in making real and vital theoretical instruction; the knowledge of subject matter and of principles in education” with an aim to “supply the intellectual method and material of good workmanship” (1904, pp. 9-10). As normal schools transitioned at the beginning of the century to become teachers colleges and some became departments/schools of education inside universities, Dewey’s proposal for laboratory experiences were implemented in laboratory schools.
Schools of education around the nation opened laboratory schools and determined that research was a critical goal, implementing research activities planned to improve teaching and the experiences of future teachers (Page & Page, 1981). For example, in the laboratory schools, future classroom teachers observed teachers through one-way mirrors, watched university faculty demonstrating lessons, used the most recent equipment and resources, and freely experimented with new educational ideas and strategies (McIntyre, Byrd, and Foxx, 1996, p. 180). The number of laboratory schools reached their peak in 1964, as the National Association of Laboratory Schools (NALS) listed 212 laboratory schools in its roster (Kelley, 1967). However, by 1969 the number of laboratory schools decreased to 208, and in 1988 the number of laboratory schools had declined to 95.

Moreover, McGeoch (1971) pointed out that “experimentation and research have been more talked about than practiced” in laboratory schools (p. 16). By the 1970s laboratory schools served two primary purposes, “to provide an on-campus environment in which prospective teachers could observe prevailing methods and to provide a setting where student teaching could be completed” (Stallings & Kowalsk, 1990, p. 252). As the decades have passed by, laboratory schools had many difficult moments due to university funding troubles and it led to many school closings (Stallings & Kowalsk, 1990). Other reasons for their laboratory schools closings were that the number of student teachers increased and they were very different from public schools; reasons that led many universities to start making use of public schools as placement sites (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990, p. 515). Some argue that current professional development schools (PDS) possess features that parallel laboratory schools (McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996, p. 181). However, as Adler points out “although the rhetoric of field experiences reflected a
Deweyian influence, it remains questionable whether actual practice followed an apprenticeship or laboratory model” (p.11). Nonetheless, all types of field experiences continue to be incorporated into teacher education programs in colleges and universities.

Current issues in education have influenced field experiences and nowadays teacher education practitioners suggest planning and implementing field experiences in teacher education which prepare future teachers to work in urban environments (Grant, 2002; Whipp, 2003), with diverse students (Farrell, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas 2002; Zeichner, 1993), with students with special needs (Epanchin & Colucci, 2002; Maheady, Harper, & Mallette, 2001; Prater & Sileo, 2002), become more aware of social justice issues and critique the status quo (Armaline & Hoover, 1989; Beyer, 2001), and reflect on their teaching practice (Bartolomé, 2004; Johnson & Landers-Macrine, 1998; Spalding & Wilson, 2002). All of these issues have influenced field experiences and as the decades passed by more and earlier field experiences with a specific focus have started to be incorporated into teacher education programs.

Emergence and Incorporation of Early Field Experiences

Field or practicum experiences have become an important element in teacher education program curricula. Future teachers consider these experiences the “lifeblood” of their teacher education programs (Applegate, 1986, p. 21). However, the final student teaching experience, which typically occurs in the last year of the teacher education program, used to be the only practicum experience for future teachers until the early 1980s (Huling, 1998, p. 2). Nonetheless, as evident in a 1981 report published by the
Association of Teacher Educators (ATE), since the 1980s there have been strong movements to incorporate earlier field experiences in the preparation of future teachers.

*Early Field Experiences* (EFEs) are practical experiences that occur before the student teaching experience, either prior to or after entrance to the teacher education major, but before the student teaching experience. A look at teacher education programs around the country show that the majority of EFEs usually occur sometime during the first two years of studies of the future teachers (Huling, 1998). During the last three decades many position papers on EFEs have been published in major journals in the field of teacher education, where many reasons are given for the emergence and incorporation of EFEs in teacher education programs (Applegate, 1985; Bowyer & Van Dyke, 1988; Harp, 1974; Ishler & Kay, 1981; McDiarmid, 1990; Myers, 1996; Rios-Perez, 1991; Silverman, 1998).

Rios-Perez cited Nolan (1982) in mentioning that in 1948, the *American Association of Teacher Colleges* published the *Flowers Report*, which called for an “extension of professional laboratory experiences” (1991, p. 8). The report stated that classroom experiences before student teaching existed, but they were very uncommon. Still, it was not until the AACTE endorsed the field-oriented approach in 1976 that several states increased considerably the number of required early field experiences (Applegate & Lasley, 1985, p. 27). Due to this fact most publications on field experiences prior to the 1980s wrote about the student teaching experience (Lasley, Applegate, & Ellison, 1986). Norman E. Hefke (1989) also identified three significant contributors to support for the significance of early field experiences and the endorsement in teacher education programs. The first source consisted of preservice teachers who remember
vividly the “technical skills” that they learned from their field experiences. Hefke included in this source experienced teachers who focus on the significance of field experiences for “learning practical skills” or who recall their student teaching as “the most influential aspect of their program” (p. 158). The second source of support comes from the state legislative bodies that question the “value of theory courses” and who believe that more “hands on” experience will increase the knowledge of teacher education graduates (p. 158). The third force backing up the increase on field experiences are the leaders of professional education associations and accrediting bodies as well as many education professors who “believe that, given the proper conditions and settings, early field experiences can be significant, effective components of every teacher preparation program” (Hefke, 1989, p. 158). Some examples of the importance of this last source can be found in Applegate and Lasley (1985), Huling (1998), Rios Perez (1991), and Sikula (1990).

However, a closer look at the dates when most of the literature written on EFEs was published (after the 1980s) reveals political reasons for justifying their emergence. First, McDiarmid (1990) argued that EFEs were a response to charges made to teacher education programs by policy makers, teachers, and teacher education students that teacher education programs were too abstract and theoretical (p. 12). McDiarmid pointed out that these charges are part of innumerable national reports on the state of education and teacher education that have been published since the 1980s. These reports have called for teacher education reforms that include “a more rigorous preparation and more authentic experiences to enable them to cope with the increasing complexity, challenges, and diversity of current schools and classrooms” and advocated for “a more holistic
conceptualization” of the future teacher experience and better partnerships between universities and public schools (Huling, 1998, p. 3). The reports also emphasized the importance of quality over quantity field experiences.

A second political reason to include EFEs into teacher education programs is that, since 1979, NCATE has incorporated field experiences for future teachers as one of the accreditation requirements for teacher education institutions (McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996). Accountability through accreditation usually translates into more financial resources and support for colleges and universities. The U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation have identified NCATE “as the national professional accrediting agency for schools, colleges, and departments of education that prepare teachers, administrators, and other professional school personnel” (NCATE, 2002, p. 6, emphasis mine). This recognition puts more pressure on teacher education to adhere to NCATE standards and go through their accreditation process. The demands are also big for teacher education programs since NCLB was signed into law in January 2002. NCLB requires that all teachers be “highly qualified.” New teachers are extremely vulnerable to the consequences of not complying with the highly qualified standards.

According to Walsh and Snyder (2004), the U.S. Department of Education may decide to target some states for “egregious non-compliance” and due to the “kid-glove approach” that their educations agencies have taken towards experienced teachers. The U.S. Department of Education may decide to choose to select those states that are found “non compliant on new teachers” under the highly qualified teacher’s guidelines (p. 2).

Another aspect that supports the political nature of the emergence of early field experiences is that teacher education programs in colleges and universities have always
been subject to plenty of criticism. The response from educators in the field has been a call for quality teacher education programs. As Cochran-Smith explained, since teacher education started as a formal endeavor there have only been very few moments in which “it was not being critiqued, studied, rethought, reformed, and often, excoriated” (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 295). She added that during the late 1950s to the early 1980s, “teacher education was defined primarily as a training problem;” in the early 1980s through the early 2000s it was “defined as a learning problem;” and since the late 1990s it has been “defined as a policy problem” (p. 295). Colleges and universities have been trying to prove through NCATE and other accreditation agencies that they do know how to prepare teachers, that the call for the elimination of teacher education programs to be substituted with alternative teacher certification programs through online and for-profit colleges is not an appropriate response for the need to prepare more “quality” teachers (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Goodlad, 2002; Jaschik, 2005; Zeichner, 2003). All these regulations and reports have defined a new period for teacher education in the United States and during these last decades teacher education programs around the country have gone through several curricular revisions. Among the changes they have incorporated to their curriculums are early field experiences.

Today, there is no doubt that early field experiences have become an important element in most teacher education programs around the United States. By 1981, Ishler and Kay reported that 99% of the colleges of education that responded to their survey on early field experiences indicated that their programs included an EFE. More recently, the results of the 1997 Joint Data Collection System (JDCS) Clinical and Field Experience Survey (addendum to the JDCS, which the AACTE collected annually) indicated that
77% of elementary education candidates and 70% of secondary education candidates are required to participate in field experiences in PK-12 environments before their junior year in college (Huling, 1998). The survey also found that elementary education majors “spend more time in field experiences,” and have a higher percentage in working in more than one setting than secondary education students (Huling, 1998, p. 4). Therefore, field experiences before student teaching are now an expected element in the education of both elementary and secondary education future teachers. Nonetheless, it is still unknown how many of these EFEs are actually planned for specific teaching areas like language teacher education.

**Part II: Theoretical Connections on Early Field Experiences and Language Teacher Education Research**

The theoretical concepts, explained below, guide my search for “a clearer picture, not only to contribute to knowledge in the area, but also as a basis for developing further the practicum aspect of our teacher education program” (Beck & Kosnick, 2002, p. 82). It is my purpose to highlight the importance of learning from the implementation of a Pilot Early Field Experience (PEFE) as part of a newly developed LTE program. To explore the different aspects of the PEFE implementation I look at it through the lens of John Dewey’s theory of experience (Dewey, 1938/1997b) and an ecological approach to the study of field experiences (Hersh, Hull, & Leighton, 1982; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998; Zeichner, 1987). Following Myers’ (1996) example which involved using Dewey’s theory of experience to classify early field experiences, the first section of the theoretical review connects this theory with research studies published on several EFEs. In the second section, I connect research studies on field experiences and LTE with the
elements of an ecological approach to the study of field experiences (structure, content, context, and relationships).

**Theory of Experience**

“I have come to believe that the best type of learning comes from experience.”

(Kate, E-Portfolio-A1)

Like Kate, many future teachers believe that the best way a person can acquire knowledge is through experience, but as Dewey acknowledged, even though each experience is important, not all experiences contribute to growth in the students’ education and mere activity does not constitute experience (Dewey, 1916/1997a, p. 139). He established that to actually “learn from experience” is:

- to make a backward and forward connection between why we do things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence. Under such conditions doing becomes a trying; and experiment with the world to find out what is like; the undergoing becomes instruction-discovery of the connection of things. (Dewey, 1916/1997a, p. 140)

Therefore, experience, according to Dewey, includes two elements: active (trying) and passive (undergoing). The trying has to be followed by the undergoing in which people reflect on what they do and connect it with “the consequences which result, so that the two become continuous” (1916/1997a, p. 145). In 1938, Dewey developed his ideas on experience into a theory of experience and established that experience and education are not equal. Dewey (1938/1997b) explained that some experiences are educative, others are mis-educative, and some could also be non-educative. He explained that educative experiences are those experiences that promote growth. Field and Macintyre Latta argued that “the possibility of becoming more experienced arises only when something happens
to us beyond what we anticipate” (2001, p. 887). Therefore, growth occurs whenever a person has to confront unexpected situations that result in new experiences. On the contrary, mis-educative experiences are those that have “the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience…it may produce lack of sensitivity and responsiveness” and impede possibility of future quality experiences (Dewey, 1938/1997b, pp. 25–26). The non-educative experience is the third type of experience and could be described as an experience that does not promote growth or change, but it does not impede further experiences. Myers (1996) applied Dewey’s definitions to classify various early field experiences presented on research publications.

Myers (1996) reviewed seventeen research studies he believed supported the statement that EFEs are educative experiences (pp. 230–231). One of these studies was conducted by Harp (1974). After administering a Concerns Statement (University of Texas) instrument, Harp reached the conclusion that students that participated in a voluntary early field experience underwent a “maturation process.” The research study proved that students’ maturation process was demonstrated as they moved from self-centered concerns at the beginning of their experience to more pupil-centered by the end of their field experiences. Five years later, Benton and Osborn (1979) concluded that an early field experience was a “major influence” for the future teachers enrolled in it, because engaging in it confirmed their decision to become teachers, led others to teach another age group from the one they had worked with during the EFE, and demonstrated to around 40% of the future teachers that they did not like to teach or needed to change to another teaching area (p. 124). The researchers stated that “this early decision making has a beneficial effect on both the student and the program since it helps the students avoid
making a career mistake” (Ibid., p. 124). In 1982, Denton showed that EFEs had an influence on students’ cognitive attainment in “subsequent” work (Denton, 1982, p. 22). Anderson and Graebell (1990) argued that EFEs are beneficial for all the participants involved in the field experience, this included, the future teachers, the children, and the mentor teachers. The future teachers “developed skills and confidence;” the children “received more individual attention;” and the mentor teachers “believed that their performance as classroom teachers was enhanced” (p. 19). Goodman (1986) stated that an EFE planned in his university was beneficial because the students demonstrated their ability to link theory and practice through teaching units, term papers, and presentations that reflected the themes discussed on campus courses. The EFE also included the benefit “that student’s sense of professional autonomy and creativity was enhanced” (p. 120). The students enjoyed the “challenge of developing innovative learning experiences for children, and they saw their ability to design unique curriculum units as essentially a creative endeavor” (p. 121). Heinemann, Obi, Pagano, and Weiner (1992) also argued that early field experiences are wonderful opportunities to expose students to more urban and diverse settings because they help to reduce students’ stereotypes, fear, and challenge them with new self-knowledge. This argument was supported by Burant (1999), as preservice teachers involved in an urban early field experience got involved in grassroots projects organized by the schools. In addition, Stahler (1996) stated that the early field experience she evaluated worked because its content was prepared in collaboration with classroom teachers and this fact helped to “reinforce rather than ignore or devalue theory” (p. 8). Other research studies report successful EFEs that emphasized reflection (Feyten & Kaywell, 1994; Silverman, 1998) and real-life experiences (Pierce, 1996). The
results of these studies indicated that these early field experiences were educative because they promoted further growth through new experiences, autonomy to make decisions, and guidance to connect theory with practice. In contrast to these positive results, there are also a number of research studies which critique the role of EFEs as part of the education experiences of future teachers and provide suggestions to improve these experiences.

Myers (1996) also included in his literature review thirteen research studies that he believed supported the view that EFE are mis-educative for pre-service teachers (pp. 232–233). One study was that by Grossman (1980), who reported that student teachers who participated in more EFEs actually were rated lower by their student teaching supervisors than others with fewer experiences. Goodman (1986) also stated that future teachers were becoming “deskilled” during their field experiences, especially because they were not given opportunities to grow and experiment with their knowledge in their school placements. Unfortunately, the majority of “the students began to view teaching as the transmission of utilitarian reading, mathematics, and grammar skills from officially approved textbooks” (p. 44). This statement was supported by Dowhower (1990), who pointed out that what students observed in their placement sites was contradictory to what they were learning in the university. In addition, Evans (1986) described an EFE in which the students did not have the opportunity to critique and reflect on what they observed from classroom teachers and “learned poor models of teaching” (p. 43). Anderson’s (1993) research study showed that for EFEs to be effective mentors, teachers and future teachers needed to communicate on an ongoing basis and find “adequate time to plan and work together”—if not, the purpose of the EFE may not be achieved (p. 606). This statement was confirmed in Moore’s research study (2003), who found that due to a lack
of discussion and examination from mentor teachers and university supervisors, preservice teachers’ pedagogical decisions were “overlooked in lieu of procedural concerns of time management, teaching the expected lessons and content, and classroom management” (p. 40). Others studies like Lasley and Applegate (1985) doubted Denton’s (1982) findings of EFEs positive benefits and concluded that if “teacher educators and cooperating teachers fail to create an appropriate structure and context to field experiences,” the influence of EFEs could be lessened (p. 227). These mis-educative early field experiences had the potential to impede future growth because they did not connect theory with practice through dialogue among the participants of the field experiences, presented poor models of practice to future teachers, and contradicted the knowledge that future teachers were receiving in their teacher education programs.

There are few examples of non-educative experiences, but the one presented by McDiarmid (1990) fits its definition. The EFE was designed to challenge future teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning by observing an experienced math teacher. The students were also asked to teach someone else a math skill. Some students showed some signs of reconsidering their initial beliefs, but they did not demonstrate preparation to transfer what they learned to their teaching; therefore, the researcher was very “skeptical about the effects of the course” (p. 18). McDiarmid concluded that “although the students appear to reconsider their beliefs, such changes may be superficial and short-lived” (p. 12). As a result, the future teachers did not demonstrated any growth, but at the same time the experience did not impede any further growth that may occur in later experiences. Part of the results of Scherer’s research (1979) also showed a non-educative EFE. The research study compared two groups of students—one that participated in an
EFE and one that did not. Scherer (1979) reached the conclusion that EFEs have an underlying positive effect on the self-concept of future teachers, but did not improve their teaching performance. The results of these research studies were mixed, and demonstrated that EFEs could have a positive influence, a negative influence, or no influence at all on the growth process of future teachers.

Besides the element of growth, it is important to also take into account the quality of the experience, which needs to be measured through the principles of continuity and interaction. Dewey defined continuity as “every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after” (1938/1997b, p. 35). The principle of continuity implies that when people go through experiences they continue moving forward, but does not mean that previous experiences do not play a role in their present or future. Dewey stated that “growth or growing as developing, not only physically, but intellectually and morally” (p. 36) is an example of the principle of continuity because the process of growing includes different aspects and one stage of growing influences the next one. The second principle, “interaction,” acknowledges the interplay of the objective and internal aspects of experience. It affirms the social nature of experience in which “an experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitute his environment” (p. 43). The environment, with its people and objects, is always in interaction “with personal needs, desires, purposes, and capacities to create the experience which is had” (p. 44). Dewey emphasized that the two principles of continuity and interaction come together as the “longitudinal and lateral aspects of each other” and provide the “measure of the educative significance and value of an experience,” because
experiences follow and influence each other. As the individual goes through these situations the environment grows or not depending on the type of experience he/she endures (pp. 44–45).

The principle of continuity also validates Dewey’s position on the important role that past experiences play in the education of children and how these experiences create new experiences. He emphasized that “departure from the old solves no problem” (Dewey, 1938/1997b, p. 25). As an example, teacher education programs usually try to move away from the experiences that future teachers bring with them, commonly refer to as “apprenticeship of observation” (Lortie, 1975/2002). Lortie, in his often cited work, *Schoolteacher*, explained how schooling experiences influence classroom practice, explaining that as students go through school they are also being prepared to work in a classroom. He named this process *apprenticeship of observation* (Lortie, 1975/2002). and cautioned against overlooking how schooling experiences strongly influence public school teachers especially as they “move to the other side of the desk” (Lortie, 1975/2002, p. 61). He added that the “average student has spent 13,000 hours in direct contact with classroom teachers by the time he graduates from high school” (Ibid., p. 61). Through this contact students become “teacher apprentices,” but what they learn will also depend on their personalities and what they decide to take from their observations. In the process of learning-to-teach pre-service teachers find out there is a big difference between “imagining how the teacher feels and playing the role of a teacher” (Ibid., p. 62). Johnson (1999) argued that the apprenticeship of observation “could be both a blessing and a curse,” because it gives teachers an immediate knowledge that allows them to function in a classroom setting, but this apprenticeship can also make teachers teach as
they remember they were taught (p. 19). There is no doubt that previous experiences can influence teachers, but other scholars have argued that teacher education programs should not focused on changing the teaching beliefs that future teachers bring with them into the program, but “to build on the teaching beliefs that already exist” (Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998, p. 144). Teacher education practitioners need to take into consideration future teachers’ “ongoing dialogues,” which they “already use for thinking about their own future practices” (Holt-Reynolds, 1991, p. 1). Not acknowledging these thoughts and experiences do not mean that they don’t exist and future teachers even in “traditional schools do have experiences” (Dewey, 1938/1997b, p. 27) and “every experience is a moving force” (p. 38). After conducting a research study Applegate and Lasley (1985) emphasized that field experience students cannot be viewed as “tabulae rasa,” because they have a “definite sense of what they believe about schools and teachers” and as a consequence their expectations and beliefs should be “taken into account if field experiences are to be truly effective” (p. 34). They also add that for EFEs to be truly effective in their education future teachers need to know the purpose and what is expected of them during EFEs.

The controversies in EFEs research may continue, but researchers agree “that early field experiences can, when appropriately and effectively structured, be of significant value to prospective teachers by providing opportunities for participation in a sequence of developmental experiences culminating with student teaching” (Pierce, Stutler, Stoddart, Martinez, & Wilson, 1993, p. 11, emphasis mine). Teacher education programs need to consider different aspects of an “appropriately and effectively structured” early field experience. According to Walter (1989), future teachers and
mentor teachers involved in an EFE preferred “structured” EFEs. This structure may include information sessions for the mentor teachers, weekly “dialogues” with the future teachers, and on-site sessions with the university supervisor and the mentor teacher (Walter, 1989, p. 17). Some researchers also believe that EFEs could help to close the gap between theory and practice in teacher education programs (Hefke, 1989; Silverman, 1998; Stahler, 1996). Moreover, teacher education scholars like Zeichner (1980) and Goodman (1988) have argued against EFEs that “domesticate” future teachers into old forms of teaching. Both researchers and practitioners agree that when carefully planned, EFEs can also provide teacher education students with experiences that could challenge their teaching views and avoid domesticating them into traditional ways of teaching (Beyer, 1984; Goodman, 1986; McDiarmid, 1990). It is also important to keep in mind that as Elliot and Mays (1979, p. 18) pointed out, it is “as impossible to describe the model of a typical early field experiences program as it is to describe the average child, for the simple reason that there is no average child and there is no typical early field experiences program.” They emphasized that every teacher education program has unique features that reflect the “particular theoretical bases, institutional philosophy, and unique characteristics of the school of education that conceived and implemented it” (Ibid., p. 18). Each program has components that have a purpose or a need. In their own words:

At best, the common elements in early field experiences programs are students, instructors, and a setting where some dimension of the teaching-learning process is going on. This is probably as it should be. The wide variety of teachers needed in our schools virtually mandates such diversity in preparation programs. (Ibid., p. 18)
This diversity “mandates” that EFEs become more connected to the subject area studied by the future teachers and the educational contexts where teaching takes place with the purpose of providing them with experiences meaningful to their development as teachers (Zeichner, 1996). Teacher education practitioners have a big commitment to plan experiences which “promote having desirable experiences” (Dewey, 1938/1997b, p. 27). If every experience is a moving force, past, current, and future experiences of prospective teachers are continually interacting and present throughout their teacher education programs and after they become teachers. It is important to identify educative experiences that “live fruitfully and creatively in subsequent experiences” (Ibid., p. 28). In defining what an educative practicum experience entails Zeichner (1996) identified three key aspects: “helping teachers assume the full scope of the teacher’s role, helping them accomplish the purposes of schooling with all students, and helping them develop the capacity to learn from further experience” (p. 224). Therefore, if efforts are made to incorporate early field experiences into teacher education programs, it is crucial to take the time to learn about what happens before, during, and after they are implemented to determine if they are educative experiences or not.

Erdman (1983) argued that “descriptions of individual early field experiences programs are needed to provide a basis for dialogue about the internal dimensions of particular programs, as a complement to examinations of the personal meanings preservice teachers construct from their participation in field experience programs” (p. 27). Dewey’s theory of experience provides a “basis for evaluating field experience programs” (Erdman, 1983, p. 27). Moreover, to evaluate field experiences one also needs to look to other elements. As McLean (1999) has signaled:
to understand this process of becoming, we cannot focus on the beginning teacher alone. We also must consider the contexts in which this process is located, and out of which it is constructed…. Our ways of perceiving the whole process are all heavily context-dependent. To understand the process of becoming a teacher, we also need to include all of the traveling companions, because as so many contemporary writers have described, teacher educators, no less than the students they teach also engaged in a process of becoming….For teacher educators, as for beginning teachers, this personal journey of becoming will last out entire careers. (p. 86)

McLean suggested that any research study that seeks to understand the experiences that are part of the process of becoming teachers should include the contextual elements and the role of the “traveling companions.” Therefore, to draw attention to these elements, the research data for this dissertation were analyzed using an ecological approach to the study of field experiences (structure, content, context, and relationships of the PEFE).

*Ecological Approach to the Study of Field Experiences*

Hersh, Hull, and Leighton (1982) noticed that research studies on the student teaching experience were moving away from recording what happened during the experience, or looking at specific features and their effect on student teachers. These “simplified descriptions” were changing and educational researchers had started to use a “new trend” in which they used the “tools of the anthropologist: interviews, observations, case studies” (p. 1812). The former approach was directed towards description, but through this new approach “focusing on a few subjects, investigators detail the relationships among program features, settings, and personnel…. to explain the intricate ecology of student teaching” (Ibid., p. 1812). Ecology is usually defined as the interaction of the human being with his/her environment. Therefore, to study the ecological components of field experiences it is necessary to pay close attention to how the different
aspects of the experience and the relationships among the program participants located in particular contexts “act as simultaneous influences on the student teacher. This phenomenon creates a complex ecology that is often masked by research attempts to explain the effects of single factors in the setting” (Ibid., p. 1817). Rather than looking at only one aspect, researchers need to look at the “relationships between a student teacher and other people in the placement, characteristics of the placement site itself, and the nature of the training program” as the elements that make up a field experience (Ibid., p. 1817). These elements—structure, content, context/placement site, and relationships of the program—make a field experience a “multidimensional process” which influences the experiences of future teachers (Ibid., p. 1818). In a later article titled, *The ecology of field experience: Toward an understanding of the role of field experiences in teacher development* (1987), Zeichner argued that research on field experiences’ failure:

> to attend to the complex, dynamic, and multidimensional nature of settings and people, individually and in interaction (“the ecology of field experiences”) is a major reason for the current unsatisfactory state of our knowledge base related to the influence of field experience on teacher development. (p. 95)

As a result, Zeichner explained Hersh, Hull, and Leighton’s thoughts on what he termed an *ecological approach to the study of field experiences*. He emphasized that an ecological approach requires research studies on field experiences to: 1) seek to understand the interaction of people in a particular environment and at different stages; 2) record how an experience evolves and what influences it over time; and 3) look at the interactions “between and among participants and the social context” of teacher development “as influencing one another or “reciprocal in nature” (Ibid., p. 97). Consequently, an ecological approach to the study of field experiences should have certain *ecological characteristics*. The first ecological characteristic, the *structure and*
content of the field experience program, includes an analysis of the goals and content of a field experience program and pays close attention to how a program is implemented in reality or its “curriculum in use” (Ibid., p. 97). Zeichner pointed out that teacher education researchers should include in their investigations “descriptions of individual programs and program components (as planned and as implemented)” to finally discover the influence that diverse field experiences have as part of teacher development programs (Ibid., p.104). In other words, there is a need not only to conduct research on a particular aspect of the teacher education program, such as how a particular teaching method was implemented by the students in one of their field experiences, but also to identify the different requirements of the field experience and how these requirements were part of a bigger program or curriculum to prepare future teachers. The second ecological characteristic is the characteristics of the placement sites; through it, the researcher needs to conduct “an examination of the classroom, schools, and communities in which field experiences are carried out” (Ibid., p. 97). Descriptions of where and when a particular field experience program was implemented are important to understanding the context of the study and how these placements influenced the development of future teachers. The last ecological characteristic is the relationships between education students and other people” and “presupposes an understanding of the characteristics, dispositions and behaviors of both the students and those with whom they interact” (Ibid., p. 97). These relationships include “pupils, college supervisors, cooperating teachers, and significant others, whom during this time help the student teacher determine what a professional teacher might be” (Hersh, Hull, & Leighton, 1982, p. 1816). In his literature review, Zeichner explained that only a few studies give attention to how the “individual
characteristics” of the students influenced how they developed in the field experiences (p. 108). Nonetheless, in those studies “where attention was given to the role of individual characteristics” just one gave a “description of the structure of the student teaching program or field experience under study” and not even one described “the content or curriculum of the program” (Zeichner, 1987, p. 108). Zeichner emphasized the importance of including all these aspects in the search to understand the research results and improve teacher education. An ecological approach can inform not only research studies on field experiences, but any research directed toward enlightening practitioners on the learning-to-teach process.

Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon (1998) reviewed 97 research studies on how people learn-to-teach on three thematic areas: “a) prior beliefs of beginning teachers, b) program interventions occurring during teacher education (program monitoring, preservice interventions, and student teaching experiences), and c) the first year of teaching” (p. 135). They reached the conclusion that the majority of research findings had focused on presenting future teachers as the “central problem in teacher education” and the researchers usually proposed that the solution was to “have preservice teachers reflect more on their practice, to employ teaching approaches more consistent with constructivism, or to recruit a different population of prospective teachers” (Ibid., p. 168). They believed that it was time to acknowledge the other elements in the “larger system” that need to “be recognized as equally significant” to move forward the research and practice in teacher education (Ibid., p. 168). They argued that “from ecology we have learned that everything is connected to everything else” thus taking and ecological approach to the learning-to-teach process will help to finally achieve “progress in
research that will support improved practice” (Ibid., p. 168). Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon called for research studies in which “all the players and landscapes that comprise the learning-to-teach environment are considered in concert to gain appreciation of the inseparable web of relationships that constitutes the learning-to-teach ecosystem” (Ibid., p. 170). Hersh, Hull, and Leighton (1982), Zeichner’s (1987), and Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon’s (1998) ecological approach provides a useful framework from which to conduct and present research on field experiences, but it is rarely mentioned in field experience research studies.

Mewborn (2000) conducted one of the few studies to present this ecological approach to the study of field experiences in action and included all ecological characteristics. She emphasized that “an ecological perspective recognizes that field experiences are a complex web of settings and people and the interactions that take place” (Mewborn, 2000, p. 28). With this statement she confirmed that all arguments calling for more research present as many aspects as possible of this complex web of field experiences. Mewborn classified her research data into three themes that reflected three aspects of the ecology of a mathematics field experience: an inquiry perspective, the cohort group, and school university collaboration. She provided careful descriptions of her participants, the setting of the field experience (grade, school, location, and Mathematics mentor teacher), the teacher education program (field experience semester, prior courses, following courses), the methods course, and field experience (goal of the methods class, purpose of the field experience/and what was not the intention of the field experience, how many days the course met, description of tasks by week). She noted that field experiences needed to have clear goals to match and connect with methods courses,
mentor teachers and teacher educators should allocate time to discuss observations made by the students, and the use of cohorts in field experiences should be studied to determine their effectiveness. Another study conducted in the area of mathematics teacher education that took an ecological perspective examined not only a field experience, but how the field experience was connected to the rest of the teacher education program (Spielman, 2006). Spielman made it very clear that her research focus was not on the way in which prospective teachers “learn” from a particular course in their teacher education program, but “how our individual and joint work with preservice teachers extends beyond the particular course or field placement assignments for which we are responsible” (Spielman, 2006, pp. 3–4). She felt that even though there is plenty of research on the “impact of methods courses and other subject-matter specific work on preservice teachers’ general pedagogical and subject-specific knowledge, beliefs, and practices,” there is little on how preservice teachers recognize the different relationships in their teacher education program and connect their coursework with their field experiences (Ibid., p. 41). Her dissertation research did not provide new information on “possible general impacts of college on students’ learning,” but did provide the preservice teachers’ descriptions of their college coursework and how they considered the content of some courses more “relevant to their future than others” (Ibid., p. 36). Spielman’s research also acknowledged that often it was not the preservice teachers’ “fault” that they did not accomplish the program goals, because “1) schools interfered with the accomplishment of program objectives or 2) program objectives proved unrealistic for schools” (Ibid., p. 5). These results showed how the context, structure, and content of the program came into conflict with the goals for the field experience.
Even though some dissertation research studies in LTE were conducted while future foreign language teachers were enrolled in student teaching field experiences, their research attention was not on the field experience itself and how its structure, content, context, and relationships may have influenced the experiences that the future teachers had during the semester. For example, Egéa-Kuehne (1992) studied pre-service teachers’ perspectives in foreign language teaching; Velez-Rendón (2000) wanted to identify their understanding of and meaning behind their learning-to-teach process from their own perspective; Raymond (2000) identified some connections in theories and techniques learned during their methods course and the application of those theories and techniques in their student teaching experience; and Harrington (2001) paid close attention to reflective practices occurring during a methods course and a student teaching experience. Nonetheless, there are examples of research studies that have described LTE programs and field experiences that have paid attention to the structure, content, context, and relationships of the field experience, but tended to describe one aspect more than others.

Structure and Content

Zeichner (1987) lamented that the field experience research studies that he had reviewed did not pay close attention to describing structure, goals, and content, and how they related to the rest of the teacher education program. Only 3 out of 16 of the research studies on student teaching experiences gave “information about the purposes and organization of courses or seminars which complement student teaching, and about the structure of the student teaching experience itself beyond descriptions of when it took place (e.g. senior year), length, and number of classroom placements” (Zeichner, 1987,
p. 101). Even though research studies on early field experiences rated far better in providing more information on the structure and content of field experiences and related courses, they did not explain how it went beyond words to action (Ibid., p. 103). As an important element to an ecological approach to the study of field experiences researchers need to not only provide details on the structure and content of the field experiences and teacher education programs, but also how they are implemented.

The structure and content of LTE and preservice practices (Velez-Rendón, 2002) have been described in many survey studies that sought to understand the type of knowledge that future language are receiving (e.g., Antenos-Conforti, 2008; Brickell & Paul, 1982; Cooper, 2004; Grosse 1993; Lange & Simms, 1990; Paquette, 1964, 1965; Park Mellgren, Walker, & Lange, 1988; Tharp 1943, 1955; Wilbur 2007). Due to the fact that the 1980s began a new era in language teaching with new teacher preparation guidelines, new trends in FL teacher certification and standards, the surveys published after this date are vital to understanding the current structure and content of LTE programs, which reflect the type of knowledge language teachers are receiving nowadays.

For instance, at the beginning of the 1980s ACTFL commissioned an advisory board to conduct survey research among school districts and teacher training institutions on the state of foreign language teachers and teaching in the United States. The results of this survey were very interesting—they described the typical 1980s foreign language teacher as “35-year old white woman who was born in the United States and who has been teaching school for 10 years, nine of those years teaching a foreign language of which she is not a native speaker” (Brickell & Paul, 1982, p. 169). ACTFL’s survey also
provided detailed information on how inservice foreign language teachers evaluated the curricula in their teacher education programs. Foreign language teachers reported that most of the credits they earned in their undergraduate preparation on the foreign language consisted of literature classes (45%), followed by language/linguistics (35%), and culture/civilization (15%). The foreign language teachers were asked to rate different aspects of their preparation on a 10-point scale. Education courses rated poorly and in need of improvement, with an average of 5 points. Foreign language courses were rated a little bit higher with 7 points. Student teaching averaged about 8 points, which indicated the importance that foreign language teachers gave to this aspect of their education. However, it was the study abroad experience that received the highest rating, with a 9-point average. Unfortunately, further survey studies throughout these past decades conducted with inservice teachers in Minnesota (Lange & Simms, 1990), Georgia (Cooper, 2004), and New Jersey (Antenos-Conforti, 2008) have confirmed many of ACTFL’s national survey results. The results indicate that the structure and content of LTE programs around the U.S. nation have not changed much. Moreover, until this moment research data have also shown that language teacher educators are often the gatekeepers of LTE program curricula.

Two syllabi analysis studies have confirmed that language teacher educators’ beliefs strongly influence the curriculum of LTE programs and the knowledge future language teachers receive during their foreign language methods courses (Grosse, 1993; Wilbur, 2007). Grosse (1993) conducted an analysis of the goals, instructional materials, content, requirements, and evaluation system presented on the syllabi of 157 FL methods courses from 144 colleges and universities. Of the 157 syllabi, only 42 included all five
areas of analysis. According to Grosse, the “variety and creativity of assignments in FL syllabi are impressive,” and the activities reflected more practical/teaching than theoretical purposes which demonstrated that language teacher educators placed a high value on “the immediate needs of the aspiring teachers” (p. 308). The syllabi analysis reflected the “growing consensus” that Lange pointed out in 1983 (p. 377). According to Grosse, there was “widespread agreement on instructional materials and course content reflect the professionals’ powerful consensus on what should be taught in the FL methods course” and how these courses are “stronger that anyone might have imagined” (p. 310). Nevertheless, there were areas that needed further development, such as technology, collaboration among schools and universities, use of alternative assessment measures, journal writing, involvement/participation on professional organizations and conferences, and observation and entrance to education contexts. Some of these recommendations were also made in a recent research study in which data were collected from 32 postsecondary preservice foreign language methods instructors; as a follow-up, ten randomly selected methodology instructors were asked to respond to a questionnaire on their beliefs (Wilbur, 2007). It was interesting that six of the ten instructors who completed the questionnaire accepted that their language acquisition and personal experiences influenced the “methodology they presented to preservice teachers” (p. 83). Taking the results of this research study, Wilbur concluded that there was a lack of agreement in the LTE field on the how, not on the what, because most of the research data indicated agreement on the content of the LTE courses, but “inconsistencies continue to exist especially in the areas of the appropriate use of L2 in the classroom, how to address learner diversity with a sufficient variety of instructional strategies, and
how those intersect with Standards-based assessment and instruction” (p. 96). She recommended, as a first step, the establishing of “a national movement to identify best practices of methods instructors and to identify certain instructors and their courses as models for others” (p. 96). The next step could be to ask ACTFL to serve as a liaison in creating a network to share these practices and to be in charge of “developing guidelines for credentialing methods instructors” (Wilbur, 2007, p. 96). When this national movement will occur is still in question, but some efforts, such as the International Language Teacher Education Conference, bring together researchers and practitioners in the field who not only discuss the issues, but also share the actions being taken into improve LTE.

Even though the researchers who conducted these research studies wanted to avoid making generalizations, their findings sound strangely familiar to those involved in LTE programs. The results confirm that the “needs and desires of practicing teachers for meaningful preservice coursework and inservice activities had not been met” (Schrier, 1993, p. 114). Cooper (2004) encouraged researchers to listen to how inservice teachers evaluate their preparation and make recommendations to improve it for future teachers, because “these type of feedback for hands-on experience ought to be taken seriously as we work on refining and revising our teacher education programs” (p. 38). Moreover, it “supports the conviction that such improvement is possible and can be achieved” (Ibid., p. 45). One area on which all of these research studies agreed is that field experiences are a necessary component in the structure and content of LTE programs, but that they need to be longer and relevant/useful to the preparation of future language teachers. Future language teachers should be able to connect the language content, theory, and methods
that they learned in their classes in their field experiences (Velez-Rendón, 2000). One way to achieve this is through taking a closer look at the structure and content of LTE programs to ensure the quality of experiences offered to future teachers. Moreover, looking at the context in which these experiences take place could also illuminate a path towards this quality.

**Context**

Freeman (2002) pointed out that research until the mid-1970s viewed classrooms mainly “as sites of educational delivery” in which teacher practices took place. This position entailed not modifying teaching according to the context in which it is being put into action. More recent research has demonstrated that not only classrooms, but “spheres” in the larger context (society, state, university, college of education, school) influence teacher education practices (Corrigan & Haberman, 1990). From an ecological approach the context “demands moderate performance and establish limits on the range of response options. From this perspective, learning to teach involves learning the ‘texture of the classroom’ and a set of behaviors congruent with the demands of that setting” (Doyle, 1977, p. 51). According to Becher and Ade (1982), when it comes to placement sites for field experiences, “by their very nature no two placement sites are alike. All vary on a number of dimensions and it is likely that they may have potentially different effects and make potentially different contributions to a student’s growth” (p. 25). Therefore, each context requires a different set of thoughts and actions. Nevertheless, Zeichner (1987) observed that 13 of the 20 studies he reviewed did not provide information on the schools and classrooms in which the preservice teachers were
placed. On occasion, researchers mentioned the grade level and/or number of schools in a district that received students, but not “to the potential impact of particular types of classrooms, schools, and communities on the relationship between field experiences and teacher development” (Zeichner, 1987, pp. 104–105). There is a necessity for research studies that pay more attention to how different contexts could promote future teachers to grow or not on their path to become teachers.

An example presented in LTE research confirmed that the context in which a field experience took place impacted the future teachers’ experiences. Irving (1977) provided contextual descriptions of a pilot FLES field experience that became an optional three-credit course in the program’s curriculum. The students had the option of taking the course during two consecutive semesters for a total of six credits. The field experience consisted of an after-school “voluntary” language program at a local elementary school. As the person in charge of planning, coordinating, implementing, and evaluating the field experience, Irving considered that his “most serious problem was somehow to minimize the ‘traumatic shock’ of the initial encounter by preparing the students to face an elementary classroom” (Irving, 1977, p. 17). Even though the preservice teachers received a three week training orientation to help them build up their confidence to a point that they wouldn’t “freeze” when they entered the classroom Irving realized “that no amount of preparation is really adequate” (Ibid., p. 17). The elementary classroom was an unexpected environment for the future teachers who until that semester had not received any preparation in teaching FLES. Even though Irving did not mention the grade level at which these preservice teachers were planning to teach, one could infer through their comments that they were planning to teach in secondary school, not elementary.
One student expressed “I really enjoyed working with the kids, but I learned an invaluable lesson- I will never teach elementary school!” (Ibid., p.18). Also, many of the students comments reflected their doubts regarding how to manage discipline in an elementary classroom, as one mentioned that not being firm led her/him to discover that “my new little friends ignored me, abused me, didn’t trust me, and appeared to have no interest in what I was saying” (Ibid. p. 18). Nonetheless, at the end of the experience, the preservice teachers and the school teachers were asked to evaluate the field experience and both groups agreed that the after-school language program was “worthwhile and should be continued” (Ibid.). The main results of the evaluation also indicated that the pilot field experience accomplished two main purposes. First, it helped the students decide if they were going to become teachers. Second, it contributed to improve public education through providing elementary school children with the opportunity to develop interest and enthusiasm for an “important subject not normally taught in the elementary school” (Ibid., p. 19). In his article, Irving also offered suggestions for how to start similar programs in other institutions. This study reflected how not only the context that could have an impact on the preservice teachers, but how their presence in the elementary school was seen as an important element in motivating children to learn languages in the elementary school, so that the influence was occurring in both ways (Zeichner, 1987).

**Relationships**

This ecological characteristic includes “the characteristics and dispositions of individual education students and their ‘significant others,’ and how relationships among student characteristics and ‘significant others’ characteristics’ affect teacher development
during field experiences” (Zeichner, 1987, p. 106). Zeichner (1987) explained that all of the 20 studies he reviewed did offer some general characteristics of the students (gender, college majors, ages, ethnicity), but this information was generally not included in the analysis and how it may have affected the field experience outcomes. In later years, researchers have started to pay closer attention to how what preservice teachers bring to their field experience (character traits, dispositions, talents, and personal experiences) interacts with the context and affects their growing process during their field experiences (Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Cole & Knowles, 1993; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; Hawkey, 1996; Kagan, 1992; McLean, 1999; Tusin, 1999).

Using the construct of personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1985; Connelly & Clandinin, 1984), Golombek (1998) presented data on two ESL teachers who had gone through a TESOL master program internship experience. Clandinin (1985) defined personal practical knowledge (PPK) “as knowledge which is imbued with all the experiences that make up a person’s being. Its meaning is derived from, and understood in terms of, a person’s experiential history, both professional and personal” (p. 362). Through this definition Clandinin acknowledged that both personal and professional experiences that teachers have through their lives influence their teaching practices. Therefore, through the use of the PPK construct Golombek (1998) described how Jenny’s experience as a language learner made her take instructional decisions in her ESL class. When Jenny was learning Russian she became terrified of speaking the language because the instructor constantly corrected her grammar. As a result of “her fear of being corrected,” Jenny avoided correcting her ESL students’ pronunciation, as she did not want to be disrespectful and/or silence them (Golombeck, 1998, p. 455). She
acknowledged that her fear may have affected two of her students who needed to be corrected and who did not approve of the course requirements. The second participant, Sonya, had learned Vygotsky’s notion of scaffolding in one of her classes and her strong belief in it made her implement it in her ESL class. Through scaffolding, Sonya believed “it was her responsibility to know her students’ abilities and needs” (Ibid., p. 457). She considered unethical on her part to fail to pay attention to the students and “as a student in that situation, she would have been aggravated” (Ibid., p. 458). Both of these teachers are examples of how their personal and professional experiences interacted with their teaching practice. Jenny’s fear and Sonya’s belief on a certain notion of learning went beyond personal and educational experiences to teaching approaches.

The role of significant others’ characteristics, dispositions, and abilities and how they interact with the ones of the preservice teachers affect as well the students’ growth while they are enrolled in field experiences. Zeichner reported in 1987 that only five studies presented the “socializing role of the cooperating teacher and none investigated the role of the university supervisor” (p. 108). Even though it has not received the attention it deserves research studies conducted have agreed that the relationships that preservice teachers have with their university supervisors (Cornbleth & Ellsworth, 1994; Freidus, 2002; Lasley, Applegate, & Ellison, 1986); the students (Beach & Pearson, 1998; Cooper, 2007; McIntyre & Killian, 1986), and especially the mentor teachers (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Montgomery, 2000; Sinclair, Dowson, & Thistleton-Martin, 2006) could affect the outcome of the field experience.

The relationship of the cooperating or mentor teacher’s as the “most pervasively influential of all those whose activity impinges on the student teacher” (Hersh, Hull, &
Leighton, 1982, p. 1816) is presented in Hall and Davis’s research study (1995). Hall and Davis explored the relationships that developed among future language teachers and their mentor teachers. As student teaching practicum supervisors for future Spanish teachers they questioned why some student teachers (ST) and their cooperating teachers (CT) developed positive relationships and others not, which resulted in how they perceived their experiences. After analyzing the data they defined “six different role relationships that the teachers developed during their student teaching practicum.... these are clearinghouse, expert/mentor/master teacher, facilitator, mediator, motivator, and friend” (p. 35). Hall and Davis further their data analysis with two dimensions of these roles: complementarity and reciprocity. The main differences in the two dimensions of the role relationships difference was that in complementary role relationships the “CTs were the competent ones” (p. 39) and in reciprocal relationships “both the CTs and the STs assumed the role of the competent ones (or providers of needed information or behaviors) at various times throughout the practicum” (authors’ emphasis, p. 40). As the data were analyzed, the researchers found examples of occasions in which three pairs had a reciprocal relationship as they worked as a team, supported each other, shared personal details, and enjoyed the experience of working together. One CT even invited her ST to dinner at her house at the end of the semester. The two other pairs had complementary relationships and even though the CTs “expressed general satisfaction with their STs and the practicum experience in general and both thought that the STs were equally positive about their experiences” their STs “made remarks during the meetings and in their journals as the practicum wore on, in which they criticized their CTs and expressed a level of discomfort and even competiveness with them” (p. 42). Therefore, while the STs...
involved in reciprocal relationships felt supported by their CTs, the STs in complementary relationships felt that their CTs were “obstacles to their development as teachers” (p. 44). Curiously, the two teachers in complementary relationships were the ones with the longest experience as CTs and “considered themselves to be good at what they did” (p. 45). As the ones directing the student teaching experience Hall and Davis also acknowledged that the CTs and STs relationships may had developed as a result of their perception of the hierarchy of the relation (asymmetrical or similar) between the university and the school. They also pointed out that their supervisory approach was different from the former supervisor’s and the two teachers with complementary relationships had worked with this person. With this statement Hall and Davis started to acknowledge that their supervisory approach may have affected the relationship of the student teachers and their cooperating teachers, but they did not provide enough information on what were the reasons for this conclusion. They confirmed that argued by Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon, that “one aspect of the ecosystem that appeared missing in the research was the teacher educators themselves” (1998, p. 169).

In summary, a closer look at how the structure, content, context, and relationships of field experience programs, and how these experiences could be educative, mis-educative, or non-educative could further on the knowledge and practice in LTE. These elements (experience, structure, content, context, and relationships) are related to each other and are always in constant interaction; one cannot be separated from each other in the process of developing, implementing, and examining field experiences. (See Figure 2.1 for a visual representation of these interactions.)
Figure 2.1. Theoretical Framework

Summary

History and educational policies are always present in language learning/teaching practices, which consequently affect LTE. Looking at these influences is not new, but researchers and practitioners need to acknowledge the history and policy that have affected LTE and move forward to resolve the issues that have been constantly discussed over the years. The call is still there to unite all voices in the field of language learning and teaching to create a national coalition in which not only the issues are discussed, but
actions plans are created. Research studies could contribute to advancing these plans, and this dissertation sought to advance the discussion on one aspect of LTE: early field experiences. Even though the LTE research and practice literature has grown significantly in the past decade, the role of early field experiences is rarely taken into account. Looking at Dewey’s theory of experience (1938/1997b) the research data to be described here were analyzed from an ecological approach to the study of field experiences as presented in the ecological characteristics: structure of the WL ED program, PEFE content, characteristics of the placement sites (ECE Centers), and relationships that developed throughout the PEFE. Research studies published specifically on the role of field experiences in language teaching could provide a glimpse into what happens when future language teachers enter school settings and how the structure, content, context, and relationships may affect their experiences during the field experience. Looking closely at these experiences may enable us to see how EFEs may affect future language teachers’ further growth as teachers

Therefore, these two theories were used to help us to answer the following questions: Could the PEFE be considered an educative, mis-educative, or non-educative experience in the preparation of future language teachers? How did the pilot early field experience structure, content, context, and relationships influence its implementation? The following chapters offer descriptions of the data analysis and review the process that enabled me to look for the answers to these research questions.

Revised in 1999 to include college level standards

PDS were included in the teacher education reform recommendations of Tomorrow’s Teachers: A Report of the Holmes Group (1990). The Holmes Group advocated “Professional Development Schools which would bring practicing teachers and administrators, together with university faculty in partnerships that improve teaching and learning on the part of their respective students. Such schools would largely overcome many of the problems associated with traditional academic and clinical pedagogical studies programs through providing opportunities for 1) mutual deliberation on problems with student learning,
and their possible solutions; 2) shared teaching in the university and schools; 3) collaborative research on the problems of educational practice; and 4) cooperative supervision of prospective teachers and administrators” (p. 56)

iii Exploratory Field Experiences in Teacher Education: A Report of the Commission on Exploratory Field Experiences of the Association of Teacher Educators.


v In their online glossary, NCATE makes a clear distinction between field experiences and student teaching. The organization defines field experiences as “a variety of early and ongoing field-based opportunities in which candidates may observe, assist, tutor, instruct, and/or conduct research. Field experiences may occur in off-campus settings such as schools, community centers, or homeless shelters.” Student teaching is then defined as “pre-service clinical practice for candidates preparing to teach.” Therefore, whenever NCATE uses the term field experience it refers to field experiences occurring before the student teaching clinical practice.


vi Some of the studies discussed below were not included in Myers’s review. The 17 EFEs that Myers classified as educative were Jacobs (1968); Marso (1971); Harp (1974); Haddad (1974); Fuller and Brown (1974); Silvino and Willsey (1977); Seiforth and Samuel (1979); Benton and Osborn (1979); Austin-Martin, Bull, and Moltrine (1981); Denton (1982); Paese (1987); Gipe (1989); Byra and Marks (1991); Savitz (1992); Farber and Armeline (1992); Heinemann et al. (1992); Lewis (1993). For those studies that are included in Myers literature review, the primary source was looked at and quotes belong to the original publications.

vii These EFEs were Ingle and Robinson (1965); Ingle and Zaret (1968); Uhlenberg and Holt (1975); Hedberg (1979); Scherer (1979); Sunal (1980); Grossman (1980); Tanner (1982); Luttrell, Bane, and Mason (1981); Goodman (1984); Anderson (1987); Myers (1987); Dowhower (1990); Didham (1992).
CHAPTER III

Research Design

This chapter presents the research design used to collect and analyze the research data. In addition, it provides information on the participants (future language teachers, Professor-in-charge of LTE, and PEFE course instructor).

Field of Inquiry: Qualitative Research

Researchers inquire or search for the answers to their research questions usually through two fields of inquiry. These two fields are quantitative research and qualitative research. Quantitative research is defined as “a type of educational research in which the researcher decides what to study, asks specific, narrow questions, collects numeric (numbered) data from participants, analyzes these numbers using statistics, and conducts the inquiry in an unbiased, objective manner” (Creswell, 2005, p. 39). Qualitative research is:

an approach to inquiry that begins with assumptions, worldviews, possibly a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems exploring the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Researchers collect data in natural settings with a sensitivity to the people under study, and they analyze the data inductively to establish patterns or themes. The final report provides for the voices of participants, a reflexivity of the researchers, a complex description of the problem, and a study that adds to the literature, or provides a call for action. (Creswell, 2007, pp. 50–51)

These two definitions emphasize what Creswell (2002, p. 58) has argued is “the difference between quantitative and qualitative research is more than numbers versus words, or instruments versus interviews-the distinctions appear at all phases of the
research process.” His argument goes beyond Patton’s assertion that “some questions lend themselves to numerical answers; some don’t” (2002, p. 13). Creswell encouraged researchers to understand the research process for both quantitative and qualitative research by looking at its characteristics. He shows how the language and techniques used for both inquiry approaches differ in all steps. After reviewing these definitions, I decided that qualitative research is more appropriate to use in this study. In addition, qualitative research has nine characteristics that make it more suitable for studying field experiences according to an ecological approach. These characteristics are natural setting, researcher as key instrument, multiple sources of data, inductive data analysis, participants’ meanings, emergent design, theoretical lens, interpretive inquiry, and holistic account (Creswell, 2007).

The first characteristic, *natural setting*, is also a feature that Bogdan and Knopp Biklen (2003) used to identify qualitative research. They called this feature *naturalistic*; it refers to the use of real tangible locations as the “direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument” (p. 4). The researcher collects data that may help him/her to understand the research problem through talking, observing, and collecting other artifacts from the participants in a natural setting and with “face-to-face interaction over time,” not in a lab setting with constrictions (Creswell, 2007, p. 37). This characteristic is extremely important to use in an ecological approach to the study of field experiences because the context is a major influence on the experiences of future teachers. The second characteristic of qualitative research is *researchers as key instruments*, because they are the ones who collect and examine all data. Many times, as was my case, researchers play a major role because they are also part of the context. Through qualitative research,
practitioners “systematically try to understand the different people in their subject schools as they see themselves” (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2003, p. 230). The researcher then becomes a careful observer of his/her practice in relation to others in his/her own teaching context (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2003). From an ecological perspective I was a member of the group of “people” who participate in a field experience because I was the PEFE course instructor. I also became the researcher and I had access to the rest of the participants. In this process I collected and organized all the research data, which as the third characteristic came from multiple sources. Research studies that take into account an ecological approach do not rely “on a single data source” (Creswell, 2007, p. 38), because it is necessary to understand the field experience from all aspects involved in its planning and implementation. The fourth characteristic of qualitative research, inductive data analysis, requires researchers to work continuously with the rest of the participants to establish the themes that emerge from the data collected. The fifth research characteristic involves focusing on the meaning that the participants give to the issue or problem under study throughout the research process. This feature is an essential element of qualitative research, especially because “interpretive research and its guiding theory developed out of interest in the lives and perspectives of people in society who had little or no voice” (Erickson, 1986, p. 122). In addition, even though Creswell (2007) mentioned that the researcher’s meanings are not the focus, in this case even though my meaning was not the central focus I needed to present it as a participant as I looked at all the ecological characteristics of the field experience under study. The sixth characteristic of qualitative research, emergent design, was definitely present in this research study. An emergent design allows flexibility and changes throughout the research process, because
when the researcher enters the research field and starts the data collection, “the questions may change, the forms of data collection may shift, and the individuals and the sites visited may be modified” (Creswell, 2007, p. 39). This research study began with the simple desire to determine whether the PEFE could help or not help FLT to consider teaching world languages in the elementary school, and it evolved as I began to collect the data and listen to the students also talk about their joys and disappointments in the field experience. I then had to reconsider my initial questions and collect more data on how the structure, content, context, and relationships may have influenced what happened during the PEFE and what could be learned from this experience. Creswell (2007) pointed out that researchers use many times a theoretical lens (seventh characteristic) to explore their studies. In this case, John Dewey’s theory of experience (1938/1997b) and an ecological approach to the study of field experiences helped to organize and analyze the problem in the research study. The last two characteristics of qualitative research, interpretive inquiry and holistic account, focus on how the research study is interpreted and written up. In interpretive inquiry, the researchers’ “background, history, context, and prior understanding cannot be separated from the way they interpret what they “see, hear, and understand” (Ibid., p. 39). This process of interpretative inquiry also occurs when the rest of the participants and others read the research report. Throughout this process “multiple views of the problems can emerge” (p. 39). Holistic accounts involve “reporting multiple perspectives, identifying the many factors involved in a situation, and generally sketching the larger picture that emerges” (Ibid., p. 39). These “complex interactions” are what a report on an ecological approach to the study of field experience
needs to include, which could help practitioners learn more about the role of field experiences in teacher education programs.

I worked from a qualitative research approach because, as McIntyre, Byrd, and Foxx (1996) explained, the data that have been produced from qualitative studies have permitted “teacher educators to have a richer understanding of some of the attitudes and behaviors of those involved in early field experiences and student teaching” (p.188). This information has also enabled teacher education practitioners to “capture and analyze variables of students who engage in laboratory experiences” (McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996, p. 188). With the use of qualitative research educational researchers have obtained experiential information that otherwise may have not been possible. Moreover, this type of data could also help to improve language teacher education practices, which was one of the purposes of my study.

Case Study

Even though there are many qualitative approaches/methodologies (Creswell, 2007) to guide research studies, I chose the case study to use in looking more deeply into the different aspects of the implementation of the early field experience. Through case studies I can take a step back to “see what others have not yet seen” (Stake, 1995, p. 136). Stake defined the case study as “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (Stake, 1995, p. xi). Other scholars, such as Miles and Huberman (1994), explained that a case is “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context” (p. 25). The “phenomenon” could be an individual, a role, a small group, and organization, a community or
settlement, a nation in a “defined context” (p. 26). Creswell (2007) included case study research as one of five approaches to qualitative research and indicated that even though Stake did not consider the case study a “methodology, but a choice of what is to be studied,” he decided to see it as “a methodology, or an object of study, as well as a product of the inquiry” (Creswell, 2007, p. 73). This is why he defined the case study as:

a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes. (Creswell, 2007, p. 73, author’s emphasis)

All three definitions provide insight into why the case study is considered a research approach and a product of research. Therefore, the case study could be defined as a qualitative approach for conducting and presenting in-depth research on a particular phenomenon that occurs under important circumstances or a bounded context.

The phenomenon to be understood in this dissertation research study was a Pilot Early Field Experience (PEFE) that was first introduced during the 2004–2005 academic year as part of the requirements for the newly developed World Languages Teacher Education program (WL ED). This case study focused primarily on the PEFE during the spring 2005 semester. The bounded context included at least four elements: 1) the newly developed WL ED program; 2) the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Centers where the PEFE took place; 3) the field of Language Teacher Education (LTE) where early field experiences (EFEs) specifically design to prepare future language teachers rarely occur; and 4) and the larger Teacher Education field (TE) with its current policy issues. This context includes the “political, social, and cultural context” of the researcher, the participants, and the readers of this study (Creswell, 2007, p. 37). Therefore, to “obtain
the descriptions and interpretations of others” of the PEFE within its bounded context, three views are presented: 1) the future language teachers (FLT) enrolled in the PEFE; 2) the Professor-in-Charge of the WL ED program, 3) and the PEFE course instructor (Stake, 1995, p. 64). Due to many circumstances, especially time constraints, I was not able to interview the ECE mentor teachers then, but their view is somewhat present in the students’ accounts and their suggestions from the end of the fall 2004 semester about improving the PEFE. To analyze the research data two theoretical perspectives were used: John Dewey’s theory of experience (Dewey, 1938/1997b) and an ecological approach to the study of field experiences (Hersh, Hull, & Leighton, 1982; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998; Zeichner, 1987). Figure 3.1 is a visual representation of all these elements.

My motivation to conduct and present this case study was intrinsic. By intrinsic I mean that as a practitioner in the field of language teacher education, I was curious to understand and learn more from the introduction of an early field experience into a newly developed language teacher preparation program. I needed to learn about this particular case (Stake, 1995, p. 3) to explore the role of early field experiences as part of a language teacher education program. Therefore, this research study did not to seek generalizations, because as Stake explained, “the real business of case study is particularization. Not how the case is different, but what is, what it does …. the emphasis is on uniqueness, and that implies knowledge of others that the case is different from” (p. 8). Part of the uniqueness of the PEFE comes from being part of the curriculum of a language teacher education program and the context in which the future language teachers were placed for the field experience. Nonetheless, as Stake reminded us, “the first emphasis is on understanding
the case itself,” and with that purpose the ecological characteristics of the field experience were studied (p. 8). Through the use of case study I was able to look at all the individuals and artifacts involved in the planning and implementation of the PEFE and pay closer attention to all available ecological characteristics of the case study.

*Figure 3.1. Research Study Conceptual Model*

**Legend:**
- **TE** = Teacher Education
- **LTE** = Language Teacher Education
- **ECE** = Early Childhood Education Centers
- **WL ED** = World Languages Teacher Education Program
- **PEFE** = Pilot Early Field Experience
- **FLT** = Future Language Teachers
- **WL ED PIC** = World Languages Education Program Professor-in-Charge
- **PEFE Instructor** = Pilot Early Field Experience Instructor
Data Gathering

The main sources of data were interviews and documents. More specifically, the data included: 1) participant profiles for each of the FLT (10); 2) two individual interviews with the FLT; 3) a focus group interview with six of the FLT; 4) one individual interview and personal communications with Dr. Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto (her real name), WL ED program Professor-in-Charge; 5) FLT documents—journal reflections, E-Portfolios, evaluation forms, written feedback for class assignments, and e-mail communications; 6) course instructor documents—reflections written from 2001–2005 on work with future language teachers and field notes; and 7) PEFE documents—syllabus, description of class assignments, evaluation forms, handouts.

Before conducting the interviews and collecting the FLT documents, the first step was to gather informed consent forms and participant profiles from the students who agreed to participate in the research study to ensure the privacy of the participants and their knowledge of the research study. This was completed right after I received the research study approval from the Office of Research Protections (ORP) at the end of March 2005 and the FLT were midway through the PEFE (See Appendix E, Research Materials). Per instructions of the ORP, I was not allowed to be in charge of the participants’ recruitment process. The ORP does not permit the principal researcher to perform this task if s/he is the instructor of the course under study—that is, from which he/she plans to recruit research participants. Therefore, Dr. Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto helped me with the recruitment of the participants visiting the PEFE seminar, talking to the students about the research study, and distributing/collection the participants’ informed consents and profiles. I left the classroom for the duration of this process. After
learning which students had agreed to participate in the research study I contacted them
to schedule the first interview. This first interview lasted approximately 30–45 minutes;
the future teachers talked about some of the experiences that led them to decide to
become language teachers, as well as talking about previous teaching experiences (if
any). As I listened to their previous experiences I heard horror stories about language
teaching in their middle school and high school, and how they overcame these bad
memories by finding other ways that motivated them to continue learning a world
language. For example, some had the opportunity to travel abroad and fell in love with
the Spanish culture. On the other hand, some of the FLT did have very good experiences
learning another language, and mentioned the types of activities offered by their language
teachers in their world languages classes that encouraged them to learn the world
language. Many of the FLT had also worked in different contexts that had helped to
confirm their decision to become teachers. This included summer camps, daycare
facilities, tutoring centers, and after-school programs. During this interview I also asked
them about their experiences thus far in the PEFE. A number of the FLT recognized that
they were actually having a wonderful experience in the PEFE, while others had to
“drag” themselves to the PEFE because they were extremely frustrated with the lack of
support from their mentor teachers and the children’s rejections when they spoke in their
language. After each of these first interviews I wrote field notes related to my interactions
with the FLT. The field notes helped me to put into words what I had “seen and heard”
(Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 256). In these notes I described each of the students and also
provided my own reflections on what happened during the interviews.
After I finished the first individual interviews, around mid April 2005 I asked the FLT to participate in a focus group interview. I conducted a focus group (group interview) because I wanted “to foster talk among the participants about particular issues” (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2003, p. 101). Six of the ten participants participated in the session, which took approximately one hour and fifteen minutes. They listened to other participants talk about their experiences during their PEFE and teacher education program. Rossman and Rallis (2003) explained that the “trick is to promote interactive talk through the creation of a permissive environment” (p. 193). The FLT did have an interactive talk and I was extremely surprised when they began to ask to each other about their ECE Centers and their experiences. It was also interesting to listen to them when they talked among themselves about why they would or would not consider teaching world languages to children. This focus group interview was also useful in hearing complaints about mentor teachers not providing the support needed in the classroom. The FLT who talked most about this was doing so for the first time, since during the first individual interview she talked positively about him. These events during the focus group interview confirmed what Bogdan and Knopp Biklen noted: that “participants can stimulate each other to articulate their views or even to realize what their own views are” (p. 101). It also proved that the group had created a trusting relationship that went beyond the classroom environment. The last interview scheduled with the FLT was a closing one-on-one interview that lasted approximately 30–45 minutes on their final reflections on the PEFE and their future teaching plans. This interview was more relaxed since the semester had ended and the FLT were going through a mix of emotions about the PEFE. For example, some were very happy that it had concluded, while others felt some
disappointment that now that the children were friendly with them, they had to leave, and others were even considering teaching world languages to children. It was also sad to hear that some had decided not to become teachers.

The last interview that I conducted was with the former Professor-in-Charge (PIC) of the WL ED program, Dr. Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto, to obtain background information on the newly developed program, her views on the students, and the WL ED program curriculum with a particular focus on how the PEFE was first conceived and its implementation. This interview helped me understand how much work had gone on behind closed doors to create the WL ED program and get it approved by the university administration. It also answered my questions about the reasons why an early field experience specifically designed for future language teachers was included in the program curriculum. Moreover, Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto explained why the PEFE occurred in early childhood education centers.

In addition to the interviews, I also gathered documents related to the PEFE. This included journal reflections, E-Portfolios, evaluation forms, written feedback for class assignments, and e-mail communications from the FLT. I wanted to collect as many documents as possible that might aid in describing the PEFE with as much detail as possible. Since I did not include site observations in my research proposal to the Office of Research Protections, I relied on these documents to “serve as substitutes for records of activity that the researcher could not observe directly” (Stake, 1995, p. 68). More and more teacher education researchers are using class assignments, especially journals and portfolios (Burant, 1999; Hall & Bowman, 1989; Johnson, Bowman, & Hall, 1990; Mewborn & Stinson, 2007; Randi, 2004; Whipp, 2003) as research tools. Erdman (1983)
argued that journal writing during early field experiences is a “vehicle for preservice teachers to reflect in first impressions- to see their first response to practice, in order to relate to it, perhaps later, to theory” (p. 31). In addition, portfolios can show “how student teachers learned from their field experiences, finding feedback inherent in the tasks of teaching as well as mentors’ advice” (Randi, 2004, p. 1847). In this research study the ten journals that the FLT wrote throughout the duration of the field experience and the performance-based electronic portfolio were instrumental in gaining an understanding of the experience. Even though the journals and electronic portfolios were required for the PEFE, and not for the research study, these documents provided insight into what happened during each week of the PEFE from the point-of-view of the FLT. From an ecological approach to the study of field experiences, it was extremely important to collect these documents to read the first impressions of the FLT about the structure, content, context, and relationships involved in the PEFE.

In addition, as the PEFE instructor, I also looked at some of my documents, which included written reflections from my work throughout the years with the WL ED program before and after it became an official teacher education major. Going through these reflections made me aware of how my experiences with the program also influenced the planning and implementation of the PEFE. Finally, other documents from the planning of the PEFE (syllabus, description of class assignments, evaluation forms) were reviewed to look at the changes that the course had gone through and provide descriptions of the structure and content of the PEFE.

Even though interviews with the mentor teachers are missing, I believe there are still many data sources that tell the story of the planning and implementation of the case
under study the PEFE from an ecological approach to the study of field experiences. However, it was not until the analysis of the research data began that the themes for this research study emerged and the elements of the ecological approach became clearer.

*Data Analysis*

Creswell (2007) visualized the data analysis process as a spiral figure. He explained that the researcher goes through the data process “moving in analytic circles rather that using a fixed linear approach” (p. 150). The researcher has the data with him as he/she enters the spiral and once inside goes through four loops inside of it. These loops are: 1) data management (file folders, index cards, computer files); 2) reading through the data and memoing (writing short phrases, ideas, key concepts in the margins of the data); 3) describing, classifying, and interpreting (detailed description of what the researcher observes, code/category formation, classify data into themes, interpret the data using personal views and/or theoretical perspectives); 4) presenting the data through text, tabular, or figure form (pp. 150–154). After the researcher goes through all “the facets of analysis and circles around and around” he/she exits the spiral “with an account narrative” of the research study (p. 150). See Figure 3.2.
In the above figure, I adapted Creswell’s Data Analysis Spiral to use in the analysis and representation of the case studies for this research. Some of the terms that Creswell used in these suggestions came from Stake’s (1995) four forms of data analysis for case study research (categorical aggregation, direct interpretation, patterns, naturalistic generalizations). I entered the data analysis spiral with all the data I collected (interviews and artifacts). As I began the spiral first loop I focused on creating and organizing electronic files to divide the data under participant information, interviews, class assignments, PEFE planning and implementation, and files with written communications with students, mentor teachers, and professor-in-charge. When I moved to my second loop, I read through all the data, highlighted segments of it and wrote comments in the margins with theoretical connections, reflections, and initial codes that I encountered more than once in texts. Some of these codes were *in vivo codes* or “names

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**Figure 3.2.** The Data Analysis Spiral (Adapted from Creswell, 2007, (p. 151)
that are exact words used by participants” (Creswell, 2007, p. 153), others were codes that I named to describe the segment that I had highlighted in the data. I started the third loop following one of Creswell’s biggest recommendations for analyzing case studies, “description of the case, a detailed view of aspects about the case-the facts” (Ibid., p. 163, author’s emphasis). Therefore, I took time to write descriptions for the PEFE and its context. According to Creswell, while the researcher is in this third loop he/she classifies the data using what Stake (1995) called *categorical aggregation*, through which the researcher “seeks a collection of instances from the data, hoping that issue-relevant meanings will emerge” (p. 163). I aggregated the data into about 25 different categories, in which I included some of the initial codes that I had found in the first loop. My final step in this loop was to “collapse” these categories themes that reflected the ecological approach to the study of field experiences, but also including a theme to evaluate the PEFE and gather suggestions to improve it. These themes were: 1) **PEFE planning**: Structure, content, and context of the PEFE, 2) **PEFE implementation**: Following PEFE requirements, reactions to PEFE context, and relationships with mentor teachers and students; 3) **PEFE Discussion**: conclusions, suggestions to improve the PEFE and implications for the LTE field. The last process in this loop was to develop naturalistic generalizations for this particular case study. As mentioned previously, it was not my intention to seek generalizations, but to seek particularization or uniqueness of the case. Nonetheless, both Stake (1995) and Creswell (2007) suggested presenting readers with naturalistic generalizations. Stake defined naturalistic generalizations as “conclusions arrived at through personal engagement in life’s affair or by vicarious experience so well constructed that the person feels as if happened to themselves” (p. 85). Creswell added
that these stem from “generalizations that people can learn from the case either by themselves or to apply to a population of cases” (p. 163). These generalizations are generated through the analysis of the data; it is up to the readers to apply them or not to other cases. The final loop of the spiral led me to present this case study using a narrative account, tables, and figures around the themes above. Creswell emphasized that for a case study, “analysis consists of making a detailed description of the case study and its setting” (p. 163). Therefore, as I went around and around through the loops of this spiral data analysis I kept this statement in mind as I developed a detailed account of the case study and its context to learn from the inclusion of a PEFE into a language teacher education program.

Participants

Future Language Teacher Teachers (FLT)

The first day of class, I was extremely pleased with the mix of students enrolled in the course. I have one returning adult student who speaks Cambodian, but is now planning to teach Spanish. I FINALLY have three Spanish native speakers, one Puerto Rican, one Dominican, and one Mexican. There is a grad certification student coming from the French department, two ESL certificate students (the Dominican student being one of them). I also have a Japanese Australian studying Spanish. 2 male students, one studying French and the other studying Spanish. I have a student t who is studying her degree in another campus, and the rest are white female students that want to either teach French or Spanish. (Personal Journal, Feb. 22, 2005)

The above journal entry describes in general terms the students who enrolled in the PEFE during the spring of 2005. Of the sixteen FLT enrolled in the PEFE during that semester, eleven signed the informed consent to participate in the data collection. The reasons for nonparticipation among the other five FLT were either absence on the day of Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto’s participant recruitment, or time constraints due to multiple
engagements at the university. I was unable to interview one of the FLT who consented to participate; therefore, her experience is not presented here. At the time of the data collection, six of the ten FLT were sophomores, two were juniors, one was a senior, and one was a graduate student. One of the reasons for not having all sophomores was that as the program transitioned from being part of the Secondary Education major to a WL ED program, all students were required to enroll in the PEFE and WL ED 300 even if they had already been accepted into the program. In addition, it is not rare to have as part of the program graduate students working on their language teacher certification. Only two participants were male students and the other eight were females. All of the FLT selected their pseudonyms. It was not until later on that I learned that one of the male participants (Phillis) had chosen a female name. I decided to keep using the pseudonym because the participant had selected it and I wanted to respect his decision. Eight of the FLT were pursuing a degree in Spanish World Languages Education and two were working towards French World Languages Education (see Table 3.1 at the end of the chapter for a summary of the profile information on each of the FLT).

Below, I describe the ten FLT whom I interviewed. It was a wonderful experience to interview each of them outside of the classroom and the ECE Centers, because I learned more about them through this research process. Some of the descriptions that I provide about the FLT were part of the field notes that I took during the semester. These descriptions are written in a narrative format and offer a glimpse of the array of experiences that each of the FLT brought with them to the WL ED program.
Jason Bezilla

Jason grew up in a small town in Pennsylvania and had to fight against the odds to pursue a college degree. His teachers and his family did not encourage him to go beyond high school, but he had the fortune of finding a mentor who motivated him to apply to a Penn State branch campus. Even though his language learning experiences at school were terrible, during his first year in college Jason traveled to France to fulfill a study abroad requirement and felt in love with the French language and culture. His mentor always mentioned he could be a great teacher; therefore he decided to combine his gift for teaching with his newly found love for French and transferred to the University Park main campus to start the WL ED program. He had a tough spring semester 2005 and felt completely disoriented about which were the classes and requirements he had to go through. This was actually one of the reasons why he decided to change his major to French and Comparative Literature. When he told me that he was going to do this, I must admit that I was very disappointed because after observing his work with the children and in class I thought he was one of the best students I ever had. But, at the same time I thought that it was a decision he had made early enough and he did not lose time in preparing for a career he did not like. Even though he changed his major, I was surprised that he stayed in the PEFE. During our first interview I found out why he did this—he liked working with the children and he was already attached to them. In addition, he liked the seminar meetings and found the book useful. Nevertheless, there was another reason not related to the PEFE—he thought that working on his E-Portfolio requirement for the PEFE was actually a good excuse to come up with “this really cool website.” He used to be a Computer Systems major before falling in love with French, and technology was still
one of his biggest passions. Jason also mentioned that he had made very good friends in the PEFE and he did not want to leave them. Nonetheless, Jason was still not giving up on teaching. He had a job for the summer where he would teach technology to underprivileged children. Jason was strongly committed to social justice and wanted to teach in a context in which he felt he could make a difference.

Elizabeth Bour

Elizabeth was a graduate student pursuing her teacher certification. She already had a bachelor degree in French and culture and was also finishing her master in French linguistics. She decided to pursue her French teacher certification, as she felt that it was extremely important to join French and pedagogical knowledge to be a successful French teacher. I must admit that I had my concerns with her the first day of class, she looked so serious! At the beginning, she admitted to me later on that she was feeling a little bit uncomfortable, because this was her first education course and she was taking a class with undergraduates. Elizabeth was the last one to join the research study because she was concerned at the moment of recruitment that she did not have the time to commit to it due to her master’s thesis; also, she was enrolled in four courses and was a graduate teaching assistant with the French Languages and Literature program. However, at the end of the spring semester, when Elizabeth finished her thesis, her classes, and her duties as a graduate teaching assistant, she asked me if she could still “help” me with my research study and I must admit that as a researcher I was ecstatic, because her point of view as a graduate student could enrich the description of the case study. I saw her as a
great student to portray in my dissertation, because her reflections during the whole experience were very honest.

Since Elizabeth was a little girl she had been exposed to French, because her mother’s side of the family came from France. Elizabeth had the opportunity to spend a year abroad in France when she was in her junior year thanks to a Rotary Club fellowship. After this experience she knew she wanted to “do something with French” and thought about French teaching, but due to lack of information she didn’t pursue it when she was an undergraduate student. But, the thought of teaching never left her, because she started tutoring French and really liked teaching. Therefore, she searched for information on how to get her teacher certification in French and request to start taking the required courses while she was enrolled in her master degree program in French. Even though she felt she had plenty of French subject knowledge, she wanted to feel that she also had the skills to teach. She wanted to combine her knowledge of French and the teaching skills she could learn through the WL ED program to become a good French teacher.

At the beginning of the semester she was extremely concerned with the PEFE, because she had never worked with pre-school children, or even had family member that young. Elizabeth never hid the fact that children were not her area of expertise, but little by little she opened herself to the experience and was actually grateful she had to go through the PEFE.
Phillis Brezina

The best way to describe Phillis is the word “character.” He was the type of student you want to be angry with, but you could not! When I talked to the WL ED 300W professor she described him as a charmer. He had this popular high school boy in him who knew he was doing something wrong and promised that he would do better and everybody believed him. During the semester he had many ups and down, especially because he had many absences. He improved in some way, but I was very concerned, because he was involved in too many activities at the same time and had a hard time focusing on the work for the PEFE. Phillis once mentioned he needed people to nag him to do what he was supposed to do, because if not he gets distracted on other things. Besides this “problem,” Phillis was more than met the eye. During the spring 2005 semester, he was working on his own painting business and participated in the outdoor and soccer clubs on campus. His inspiration to become a teacher was his grandfather from his mother’s side. He mentioned that his grandfather was a very patient man who always talked of how he loved teaching. Moreover, Phillis witnessed the admiration former students had for his grandfather. As he spoke to me I could feel in his voice the great admiration and respect he felt for his grandfather. Another topic that he talked extensively about was his experiences in his year long Rotary Club study abroad experience in Chile when he was in his junior year at high school. He did not know any Spanish at the moment, but his host family helped him learn it. Phillis liked Chile so much that coming back to the Pennsylvania was very difficult for him. He felt that everything around him was fake, almost unreal. He had trouble adapting again to the rhythm of life here. His experience in Chile left him with a pretty good proficiency in
Spanish and he loved speaking it, although he admitted that he needed to go back to some Spanish basic words that he had forgotten. After considering other majors like International Relations and Political Sciences, Phillis decided to enroll in the WL ED program, to further on his Spanish language skills and also decide if teaching was his call, because he thought that teachers were like counselors and friends that could help their students.

Samantha Díaz

Samantha was an example of what Duany (2000) called la nación en vaivén (the nation of the move) of many Puerto Rican families who move back and forth from the United States to Puerto Rico and vice versa. Nonetheless, in her case the decision to move to the United States was due to very sad circumstances. Samantha was born in Puerto Rico where she lived her first seven years with her mom and one of her older brothers. Her parents divorced a little after she was born and her father moved to New York where he remarried. In 1992, when she was seven years old, her mother lost her life in a car accident. Her dad then took her brother and her to New York City to live with him and his new family. She lived there for two years until her father decided to go back to Puerto Rico. After a year in Puerto Rico, Samantha left the island for her second and last time, because her father “realized that it was easier to live a life here.” He then decided to move to a city in Pennsylvania, where her older brother lived. Samantha was enrolled in an all English school, and even though there were more Latina/o students in her school, the majority of them were born and raised in the United States and their first language was English. Sometimes they helped her out with her English, but as she
explained “it was helpful at times, because many of them help me in my transition, but it wasn’t applicable at different experiences as if I would have been in a bilingual class or ESL class.” Even though her parents spoke English, at home she always spoke Spanish and felt extremely proud of being bilingual. For her, English was a language that had brought her very far in life, but Spanish “is also my culture, it is who I am, not just Puerto Rican, but just speaking Spanish defines me.”

These experiences at school made Samantha realized she wanted to be a teacher and during one of the interviews she cried; she cried remembering the bad experiences she had as a student in the schools of her city. Even though she had bad experiences at school, she wanted to go back to the city to teach and be able to be a different type of teacher, different from the ones that did not help her. She wanted to tell her future students that they could do it, that she was going to help them. I felt that the reason Samantha wanted to be a teacher was different from the rest of the group, she wanted to be able to do for others, what nobody did for her. Samantha first wanted to be a Math teacher when she entered college, but she realized it was very hard. She started looking at other teacher education options and one day she told herself “why not Spanish, my first language? It will be great to teach somebody a different language, a different culture.”

Samantha was extremely hard-working and committed to every facet of the seminar and field experience, but little by little became frustrated because she was not able to teach as much as she wanted to.
Jocelyn Harris

Jocelyn was wise beyond her years and described herself as a single mom with a lot of determination. Her classmates treated her with a lot of respect and she became a “mother figure” for them, even though she was only 22. Jocelyn was in her senior year in college when she realized she might want to become a Spanish teacher. Although her college major was psychology, she was also pursuing a Spanish minor in college because she had discovered in high school that she was pretty good at it and considered herself pretty proficient in the language. Therefore, she thought “Why not study to become a Spanish teacher?” In addition, through teaching she could also stay close to her hometown where her parents lived and her son was attending school. She always saw teaching as “easy” and something she could do, but as she told me during one of our interviews she did not realize it was “so much work.” Jocelyn was enrolled at a Penn State branch campus that did not offer the WL ED program courses. Therefore, every week she traveled twice a week to Penn State’s University Park campus to participate in the PEFE seminars and WL ED 300. However, she was placed at an ECE Center in her hometown. That way she could be as close as possible to her six year old son. Jocelyn felt that having a six year old son was an advantage for her, because she was able to relate to the children. According to her classmates, her situation at the ECE Center was also pretty privileged, because she was the only one at the center teaching Spanish to the children and her mentor teacher let her take over the morning routine and implement as many activities as she wanted. Even though she felt that she had a good experience in the PEFE, by the end of the spring 2005 semester she had already decided to finish her Psychology major and continue taking other teacher education courses. She was also
offered a position as a Spanish instructor at her university campus and she was strongly considering accepting it to get to “know” that teaching area and support her family.

Kate Mathews

Kate was one of those students whom teachers like to have in their classes. She was very responsible with her class work and always asked questions when she didn’t understand something. Helen described her as “an example of a student that is dedicated to become a language teacher.” When I met Kate the first day of class, my first thought was that she was one of those students that I could identify as the “typical” future language teacher. She fit the stereotype that I had of most of the students that that I had worked with throughout my four years in language teacher education: white, female, from a small town in the state of Pennsylvania, with a family member who was a teacher, and previous to coming to college had had very little contact with diverse populations. Nonetheless, there is always an element that in my opinion makes future language teachers different: they have usually traveled to other countries or have a very special interest on other cultures. Kate is an example of coming into the WL ED program with many travel abroad experiences. She traveled to Europe, Australia, and Latin America and in her words this made her “look at the world with open eyes.” When she entered college she went into a science major, but found out that was not what she wanted and switched to World Languages because she had very good Spanish language learning experiences while in high school and she had always thought about becoming a teacher. But what I admired most about Kate was her positive disposition towards learning and how she was always observing what was happening around her and responding to it,
especially when she paid close attention to the diversity of the classroom in which she was placed at the ECE Center compared to those in which she engaged as a student.

Through the interviews, I learned that Kate went into this field experience without any expectations. She knew it was an early childhood center and kind of imagined how it would look like comparing it to where her mother worked at. However, she did found the routines at the ECE Center she was at had more structure. During the semester Kate mentioned several times how great it was to have a K-12 certification in Spanish, because she could work with children too. During the PEFE she took advantage of all the opportunities she had to teach the children a new word in Spanish. Kate was not shy around the children and from day one she always incorporated herself into the classroom routines. The teachers were extremely happy with her work there. In addition, she implemented most of the activities she planned. She felt that becoming a Spanish teacher was the right profession for her.

Helen Nomi

There are many words and stories to describe Helen. She was honest, bubbly, and a grown-up kid. She was so energetic that many times during the semester I wondered if I should have controlled that or not. But, I felt that I couldn’t take away this “sparkle” from her. During our first interview she even also asked me some questions; one of these questions was: “What did you think of me when you met me?” I remembered then that when I checked the list of students and found out that I had an Asian student (I was not sure where exactly she was from); I thought “this is the first time this happens. I have an Asian student who wants to become a Spanish teacher.” I was anxious to meet her at the
first PEFE seminar. I saw her as soon as I came into the classroom. I proceeded to ask the students to tell two truths and one lie about themselves to the rest of the group. One of the things that Helen said was that she was born in Australia. All her classmates thought that this was her lie, but it was actually true. Helen explained that she was born in Australia, but her parents were Japanese. In addition, she described herself as a shy person. But, as soon as she felt comfortable in both the center and in the seminar, she was not shy at all. She was like a little girl who always had a story to tell at the beginning of class and you needed to give her that time. She made you laugh with her stories, like when one week she told the group how she ADD the kids while doing an activity and the kids ADD her. Her classmates told her they were completely lost and asked her to explain what she meant with “ADDing” the kids. Helen said that the problem was that she had ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) and sometime during the activity she “spaced out” and when she came back to the activity she was not sure what was going on. Other times she got so much into the game she was playing with the children that she had a hard time noticing what other things were happening around her. Therefore, she reached the conclusion that she could not teach children because she was too much like them, and her attention span was too short. However, Helen also had moments in which she was very serious. She grew up in a place where she was the only minority and she was not rich like many of her classmates. She was ridiculed because she drove a 1999 Plymouth to school and did not have a brand new car. In addition, she worked in a summer program that almost led her to decide not to become a teacher because she did not want to face difficult situations like the one she went through with a six-year-old and his parents. She described this moment
as a “denial,” in which she did not want to face more of these situations in the future; because as a teacher “you want to be in charge of the good moments, not the bad ones.”

She did not have good experiences with her Spanish teachers at high school, but she did have a good experience with her Latin teacher, who even let her teach a lesson to her whole class. When she entered college, she was an Animal Sciences major, but even though she liked the “factual stuff” she decided to change to Spanish teacher education because she had good grades in her Spanish classes at the university. I asked her why she did not teach Japanese; she mentioned that while traveling to other states like Arizona and Florida, “Spanish” was everywhere, not Japanese.

Adriana Reyes

Adriana was a sweet girl. She had a quiet demeanor that pleased everyone. All her classmates were fond of her, but I think Helen more than others. They were both placed in the same classroom for their PEFE and this was one of the reasons they became very good friends. She was the type of student that was so quite that sometimes I wondered if she would be able to let her “teacher’s voice” come out and become a great teacher. However, during the PEFE she worked on some activities and her creativity started to come out. She also capitalized on the fact that she was a Spanish native speaker. Adriana was born in a small town in the state of Michoacán, Mexico, but when she was fifteen her family decided to move to a small agricultural town in the southeast of the state of Pennsylvania to work in the fields. She believed that her move from Mexico was good because her dad found work here, but she encountered some difficulties in her new school. Adriana attended a white majority school and did not know any English when she
first arrived. Therefore, she was enrolled in ESL classes throughout her high school years. She described the experience of learning English as “difficult and sometimes you get frustrated, because you can’t communicate.” By the time she entered college, she considered herself bilingual and felt it was “a great experience, because, one of the experiences that I have is translate for my mom in English.” Both of her parents only spoke Spanish, but they were taking English classes in the evening. They were her biggest emotional support; one of the reasons she decided to attend Penn State was because she could still be close to them.

Adriana really wanted to become a Spanish teacher, but similar to Samantha, for a different reason. She always liked her Spanish class when she was in Mexico, but when she came to the United States she had what she called a “very bad teacher” that made her realize that she knew more than her and she could actually teach the class better. Even though she was a native Spanish speaker she took Spanish in high school because the counselor of her school did not let her take any other language; the reason that she was given was that she was an ESL student. This made her very mad, because she wanted to learn French. These experiences made her want to become a Spanish teacher and she was also considering ESL teaching. She wanted to go back to her town and teach other migrant students that every year had to go through the same experiences that she had.

Kaylynn Rossi

Kaylynn went through some tough times in her personal life during the semester, but she was still able to attend her field experience and the seminar. As I talked to her during the interviews I could feel how proud she was of her Italian heritage. Her mom
was an Italian immigrant who taught her how to speak Italian and Kaylynn spoke it with her and her grandfather, who also lived in the United States and did not speak a word of English. She found it puzzling to be able to learn Italian while her brother, who lived under the same home circumstances, could not learn the language. She felt that he was missing a lot because she loved been able to communicate with her grandfather, whom she spoke to everyday. In addition, her knowledge of Italian helped her to learn Spanish too. Kaylynn was extremely proud of the fact that she was trilingual. This fact plus the influence of two Spanish teachers whom she still had contact with inspired her to become a teacher. The influence that these two Spanish teachers had in her decision of becoming a Spanish teacher was more palpable than for any of the other FLT. She talked to them constantly and admired each one of them for different reasons. One teacher was a Spanish native speaker and Kaylynn saw her as someone that had taught her first hand knowledge on Spanish language and culture. The reason why she admired her other Spanish teacher, was that she had learn Spanish as an adult and had come a “long way.” This teacher made Kaylynn feel that she could also learn as much Spanish as her teacher and teach other English speakers to love the language. Besides her Italian background and her Spanish teachers, Kaylynn also grew up in a town in the state with a high percentage of Spanish speakers, especially Puerto Rican. She learned in her town how to understand the Spanish her classmates spoke in school and also practice it in work settings with other adults. After interviewing her I felt that she had a very unique cultural background and that the opportunity to be surrounded with the language that she planned to teach helped her to confirm her career choice, even though she always thought she wanted to be a teacher.
Amy Taylor

I met Amy in the fall 2004 semester, when she had just transferred from a branch campus to the main university campus. She was completely lost! Her academic advisor had enrolled her in the “second” block of classes for the programs rather than the first one. I directed her to Dr. Espinosa, but it was already a little bit late and the first block of classes was full. Therefore, I was glad to see her in the right place when the spring 2005 semester started and I noticed she was not lost anymore and was pretty focused on becoming a Spanish teacher. During the first interview, Amy mentioned that she would like to teach advanced levels of Spanish rather than basic ones. Amy felt confident on her language skills and she believed she could do it. This confidence came from being exposed to the Spanish language since she was a little girl. Amy’s mother is a Spanish teacher and her role model. Therefore, more than her Spanish teachers, it was her mom who inspired her to become a teacher, and she knew early on that she wanted to be a Spanish teacher—especially, because in high school she became her classmates’ Spanish tutor and many of them had mentioned that she could be a wonderful Spanish teacher.

Even though she had a hard time at the beginning of her field experience she did wonderful work by the end in incorporating the language into the classroom. I was glad about this, because her teachers did not give her a good midterm evaluation because she had not been incorporating much Spanish into the classroom and her interaction with the children was minimal. I talked to her about it and tried to help her to brainstorm more ideas. I was worried that she was the type of student who, rather than taking the feedback to improve her performance, would become angry with her teachers for writing that feedback. But, I was extremely relieved because Amy took the feedback to heart and
came up with very original ideas to teach the children Spanish vocabulary for animals and colors. She was very happy with her success, especially since her teachers could not stop talking about how her activities with the children were very creative and educative. When I interviewed her, she confirmed that the success of her activities had a very positive influence on her and even though this field experience had proven to her that she would prefer to teach high school students, she could also teach young children.

Also, because Amy was a transfer student she had taken the general early field experience (CI 295A) at her other campus. She felt she had not learned much because it was mainly observation.

*Dr. Miryam Espinosa Dulanto (Former WL ED program Professor-in-Charge)*

Dr. Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto is from Perú, where she was a teacher before moving to the United States and pursuing her graduate degree. In 2000 she was hired by the Penn State College of Education to design a new teacher education program that could prepare future language teachers. This was a big task, and even though she had worked as an instructor in a well-known language teacher education program in another state, it was still a difficult process. Nevertheless, she knew that FLT at Penn State needed to have a program that strongly emphasized three important aspects: pedagogical knowledge, fluency in the language, and becoming aware of class and social issues. She worked with the teacher education coordinator and with the different language departments to develop the WL ED program and in the spring of 2004 she received the news that the program had been approved.
Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto’s experiences as a student teacher in Peru with a Literacy Program designed by Paulo Freire taught her that to create relevant instructional materials, because she needed to immerse herself in the community in which she was teaching. When she moved to the United States at the end of the 1980s, Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto’s experiences as a new immigrant made her aware of the importance of maintaining her language at the same time that she was also learning the new language, English. Her native language was part of who she was, but she also wanted to learn English to navigate the new environment that has now been part of her life for more than twenty years. I will always remember how “la doctora” once told me that she started learning English with a little girl she used to babysit for when she first arrived to the United States. The little girl taught her colors, numbers and other English vocabulary words through their interactions. In addition, throughout her life she has been involved in several social justice projects with all the communities she has been part of in Peru and in the United States. She is a strong supporter of volunteer experiences and believes that they are great opportunities to learn and give back to the community.

These background experiences shaped many of the decisions la doctora took during the design and implementation of the WL ED program.

PEFE Course Instructor

Throughout this dissertation, I included my views and connected them with the reasons I made certain decisions during the PEFE. I am aware that researchers who are language teacher education practitioners rarely include their insiders’ view, and “practice what they preach” to their students (Johnston, 2000, p. 157, Velez-Rendón, 2002).
However, I do not wish to continue the practice of not practicing what I preach and as the PEFE Course Instructor I am aware that I needed to include myself in this study because I was part of the experience. By including myself as a research participant I learn from my experiences and continue to prepare myself as a language teacher educator. As the PEFE instructor, I was an insider who emphasized to the FLT the importance of recording their experiences and connecting them with their previous experiences. I need to start by acknowledging how my previous experiences influence my views on language teacher education practices. For example, my experiences as an English language learner in a bilingual elementary classroom in Boston led me to believe in the importance of teaching languages to children.

I moved to Boston when I was only two years old, but after only a year I started attending a Head Start program that had a bilingual curriculum that allowed me to continue using my native language at the same time that I was learning English. Learning languages from then on became a fun activity for me and by the time I returned to Puerto Rico five years later, I understood, talked, wrote, and read both Spanish and English. Through first hand experiences I believed that learning a second/third language at an early age is possible and necessary for the present and the future. This was one of my goals of the PEFE, becoming aware of the importance of teaching languages to children as early as possible.

Additionally, as a language teacher education student, I felt that even though my program prepared me with enough pedagogical and content knowledge, I did not have enough opportunities to put this knowledge into practice in a classroom setting or in Shulman’s words I was not able to put into practice my pedagogical content.
knowledge. Through my teacher education program, I learned how to prepare instructional materials, assess students, and learning the theoretical constructs on language acquisition helped me to reflect on my own language learning and be more conscious on how I could teach others a language. Nonetheless, my program did not provide me with enough practical experiences to apply what I learned—especially because my only practicum experience was a half-day student teaching experience during my last semester at college. During this semester I was one of the lucky ones who confirmed that I did want to be an ESL teacher, but I observed how some of the other student teachers dropped out of the experience, because they discovered that teaching was not for them. Therefore, I thought that the PEFE was an early opportunity for students to decide if they wanted to be teachers or not.

Moreover, when I became an ESL teacher I felt that language teaching was a lot harder than I’d realized and that the activities that I planned during my student teaching did not necessarily work with the students at the urban school in my town. Through this experience I learned that teachers need to be aware of the context in which they teach and the people who are part of it. As a result of this experience, I wanted the FLT to be aware of their context as teachers and how it may influence their teaching.

My previous experiences as a language learner, language teacher education student, and language teacher influenced many of the decisions that I made throughout the PEFE planning and implementation. Thus, it was important to include myself as a participant in this research study.
Summary

In this chapter I provided an overview of the research study design and its participants. It was necessary to also include descriptions of Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto and myself, because our life and work experiences influenced the planning and implementation of the PEFE. The following chapters give more evidence of the ecological aspects of the PEFE that may have also influenced the planning, implementation, and outcomes of the PEFE.

xiv The other four are narrative research, phenomenological research, grounded theory research, and ethnographic research.

xv Permission requested

xvi More information on each of these documents is given in Chapter 4 where the PEFE structure and content is presented.

xvii “female doctor.” I have always addressed her this way.

xviii Shulman (1987/2004) defined pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) as “the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction” (p. 228).
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<td>Psychology Minor in Spanish</td>
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<td>Spanish Tutor, Volunteer in an orphanage in the Dominican Republic School, School Volunteer (4th, 5th, and 6th grades)</td>
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<td>Caribbean and Italy</td>
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<td>Spanish</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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CHAPTER IV

PEFE Planning

This chapter focuses on the planning of the PEFE, taking into consideration the ecological characteristics of structure, content, and context. The ecological characteristics of structure and content are presented through the description of the structure and coursework for the newly developed WL ED program and of how the PEFE became one of the requirements for entering the major. It also offers details on PEFE content as planned by the Professor-in-Charge and the course instructor.

WL ED Program Description

According to Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto, the development and implementation of the WL ED program took approximately four years. In 2000, she was hired to develop a new teacher education program that could better prepare future language teachers. Her first step was to become familiar with Pennsylvania’s teacher certification requirements for world languages teachers. This first step was crucial because Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto then discovered that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s world languages teacher certification is from kindergarten to twelfth grade (K-12). This meant that even though the FLT were receiving their degrees in Secondary Education with their world languages option, they still received a K–12 teacher certification. Therefore she started to think, “How do you make a strong teacher that the range is from K-12 in only four years; and actually not four years, but two? At that point, the challenge was overwhelming” (Espinosa-Dulanto interview). She was also aware that there were more “layers” to take
into consideration when preparing FLT. These layers included world languages pedagogy (theories on language acquisition, methodology courses, and field experiences in the language option area), language courses and travel abroad to improve students’ language proficiency/fluency, and enrichment experiences that could make students more aware of class/social issues. Therefore, she worked in conjunction with the teacher education coordinator and world languages departments to match the state teacher certification K–12 requirements and include these three layers, which she considered essential to improving the development of quality world language teachers.

To address the need for more world languages pedagogy, two more blocks of education course were added to the existing one, which did not occur until the FLT senior year. FLT who planned to graduate in the spring semester had to enroll in a block of courses directed towards Secondary Education majors. This block included a general teaching methods course, a course on teaching in the secondary schools (CI 412W), and a middle field experience in the secondary schools (middle, junior high or senior high schools) around the area. When Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto noted that the methods class was not specific to language teaching methodology, she designed a substitute. This was not an “official” course in the Secondary Education program; as a result the FLT needed to “petition” the College of Education to approve this substitution. During their spring semester student teaching experience they were placed in secondary schools around the state. When the WL ED program’s new structure of classes became official, it added two more blocks of courses before the FLT senior year (see Table 4.1 for a sample WL ED Academic Plan). The first block, which is an entrance to the major requirement, includes an early field experience in Pre-K–1st grade settings (WL ED 295A) and a Foundations
of Second Language Teaching course (WL ED 300W). This block is offered during the spring semester of the sophomore year and designed to expose students to language acquisition theories and methods that they could see in action during their early field experience in the early childhood centers in which children are acquiring their language(s). The FLT enrolled in their second block of courses during the fall semester of their junior year. This includes a methods course on teaching languages in the elementary school (grades 1–5, WL ED 411) and a field experience (WL ED 495B). The field experience involves interactions with elementary school children from different area schools who come to campus for eight Saturdays to learn about different languages and cultures through storytelling workshops conducted by the FLT. The third block of classes is very similar to that instituted before the start of the WL ED program, in that it still addressed teaching in secondary schools (grades 6–12). The main difference is that with the exception of CI 412W, the courses are now listed as WL ED 412 (methods) and WL ED 495C (middle field experience). The student teaching practicum also has a new name—WL ED 495E. These new pedagogical requirements seek to address K–12 world languages teaching as the WL ED program now includes language acquisition knowledge, language teaching methods courses, and field experiences with different grade levels.

The second layer that had to be addressed was the lack of language proficiency/fluency needed to teach world languages. Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto noticed that many of the FLT already enrolled in the program could barely speak their world language and when they did it was full of basic grammar and vocabulary errors. This situation could be attributed to the lack of prerequisites in the former secondary education world
languages option that could address language proficiency expectations. This is proven by the fact that students were not required to enroll in language courses beyond the 300 level. Dr. Espinosa did not find this practice acceptable; the first change that she established, even before the WL ED program was approved, was to make an entrance requirement completion of a basic 200-level language course rather than a 100-level one. Moreover, nowadays FLT enrolled in the program are required to take at least five 400-level language courses. A second change to improve students’ language proficiency/fluency was to make study abroad a major requirement. Students enrolled in the current WL ED program must spend a semester abroad in a country in which their language major option is spoken. These experiences usually happen at the end of their junior year in the spring and/or summer semesters. During their stay in these countries, the FLT need to enroll in university-level language and cultural courses. According to Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto, these new language requirements have made a difference in the type of students who decide to enter the program because if they are not able to approve the language coursework and have a successful study abroad experience, they know they cannot teach the language. Table 4.1 shows a sample academic plan that includes all these new requirements.
Table 4.1
Sample WL ED Academic Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Second Year</th>
<th>Third Year</th>
<th>Fourth Year</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1st Semester (Fall)</td>
<td>1st Semester (Fall)</td>
<td>1st Semester (Fall)</td>
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<tr>
<td>*First Year Seminar (M)</td>
<td>*EDTHP 115 (ETM)</td>
<td>*WL ED 411 (M)</td>
<td>*CAS 100 (GE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Spanish 200 (M/ETM)- Grammar and Writing</td>
<td>*Science (GE)</td>
<td>*WL ED 495B (FE)</td>
<td>*WL ED 295 (M/ETM/ FE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*SPAN 210 (LO)- Iberian American Civilization</td>
<td>*Mathematics (GE)</td>
<td>*Spanish 440 (M)</td>
<td>*WL ED 300 (M/ETM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ENGL 015 (GE/ETM)</td>
<td>*SPAN 300W (LO)- Advanced Grammar and Writing</td>
<td>*Art Education</td>
<td>*SPAN 414 (LO)- Phonology</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Science (GE)</td>
<td>*Additional Spanish course (LO)</td>
<td>*Music Education</td>
<td>*Science (GE)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*HD FS 239 (GE)</td>
<td>*Health and Physical Activity</td>
<td>*Health and Physical Activity (GE)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>2nd Semester (Spring)</th>
<th>2nd Semester (Spring)</th>
<th>2nd Semester- Study Abroad Semester (Spring or Summer)</th>
<th>2nd Semester (Spring)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>*CAS 100 (GE)</td>
<td>*Arts (GE)</td>
<td>*WL ED 495E</td>
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<tr>
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<td>*WL ED 295 (M/ETM/ FE)</td>
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<td>*WL ED 300 (M/ETM)</td>
<td>*1/300 Level Spanish (LO)</td>
<td>(M/FE)</td>
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<td>*SPAN 414 (LO)- Phonology</td>
<td>*Science (GE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>*SPAN 215 (LO)- Spanish Linguistics</td>
<td>*Science (GE)</td>
<td>*Health and Physical Activity (GE)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\[ M= \text{Education Major Requirement} \quad ETM= \text{Entrance to the Major Requirement} \]
\[ GE= \text{General Education Requirement} \quad FE= \text{Field Experience} \]
\[ LO= \text{Language Option Requirement} \]

In the third and last layer, Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto felt that it was necessary for the FLT to have experiences that made them more aware of social and class issues. Therefore, in every WL ED course FLT are required to complete at least five experiences in which they have to “work and participate in programs that are not part of their daily activities” (Espinosa-Dulanto interview) and write a short summary about their participation and present it in class. These programs include, but are not limited to, international fairs, foreign language films, and other activities to challenge their ideas of how other cultures and groups are viewed.
These new requirements, in conjunction with other required courses, made the WL ED program more balanced. It required FLT to complete 132 credits in three main areas: 1) General Education (Writing/Speaking, Quantification, Natural Sciences, Arts, Humanities, Social & Behavioral Sciences, Health and Physical Activity) = 45 Credits; Requirements for the major (Education Courses, WL ED Courses/Field Experiences) = 54 Credits and Language Option Requirements (Language Courses) = 33 Credits. It also addressed many of the language teachers’ concerns as expressed in survey studies by Lange and Simms (1990), Cooper (2004), and Antenos-Conforti (2008)

**PEFE Development**

As soon as Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto was assigned to supervise the curriculum for the FLT enrolled in the Secondary Education world languages option, she began to include a field experience component in the language methods course of the Secondary Education block, which occurred the semester before student teaching. She believed that this field experience component was an opportunity through which students could observe “language acquisition taking place” (Espinosa-Dulanto interview). Therefore, to address this purpose she began to visit elementary schools in the area to find sites for this field experience component. Even though the principal at one of the elementary schools in the school district demonstrated interest in receiving world language students at her school, her teachers felt that this was an additional responsibility that at that moment they could not take on, because their schedules were already pretty full. Moreover, Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto needed to tell them the exact number of students and world languages they were going to be receiving in advance. This was a commitment she was not able to make due
to the fact that the number of students and world languages varied each semester. Often it was difficult to identify the world languages option of the student until the first day of the course. She decided to look into after-school programs, but after observing them she noticed a lack of program structure that could aid beginning teachers. She noted how the children were “already bored and tired. So, I didn’t think that was going to be a safe environment for anybody to teach anything new when the students were so frustrated” (Espinosa-Dulanto interview). Moreover, she realized that the 4th and 5th graders tended to voice their opinions very strongly, which could be threatening to a FLT who still lacked the fluency to speak in their world language. At this point she was not quite sure what to do, but one day a professor who was the parent of a child who attended one of the ECE Centers on campus contacted her with what she described as an “exciting project, to bring languages other than English to the children at the ECE Center #2” (Espinosa-Dulanto, Spring 2001). After visiting the center she felt that the ECE Center #2 personnel were “willing to try this,” which was an enormous step towards starting the field experience component in the methods class. When she compared the ECE Centers to the after-school program, she felt that this was the “safest place” for the FLT (Espinosa-Dulanto interview). Additionally, they also shared her ideas on social justice and John Dewey’s theory of learning through experience (1938/1997b). This practicum could also become a community service experience through which the FLT could give back to their society. As a result of this placement site search, in the spring of 2001 the FLT enrolled in the language methods course in the Secondary Education block began to visit ECE Center #2 for two hours over five Thursday mornings during the semester and incorporated their language (Spanish, French, German, Latin, or Russian) into the daily
routines of the children. They were also required to submit journal entries for each of their visits.

During the fall 2002 semester the field experience at the ECE Centers changed into a separate course offered to FLT in their sophomore year. This course began to be called 2nd Language Acquisition Field Experience. As a separate course under the supervision of Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto and graduate teaching assistants, the field experience required FLT to volunteer for 20 hours rather than 10 at the ECE Center #2, and attend a weekly seminar on campus for about 70 minutes. As occurred with the field experience for the language teaching methods class, the FLT had to incorporate their world languages into the children’s daily routines, but additionally they were asked to plan activities with their teachers. They also wrote ten reflective journals on no specific topic. As a third and new requirement the FLT needed to submit an E-Portfolio that could demonstrate the knowledge they had obtained during the field experience. Even though the WL ED was still not an official program, by the fall 2003 semester the course started to be called Early Field Experience in World Languages Education. Since that time the overall description in the course syllabus did not change much and its main goal and objectives were as follows:

This seminar/field experience will provide prospective World Language/ESL teachers with several opportunities to observe/work with pre-schoolers and elementary school children while focusing on language acquisition processes. As part of the field experience, students will have the opportunity to observe and work in an early childhood or elementary school environment. There, students will have opportunities to plan, design and deliver second language related activities. All these activities will include:

- connections with language acquisition theories,
- Foreign Language National Standards/ESL standards,
- specific cognitive behavioral and communicative goals.
During the seminar/workshop sessions on Tuesdays, students will discuss their experience, develop necessary didactic materials and teaching props, and have guidance on how to develop their E-Portfolios.

The long-term objectives of the course are:

- Develop a learning community in which students, PSU instructors, and the faculty from early childhood settings and elementary ESL programs will be able to observe, experience, discuss, and reflect about education in general and language acquisition in particular.
- Begin preparing prospective world language and ESL teachers for a lifelong, reflective teaching career.

However, there were some changes to the placements sites. Due to the growth in student enrollment in the world language teaching options, the ECE field experience added another ECE Center on campus as a placement site. In addition, some students traveled from another university campus; therefore, Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto thought it was necessary to find a placement site closer to them. She was able to find an ECE Center in the town in which this university campus was located. The ECE Center staff was very enthusiastic about exposing children to world languages. The field experience still required FLT to volunteer for 20 hours at their ECE centers, but Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto made several modifications to the course requirements. They were asked to plan “formal” activities around basic specific topics such as body parts, colors, numbers, and animals. The students still attended a weekly seminar on campus for about 70 minutes in which they had workshops to develop materials around the above topics. In addition, the FLT were asked to submit seven journal entries on specific topics: 1) First impressions; 2) Who are the teachers? Who are the students in the field experience?; 3) Children’s behavior; 4) Efforts using L2 during the field experience; 5) Learning from experience; 6) More/less successful activities and why; and 7) Final comments and suggestions. In addition, their E-Portfolio needed to include descriptions, reflections, materials, and
journals. One of the main problems during these semesters (Fall 2002 and Fall 2003) was that the FLT were still required to enroll in CI 295A, the general early field experience for all teacher education majors, because the early field experience in world languages was not an “official” course in the Secondary Education program. The other difficulty was that it was difficult to identify which students were interested in world languages education because they did not declare a major in the Secondary Education program until the end of their sophomore year. Therefore, not all students interested in a world languages teaching option were aware of the early field experience. Nonetheless, during this fall 2003 semester Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto began to receive some news that the approval for the new WL ED program was not far from becoming a reality. The WL ED program was finally approved late in the spring 2004 semesters and the official requirements were first implemented in the fall 2004 semester. Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto then asked me to reorganize the early field experience course and connect it to the rest of the WL ED program curriculum. I was ecstatic; this was the perfect opportunity to address my former FLT’s concerns about not learning how to design lesson plans, develop didactic materials, and more until their Secondary Education block. I could also add to the PEFE some of the themes and class requirements I had included in a syllabus developed for a course on language methods class for the teaching of Spanish in elementary school. Therefore, after some planning and with the input of Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto, we were able to incorporate into the PEFE’s content basic information on teaching “tools of the trade” and my interest in FLES.
PEFE Content

As I made plans for the PEFE syllabus, this seemed like the perfect opportunity to plan a class that would allow me to provide students with some “tools of the trade.” Some of these skills included lesson planning, didactic materials development, classroom management skills, technology resources for a world languages classroom, working on an electronic teaching portfolio, and more. The reason for instruction on these “tools” was that many of my former FLT had told me that they did not feel prepared to be language teachers. The students believed that they should have more teaching skills before they went through their middle field experience and student teaching experience during their last year in college. I believed that the PEFE was the best course for handling this. I also felt that through the two PEFE components—seminars and field experience at the ECE Centers—I could motivate the students to teach languages to children despite the lack of interest I observed among the FLT about teaching world languages in elementary school, even though their teacher certification permitted them to teach it from K–12.

To achieve my goal of providing students with teaching tools, I kept in the seminar the workshops on instructional materials development, adding one more topic—weather. However, besides developing the materials the FLT were asked to develop lesson plans around the five topics (body parts, colors, animals, weather, and numbers) to implement in their ECE classroom. I started calling these lesson plans “activity plans” because they were very short and focused on one class activity rather than a full class with several activities. Even though the activity plans were short, they still had to write objectives, address the Standards for Foreign Language Learning, and write down the steps they would follow in teaching the activity. In the workshops, I gave them a sample
activity for each of these topics and practiced them in class. Some of these sample activities included teaching the numbers with the Spanish version of the “Elephant Song” (Los Elefantes), tracing a person’s body on a big sheet of paper and then identifying the body parts in the different languages, making animal puppets, and others. The FLT also had the opportunity to share their activities. In regard to technology, as a seminar assignment I also asked the FLT to search for technology resources they could use in their classrooms. They had to write a description of these resources, the reference for locating it, and share it with their classmates. Two seminars were devoted to technology instruction because the FLT were still asked to work on an E-Portfolio. Nonetheless, in the fall semester we started to implement the *WL ED Performance Framework and Exit Competencies into the E-Portfolio* (see Appendix A). The FLT were asked to demonstrate through their learning experience that semester that they were achieving the performance framework indicators required for the PEFE. At the end of the semester they were asked to make individual presentations on their E-Portfolio and on their five activity plans with accompanying instructional materials (didactic materials box).

Focusing on the idea of exposing students to FLES, I decided to add a reading requirement to the seminar. For this purpose I utilized Curtain and Dahlberg’s book *Languages and children making the match: New languages for young learners, grades K–8* (2004). Following some of the book’s chapters we had seminar discussions on FLES topics such as: Defining FLES/Why FLES; FLES Programs; Classroom games and activities; Learning about children; Children’s behavior, Communication in the FLES classroom; Language in context; L2 exposure through technology; and Creating educational materials. In addition, I included as a course assignment a search for a current
FLES program in different states. Each FLT had to select a state and look for information on a FLES program. After finding a program, the FLT was asked to provide a description of the program and contact information to share with the rest of the group. I found this assignment extremely helpful because through it the FLT realized that there were more FLES programs than they realized and they could find a teaching position at this grade level.

For their field experience component, the FLT were still asked to attend the ECE centers for 20 hours during the semester. They also wrote reflective journals on the topics already selected for the previous early field experience, but I added three more topics: first joys and disappointments, implementing fun/interesting activities for children; and teaching context. They were still encouraged to use their world languages as much as possible in informal and formal activities at the ECE Centers.

After my first semester of teaching the PEFE, I asked center directors, teachers, and FLT for their feedback. The center directors and teachers from the ECE Center # 1 shared with me their concerns and recommendation through an e-mail message, below:

Sandra,

I have finally put my notes together for you. These are from the lead staff in each room, and the co-director and my suggestion from before about having a chance to meet them during one of their classes.

The teachers would appreciate:

- Students visit with their lead teacher as a group not sporadically
- Each room having the same language from semester to semester for continuity
- An observation period first so students can get a feel for the classroom functioning.
- No more than one or, at most, two students scheduled in any one classroom at a time. IF two they should speak to each other
• Explaining to your students to “just speak in their language,” not asking children if they “would like to learn the French word for ______?” asking questions of young children usually gets a “no” or at least no interest
• Is there benefit to students to be in birth to three classrooms?
• They should make efforts to learn the songs and finger plays being used in the classroom, teachers would be able to share this in meetings with them
• using the infant board books for the older children, which are easy to translate, we have tons of them
• Ways to use computers, we have internet access, and often need one on one interaction with children at the computer anyway
• Over naptime is ineffective for your students. I don’t know if anyone was scheduled then, but possibly
• There being some kind of official feedback from teachers required for the students regarding their interaction with children and teachers (some students did no interaction, no speaking, some did, others were very interactive) something as simple as a check off of expectations.
• Possibly you and the teachers working out that expectations list, they had some good ideas, as having each student have some assignment of labeling the classroom items, singing a song at circle, reading at circle, making a chart for weather, menu, etc. they have some ideas

So, as you can see, they had some comments! They don’t want you to think they didn’t like the experience; they would just like to help make it useful for the students, as well as themselves. I see this as part of the development of the course and connections between us. So, let me know when you would like to get together in the New Year.

Have a great holiday!
ECE Center #1 Director

This list was extremely helpful in planning the following semester, but I also needed to take into account the FLT’s views. For example, the FLT felt that the seminar was too short (65 minutes), and they were also concerned that the teachers at the centers were not aware of what they needed to do in the classroom. Further, they felt they needed more instructional time on E-Portfolios. Moreover, as the PEFE instructor and field experience supervisor, I was concerned that many FLT were more active than others in implementing activities, some did not know how to use basic vocabulary with the children, and the 20-hour requirements needed to be changed because students finished
their 20 hours in less than three weeks. Due to the fact that the program was in transition that year and many students were finally able to be identified as WL ED majors, the PEFE was offered again in the spring 2005 semester. This situation gave me the opportunity to address some of the above concerns and suggestions.

At the beginning of the spring 2005 semester, to address the teachers’ need to know the course requirements I contacted the centers and requested a meeting with the director and a representative teacher per classroom. I was able to share with them the new syllabus and other forms, including a new Requirements Guidelines Package. The first page of this package included a field experience expectations list on which I had worked during the Christmas break based on their suggestions and my experiences (see Appendix A). This Field Experience Participation Expectations read as follows:

1- Contact teachers as soon as you receive your placements and arrange to visit your center/school. Learn their names as soon as possible.
2- Use your first visit as an observation period, so you can get a feel for the classroom functioning, observe the children, learn their names and start looking for your space within the classroom.
3- The majority of you will be by yourselves, but those that are in pairs I don’t want one to be working and the other just looking around. The percentage toward your field experience is not only for attendance, I expect responsibility, initiative on your part, and interaction with the children ALL the time. Make sure you also communicate with the other students placed in your same classroom to collaborate among each other.
4- Attendance/Hours- Each student should plan to commit about---2-3 hours/1-3 days every week during the available supervised times---to the assigned pre-school center/school. The attendance requirement also applies to your field experience hours. If you are absent from your field experience you need to call your teachers at the centers/schools, and send an e-mail message to your course instructor no later than 24 hours after absence or points will be deducted from your field experience.
5- Always remember to sign in/out the WL ED 295A and center/school attendance sheets.
6- Wear name labels ALL the time during the first weeks.
7- Make a list of necessary classroom vocabulary that you may need to use during this experience the first day that you go to your assigned classroom.
8- Be useful! Help the teachers on the daily routines of the classroom like getting the kids ready for breakfast, etc. Incorporate the language in these tasks too.

9- Activities to do with the children:
   a- Plan and implement formal short activities (not more than 10 minutes) during circle time or class time (talk with your teachers). The teachers have some ideas on how you may have some assignments in the classroom. For example you could label the classroom items, sing a song at circle, reading at circle, make a chart for weather, menu, prepare a mini lesson (for older children), etc. **Good communication with your teachers is an essential element for your success incorporating yourself and your language into the classrooms.**

   *Note: As a class requirement you need to prepare 5 activity plans and its accompanying didactic materials. From these, you are required to implement 3 with the children at your center/school.*

   b- Learn as soon as possible commands, greetings, songs, poetry, rhymes, games, etc. in the language to use with the children in group and individual activities.

   c- Use the language in the playground, in the classroom, in the walks to point out objects around. “Just speak in your language,” do not ask the children if they “would like to learn the French word for ____?” Asking questions to young children usually gets a “no” or at least no interest.

   d- You should make efforts to learn the songs and finger plays being used in the classroom, teachers would be able to share this in meetings with you or ask them for it.

   e- Use the infant board books for the older children that are easy to translate; the Centers/schools have tons of them.

   f- Learn ways to use the computers. The centers/schools have internet access, so you can search for websites that may be of interest to the children. The centers/schools often need one on one interaction with children at the computer anyway.

   g- Talk with the teachers about the different projects (emergent curriculum/project-based learning, etc.) they are already working with the kids and incorporate the language you are teaching to these.

During these meetings with the ECE Centers staff, I also provided them with a list of the FLT who had available time in the mornings, because during the first week of classes I had met with the students and asked them for this information. Moreover, I also made some requests of the teachers. First, on their list they had mentioned the need for a form to use in evaluating the FLT. I had already started evaluation forms based on the WL ED Performance Framework, but I needed their assistance to ensure that the
performance indicators described some tasks/skills that they expected the FLT to gain in an ECE environment. In addition, I asked them to send me via e-mail the days and times they would prefer to have students. I also requested that one teacher per classroom become the “mentor teacher” for the FLT. After the meeting, each teacher sent me the information that I requested and I was able to send out the placements to the students and to the teachers to confirm that both parties had agreed to the arrangements. FLT assigned to the ECE Center #2 were also required to visit the center before the start of the experience. The difference was that the FLT would not be meeting the classroom teacher right away, but would meet the ECE Center #2 director. I joined the three FLT as they received a tour and orientation of the center. Each one was given information about the center’s philosophy and curriculum. The FLT were able to become acquainted with the learning environment before starting to incorporate the world languages in the classroom.

At the beginning of the semester, I tried to encourage the FLT to feel more comfortable about the PEFE through seminar visits from the directors of the ECE Center #1 and FLT who were part of the PEFE in fall 2004. The directors talked to the students about the center and the FLT shared their experiences during the PEFE to the new group. Moreover, to answer the rest of the FLT concerns, 15 more minutes were added to the seminar (one hour and 20 minutes). In addition, I included in the new requirements guidelines package some forms that could help them in the E-Portfolio development (E-Portfolio weekly suggested tasks, E-Portfolio Evidence sheet, and a sample E-Portfolio organization. I added four E-Portfolio workshops during seminar time, some of which included web development direct instruction by a university technology trainer. The FLT were also required to teach at least three of the five activity plans the FLT needed to
prepare for their didactic materials box. During the first week at the ECE Centers I asked
the FLT to submit with their reflective journals a list of at least 50 words in their world
languages that they felt they might need to use during their visits to the centers. The
vocabulary word list could include greetings, classroom objects, weather, colors,
numbers, animals, body parts, commands, and action words. Finally, to change the 20-
hours requirement dilemma, Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto and I reworded the requirements as a
2–3 hours/1–3 days ten-week early field experience. FLT who were assigned to ECE
Center #1 and #3 could go up to 30 hours, because they could visit the centers twice a
week for 60–90 minutes. Those FLT who were at the ECE Center #2 were only there
once a week for two hours. This difference was due to the fact that the ECE Center #2
had too many volunteers already observing and working with the children. The staff was
concerned that there were “too many adults.” Therefore, in selecting specific week days
they could balance the number of children and adults in the classrooms. The evaluation
forms took a longer time to finalize; by midterm I only asked teachers to submit a
feedback form on which they included comments on the FLT performance to that point in
time. However, by the end of the field experience the teachers were able to fill out a
formal evaluation form based on the WL ED performance framework. This new
evaluation form was put together with the help of only one of the mentor teachers and
was also filled out by the students and me (see Appendix B, PEFE Evaluation Forms).

I believed all these “technical” details made a difference in the PEFE, as it
provided more “structure,” one of the aspects students and teachers had asked for on
previous semesters. (See Table 4.2 for a comparison of changes made to the WL ED EFE
through its first five implementations.) However, as I interviewed and read more closely
the reflective journals of the FLT enrolled in the PEFE during this semester, I began to look closely at how they described their PEFE experiences. Through these data I learned that more areas needed further development in this initial field experience.

Summary

This chapter included information on how the WL ED program was developed by Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto and how the PEFE became one of the new requirements for future teachers interested in becoming world language teachers. The process was not easy and it took more than four years to convince all involved that a K–12 world languages teacher certification in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania required a program that educated FLT for these levels. The PEFE then became one of the entrance elements in the major requirements; new groups of FLT are now required to enroll in it rather than the general EFE for all other teacher education majors. Without a doubt, both Dr. Espinosa and I had our own purpose for this PEFE, but neither of us imagined how its ecological characteristics would lead the FLT to react differently to it. The chapters that follow present data on how the structure, content, context, and relationships interacted during the semester to cause each of the FLT experience the PEFE in a different way.
Table 4.2.
World Languages Education Early Field Experience Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spring 2001</th>
<th>Fall 2002</th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
<th>Spring 2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Field experience part of language methods class during senior year.</td>
<td>* Field experience became a separate course under the title: 2nd Language Acquisition Field Experience. The course was offered early in the teacher education program.</td>
<td>* Field experience course change title to: Early Field Experience in World Languages Education * Complete 20 volunteer hours in their assign ECE Center (3 ECE Centers) * Incorporate World Languages into classroom daily routines of the children and plan formal activities around four topics (body parts, colors, numbers, and animals) with their accompanying instructional materials. * 7 reflective journals on specific topics</td>
<td>* Field experience became an “official” course in the newly developed WL ED program * Complete 20 volunteer hours in their assign ECE Center (3 ECE Centers) * Incorporate World Languages into classroom daily routines of the children * 10 Reflective Journals on specific topics * Weekly Seminars with workshops to develop instructional materials; designing activity plans; FLES Readings Discussions through the use of a textbook (Curtain and Pesola, 2004) * Two E-Portfolio Workshops with course instructor * Plan formal activities around five topics (body parts, colors, numbers, animals, and weather) with their accompanying instructional materials * Special Assignments on FLES programs across the United States and Technology Resources for the world languages classroom</td>
<td>* Complete a 2-3 hours/1-3 days ten-week early field experience * Incorporate World Languages into classroom daily routines of the children. * Plan formal activities around five topics (body parts, colors, numbers, animals, and weather) with their accompanying instructional materials. Implement at least three of these activities with the children</td>
</tr>
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* 5 two hours Thursday Visits to ECE Center #2
* Incorporate World Languages into classroom daily routines of the children
* 5 reflective journals (no specific topic)
CHAPTER V

PEFE Implementation

This chapter presents data on how the FLT implemented the PEFE content, with a special look at the incorporation of the world language in their ECE classrooms. I also examine the ways in which they made connections with other elements of the WL ED program structure. Research data are presented on the relationships developed by the FLT with the people involved in the PEFE, such as mentor teachers and children, and how these relationships affected their thoughts and performance during the semester. The research data are presented in the form of narratives that include in-depth analysis of the experiences of six of the ten participants. These narratives provide examples of how each of the FLT experienced the PEFE in a different way. Additionally, these students reflect the diversity evident among the FLT who decided to enroll in the WL ED program. For example, Jason was one of only two males in a group of fifteen FLT enrolled in the PEFE; Elizabeth was a graduate student with a French undergraduate degree who enrolled in teacher education classes conducive to her teacher certification; Jocelyn was enrolled at another campus, but due to her interest in WL ED Spanish traveled twice a week to the main campus; Helen was a Japanese Australian interested in becoming a Spanish teacher rather than the typical Asian ESL teacher (to use her words); Samantha was a Spanish native speaker who wanted to learn more about her language to be able to teach it to others; and Kate could represent the white majority FLT who fell in love with a world language while she was in high school and decided to combine her interest in the language with her desire to become a teacher. By no means has the above FLT
represented completely the diversity of backgrounds of those who enrolled in the WL ED program; therefore, summaries of the experiences of the other four participants are presented to provide an additional glimpse.

*Jason Bezilla*

Even though he mentioned during our first interview that he did not have any particular idea of how the center looked, his first journal entry painted another picture. He was hopeful as he walked into the ECE Center #1 for the first time “on a bitter-cold, Wednesday morning, “My heart raced with excitement, filled with optimism.” Whatever the outcome, he knew that this was “an experience worth documenting in the annals of my mind” (Journal #1). This first statement, like many that Jason wrote out through the semester, led me to note his use of “big words,” which range from theoretical to poetic. During his first day at the center Jason noticed that the children were very interested in animals and asked him a lot of questions about them. Jason knew that “using animals will be a key to engaging their interest.” This is how he started to follow the class requirement of exposing the children to French through planned activities and involvement in their daily routines.

During his second visit Jason decided to make tiger, crocodile, lion, dog, cat, and mouse masks with the children. As they worked on their masks he would tell them the French word for the particular animal and have the children repeat it. In addition, he had an “I Spy” game version involving the animals. He would say to the kids, “I spy un lyon,” and they would find the lion for him with a “big smile;” and continue to ask him to do
another one. He was excited, because by the end of his visit the children were asking him

“for the names of all kinds of things in French.” Jason explained:

For example, when I said to one child “I spy un serpent,” and after they found the
snake, I told them about the biological habits of this particular species of snakes.
(It was a water snake and I explained to the interested child that there are many
sorts of snakes). Upon hearing it was a water snake, the child asked me how to
say water in French. Quel surprise!!! So, the child then learned not only snake in
French, but water snake: un serpent de l’eau. (Animals Activity Plan Reflection)

Jason’s enthusiasm continued during his second week at the ECE Center#1.

Through his journal reflections it seemed that he was enjoying spending time with the
children because doing so gave him the opportunity to learn as well from the children—

”it’s a two way street, a mutual picking of one another’s minds. They are teaching me so
much.” (Journal #2). His words demonstrated an admiration for the children and an open
mind about learning from them. Nonetheless, Jason’s excitement about teaching French
did not last very long. By his third week at the center he felt that:

the more time I spend with them, the less I think they are going to develop any
lasting sense of the language. The setting is not optimal for the children to learn
the language due to time constraints. Without the immersion or constant
repetition, they are only mimicking words that have no meaning to them. This
leads me to believe the French will not become a part of their cognitive
processing. This is not disappointing as I expected this to be the case from the
beginning. (Journal #3)

Jason’s hopes that the children would learn French were very low. It was his
perception that the ECE Center #1 was not an ideal location for the children to learn
another language because not enough time was allocated for this purpose. Moreover, he
also connected his low expectations with theoretical constructs that he was learning in his
language acquisition class (immersion, constant repetition, mimicking, and cognitive
processing). He was learning that all these language learning processes involved
investing time on teaching, time he did not have in his placement. As Jason continued his
field experience he described his use of French in the classroom as “both beleaguered and
blessed in the same breath…. when you feel that you are finally making progress, you
realize that you aren’t…. teaching French to the children is challenging; and challenge is
what gives us experience” (Journal #5). Midway in the semester, as he tried to overcome
his challenge, he also came to the realization that this experience was showing him what
his real professional aspirations were. Sadly, he realized that language teaching was not
for him and soon changed his major. Even though I was upset with his decision, it made
me realize that the PEFE was achieving what many educators had included as one of the
EFE’s purposes: future teachers having the opportunity to teach early enough to decide if
they wanted to be teachers or not. It was also interesting to note how Jason connected his
decision with the theories he had learned:

I once learned in one education theories and practices course that a person has a
hierarchy of motivation when teaching children. They are either motivated for
personal benefits, the need for change, or to serve the greater society as it exists
already. Those who fall into the last two categories are more adept to teach as
they have a tremendous conviction in what they are doing. Sadly, my conviction
in becoming a teacher is dwindling and I am finding that my want to study
language is slightly more selfish than I first thought. To me language is alive and I
feel malnourished when I cannot use it in a pragmatic context. It’s like an atrophy
of my heart. The children have learned nothing of French and I have learned that I
am in truth, ravenous to study literature and linguistics. I can clearly imagine
myself teaching French in a high school setting, dying from the lack of interest in
foreign studies so familiar to adolescents in America. (Journal #6)

His decision to not become a teacher had nothing to do with the age of the students, but
his own “selfish” motivation. Jason discovered that he was more interested in continuing
learning more about French linguistics and literature than teaching groups of students
who may lack the interest to learn the language. He could not even stand the idea of this
happening to him when he loved French.

This combination of emotions took a toll on Jason, and by the sixth week he felt
completely exhausted after leaving the center. The mental energy he was investing in the experience was affecting his physical energy and he did not want to continue doing this in the future (Journal #6). It also did not help that two of the activities he had planned were described by him as “failures.” As he planned his first formal activity, a dominoes game to teach the children the numbers in French, he thought that because he enjoyed playing dominoes the children would also like it. For Jason it was a “simple game that would facilitate the children’s understanding of French numbers unto itself. But I was dead wrong: the kids had more fun tearing the domino pieces apart and creatively turning them into something new (A pirate ship for example)” (Journal #7). He acknowledged during our first interview that “making activities for the appropriate level of difficulty was really challenging” and the dominoes activity was a perfect example of this. He thought that the kids could count and that they would like it, but “it was complete failure” (Interview #1). In his “body parts” activity, he also noticed that he had planned an activity that was not age-appropriate, because the children became bored with being traced on paper to show the many parts of the body. Jason noticed that the children’s interests “died down and our ‘tracee’ would become bored and wriggle around. In one instance, the little boy who was being traced jumped up and left” (Body Parts Activity Plan Reflection). He regretted at that moment not teaching the children the body parts through a French version of the song “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes…,” because that’s the way he had learned them. It is interesting that even though Jason thought about his previous knowledge, he did not plan an activity using what he knew. Not always do future teachers teach as they were taught (Lortie, 1975/2002).

Actually, Jason’s rationale for this activity was connected to the knowledge he
was acquiring, as I had used this activity during our seminar workshop as an example of a possible activity to teach parts of the body. Moreover, after receiving several activity plans involving use of the *Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes* song I had discouraged the FLT from using it and encouraged them to be more creative and original. But when Jason implemented the activity in a “real” context, even though it “had a solid, fundamental base which took into account for a kinesthetic style of learning, it was fundamentally flawed” (Journal #7). Jason noticed that many of the children were not able to trace one another because they lacked “fine motor capability.” As a result, the children were bored, frustrated, and uninterested, and he left that day “with marker all over me and a headache.” It was not until Jason decided to go back to his initial context observation when the children enjoyed learning about animals that he was more successful teaching French. One day as he was sitting with one of his “little buds,” they began to draw pictures. The little girl remembered his first drawing activity with the animal masks and asked him if they could play the “drawing game” and he agreed. His description of what happened after this moment is worth citing at length:

> All of the sudden as we played this game, and to my great dismay, an idea exploded inside my head like a TV dinner left inside a microwave too long. The game we played was an ingenious tool for instruction! Lo and behold, I had a media to teach French animals right under my nose and did not even know it. The simplicity of the game was such that the “players” named an animal for the other to draw. The first animal this girl named was a horse. After I finished drawing the horse and she a monkey, I handed it to her and said “un cheval.” She smiled and questioned “How do you say that in French?” I laughed since I had just said it in French, but again repeated “cheval.” She tried it and I was very proud to hear her succeed. After that, the game took its own route with me drawing and her repeating the name in French. At one point in time, so many kids saw what we were doing and were excited by it. Many would approach me and ask that I draw for them an animal. It was then that I taught them a phrase that is renowned in France: *dessin-moi un mouton*. This phrase is said by the main character in a book called *Le Petit Prince*. To them I said that if I were to draw an animal, they must first ask me in French. For each animal they named I renamed it in French...
and then they repeated. I thus completed my required activity of teaching animals. Although unplanned and coming to me at a whim, this activity was very successful. It made me realize that as a teacher, one must be flexible and fluid to the dynamics of a learner. Real learning is not something that can be forced down anyone’s throat. Learning occurs when a teacher molds their knowledge, and for a student, in fashions that are creative and meaningful. From this experience I have generated a new hypothesis: having a tangible mediator, something that connects to a student’s prior knowledge and engages their interest, is a necessary part of the cognitive learning process. This cognitive approach yields observable instances of learning behavior, thereby satisfying Bloom’s Learning Taxonomy. By creating an experience for a student, a teacher may kindle learning; it takes more than a piece of chalk and a blackboard for it learning to occur. (Journal #7)

Through his “big words,” Jason connected what he had learned in his education courses with this teaching moment. He recognized the importance of using the context and what the children were interested in to have greater success in his teaching of French. He described this “spur of the moment” change as one of the most successful teaching moments he had during the PEFE—a moment through which it is “the child who teaches me to teach it, and so I follow whenever I am called” (Journal #9). Without knowing it Jason was also following the ECE Center’s emergent curriculum philosophy in which the children’s interests guide the learning themes. Jason also came to the conclusion that he was most successful teaching some French in “one on one” situations.

The relationships that he formed with the children became one of the reasons Jason continued attending the ECE Center, even after he had made the decision to change his college major to French and Comparative Literature. He even dropped the WL ED 300W course, but not the PEFE. In addition, his interests in seeing theories in action was evident as he explained that the children’s “emotions, body language, and speech are teaching me a lot about the way in which a child learns,” and he connected this learning with his own joy in “the learning I am receiving as a result of my interactions with the
kids” (Journal #3). Nonetheless, he acknowledged during the first interview that at least half of the children did not remember his name and that was disappointing for him.

In contrast, his relationship with his mentor teacher was one that is difficult to describe. On the one hand, she might fit Hall and Davis’s (1995) description of the “expert” mentor relationship, because through her example Jason could see how many of the teaching theories he was learning in his educational psychology class coincided with the way she interacted with her children, such as how she used play to teach the children. In addition, as he observed her being very patient with the children, he recognized that patience was a quality he felt he lacked (Journal #6). On the other hand, he did not feel she guided him in planning and implementing his activities. Jason felt that he was just put into a situation in which it was “here you go,” with little guidance. He would have really appreciated having had his mentor teacher sit down with him while he was doing his activities. This situation was extremely frustrating for him (Interview #1). Moreover, he also disagreed with the manner in which one particular teacher assistant disciplined a little girl because she did not want to pick up some toys. As he observed the teacher assistant raising her voice in anger, he offered to help the little girl, but the assistant stopped him from doing so. Jason felt that his strategy to help out was part of team work and not undermining to the child. He felt that the teacher assistant did not recognize how her actions could really harm the little girl and that was very frustrating for him (Journal #4/Interview #1).

While he had many ups and downs throughout his experience, at the end of the semester, Jason described the PEFE as:

a very enjoyable class in which I learned a lot about the principles behind language acquisition in young children. I now have a formidable website, an
excellent field experience, and a great hope for the future. My only wish is that my time spent at the ECE Center #1 will somehow make a positive difference in the kids’ life. (Journal #10)

This reflection summarized what the PEFE meant for him, a context through which he was able to see language acquisition theories in action. Even though Jason still felt that the ECE context was not an ideal one in which to teach languages, he did recognize it as a context in which he was able to see language acquisition theories taking place. Moreover, although he was not very successful in teaching French when he planned a formal activity, he had a lot of success incorporating it into small group activities that he came up with on the “spur of the moment,” but which without knowing it fit well with the emergent curriculum philosophy. One also wonders whether he might have had a better experience if his mentor teacher had guided him more when he was planning and implementing his activities. With her guidance, he might have noticed beforehand that the children did not know how to count yet and that his dominoes activity was too advanced for the children’s learning skills.

Elizabeth Bour

At the beginning of the PEFE, Elizabeth was extremely doubtful and afraid. At one point she seemed angry and frustrated with having to attend an early childhood center as a requirement in becoming a French teacher. She repeated several times that she was terrified (actually petrified), because she did not know how to work with little children and had had very little interaction with small children throughout her life. Elizabeth mentioned during our interview that she did not have little brothers, sisters or even little cousins who could help her in interacting with this new group of children. During her
first weeks at the center, I became concerned because every time I went to see her she was standing in a corner with her arms crossed, just staring at the children. She really did not know what to do, but she decided to make the best of the semester (Interview #1). Elizabeth tried to modify her thoughts in order to turn the PEFE into “a good learning experience for me because I would like to know more about children—my fear and avoidance of children comes from my lack of exposure to them. So, I would like to break this ‘vicious circle’” (Journal #1). During her first visit to the ECE Center #2, her mentor teacher was very understanding and made Elizabeth feel comfortable enough to start interacting with the children. By the time she left Elizabeth actually had “fun playing with the children and getting used to the environment” (Journal #1). Her mentor teacher gave her his e-mail address so that she could let him know if she had any ideas for an activity she could do at one of the learning stations. Therefore, from her first day Elizabeth started to think of French words she could actually use in the classroom. She was very surprised with how the environment was set up. Elizabeth never went to daycare; therefore, her personal experience in this regard also influenced how she expected the ECE Center #2 to be. She thought it would be a more structured environment, more like her kindergarten classroom, “where there were toys and stations, but also a chalkboard, more tables, and formal instruction time. I thought that there would be a teacher instead of three coordinators….I am surprised at how relaxed and fun the environment is” (Journal #1).

Although she had a good first day experience, it was not enough to enable her to overcome her fears and nervousness by the time of her second visit to the ECE Center #2. She felt that “all morning my stomach was in knots because I was nervous about going
back. I did not all of a sudden become comfortable around little children last week when I went for the first time. This would be a gradual process for me” (Journal #2). However, when she arrived at her classroom she had fun and played with children, feeling that “some of the children are starting to bond with me—I’m not a stranger anymore.” Nonetheless, before her third visit she was still hesitant to go to the center; she was not afraid of the children, but felt “embarrassed that I don’t know anything about children.” While she was riding the bus she began to feel frustrated with her anxiety and asked herself, “When will it go away?” Helen was there with her and that helped to calm her down. She was secretly relieved when she got to her classroom and discovered a special Chinese New Year celebration with planned activities going on in all the classrooms. Therefore, she did not have to interact much with the children.

It was not until her fourth visit that Elizabeth started to feel less anxious and began enjoying herself as she started to participate in the children’s daily activities, without over-thinking it. Her teacher’s support was instrumental during this time as he encouraged her to plan French activities for the children according to the children’s interest. As soon as she started implementing her activities she experienced a mixture of emotions. She was very happy when, in conjunction with her teacher, she taught a group of children through a card game the numbers 1-5 in French. The children remembered the numbers and “even recited the numbers some more when we counted out ingredients in making play dough” (Journal #4). Her teacher continued using the game on other occasions when she was not at the center. However, her breakthrough came when she planned a musical colors game and “It went perfectly!!!”

To describe my game, it includes 10 colored circles with French monuments on them and a spinner with the 10 colors. I laid the circles out in a circular path on
She could not stop talking about how well this particular activity went and how her mentor teacher also used the game through the week (Journal #6). Her body parts activity was not as successful—she traced a figure of a girl on paper and the children had to identify each of the body parts. As it was for Jason, the activity turned out to be boring for the children. But, Elizabeth decided to try a different version with a “pin-the-nose-on-the-clown” activity, but that did not work either. Nonetheless, she did feel that this activity had potential, but two important aspects did not work on her favor. First, the children were more interested in other games and activities that were taking place, so only one or two played her game. Second, her mentor teacher was absent that day and he was usually the one who helped her get the children excited enough to play her French activities. When he came back, Elizabeth said, “having Steve back in class was so relieving” (Journal #3)!

Elizabeth was also capable of little by little acquiring some comfort level in speaking French during the daily activities of the children. For example, she would sit down with different children and play Candy Land with them, and in the process of playing she would review the colors with them. When she first started playing Candy Land, she would ask the children if they remembered certain colors, but as she kept playing she found it was “more natural to just say the color as I flipped over a card” and they would follow her example (Journal Entry #6). One particular boy was “extremely
interested in playing in French, and would keep saying the colors in French and would ask me the names of the ones he forgot. It was a great feeling.” Therefore, as Elizabeth explains:

Well, when my activities went well, I felt great! But when they did not I was so devastated! I just couldn’t understand what I was doing wrong; I actually had to have it explained to me that sometimes you are not doing anything wrong, the children they are in a different mood, or maybe next time it will work. Like this time it did not work, but next time it will. Or when I was doing something that I could improve on, they, the teachers, help me with ideas. (Interview #1)

Nonetheless, Elizabeth felt that she “could do more with them,” meaning teaching full lessons in French like the ones she was used to doing with her undergraduate students in the French courses she taught (Journal#6). Her professional background as a TA and not her own personal experience as a French learner influenced her desire to teach the children French “lessons” or “instituted activities” as she later called them in her Journal #9. However, she understood that if she wanted to teach such lessons it needed to be in the form of a game if she wanted to maintain the children’s attention. In addition, even though she did not make use of theoretical concepts throughout her journals, during the first interview she acknowledged that she did observe a connection between theory and practice through children’s clicks, English language learning, interests, interactions, conversations, and through avoiding taking them “away from what they are doing, and trying to get them to come to you.” She was particularly interested in those children whose first language was not English. She observed them in developing their English through her ten weeks.
By the end of the experience, even though Elizabeth still wanted to teach older children she had mixed feeling as she left. Her final journal and an individual interview answer summarized her PEFE:

I really had mixed feelings about that being my last visit with the children. I learned a lot in the past 10 weeks, and I really enjoyed building relationships with the children and with the instructors, especially Steve! The placement ended, but I was still in the process of learning how to teach little children French and learning about the people at the daycare. However, at the same time, I was glad that it was my last visit. I don’t want to teach little children French and putting my time in every Thursday was very frustrating. I liked when I had an activity to do (which is why I took and reused several of them), but when I was empty handed, the time went more slowly. Basically I just felt awkward during the placement, but so much less so towards the last few visits than the first few. I cannot BELIEVE the progress that I made!!! The first visit, I freaked out after being there for 5 minutes. The second visit, my stomach was in knots and I did NOT want to go. Now I am going to miss going! I really built up some great relationships. (Her emphasis, Journal #10)

I learned just to like children. I was scared about that, because I thought “Maybe I just don’t want children.” People keep telling me, someday you will want them. Now, I just think they are just so amazing, I just realized there is so much about children, I learned so much about myself. No, it is not that I did not like them; I just did not know anything about them. That was the biggest shock. The one thing is, well everything is kind of different. But the one thing is HAVING to be there, because during the past 24 years I’ve made the choice of not being around children (Laughs). Now, with the field experience, I had no other choice. We had to go every week, but I wanted to keep coming back and learn more about children. Seeing them every week and you come back and they are excited to see you. That’s just the greatest feeling! (Interview #1)

Through this journal reflection and interview responses, Elizabeth demonstrated her growth as she moved beyond her anxiety and embarrassment towards not knowing how to interact with children, to feeling more comfortable with the “little adults.” The combination of her relationship with the teacher and being able to come up with activities that the children liked helped her to relax and enjoy the PEFE. Elizabeth is probably one of the best examples of how, when all ecological characteristics work together, a field experience can make a future teacher grow on both professional and personal levels, in
ways that not even the teacher educators could anticipate. Even though she never quite agreed with the “unstructured” environment and many times wished there could be more “instituted activities” instead of free time, she was able little by little to immerse herself and take advantage of this opportunity to overcome her own fears and anxieties around children. She understood through observing the context and approaches that children preferred learning French through games. Her relationship with her mentor teacher was instrumental to her success. They had a complementary mediator relationship as he was not only present while she was teaching the children, but also repeated the French activities with the children during the rest of the week without Elizabeth (Hall & Davis, 1995). Therefore, by the time she returned the children remembered what she had taught them the week before. If he was not present, and she was not successful with her activities, Elizabeth would attribute it to the fact that he was not there. More than her activities, he was her “security blanket.” Even though Elizabeth did not consider teaching her language to children, she made the best of her experience and learned as much as possible about children for her own personal reasons.

_Samantha Diaz_

Samantha entered the ECE Center #1 full of fears, but also hopes about making a difference. Her main fear was in not being able to be “a good ‘teacher;’ that I would not be able to encourage them, motivate them, and influence them in any way. I would like to have made a difference in at least one of them” (Journal #1). Let’s remember that Samantha was a Puerto Rican native Spanish speaker who felt she did not have good teachers who challenged her during her schooling. Therefore, her main motivation to
become a teacher was the possibility of having a positive influence on her students. As she entered her classroom for the first time, she was literally “knocked down to the floor” by some children who also wanted to tickle her. At this point she was not sure what she could do and “it seemed so scary for a second” (Journal #1). Samantha decided to ask them for their names; doing so made them stop and she stood up. She then started to learn more about the children and the classroom environment. She felt that the kids looked up to her as “another teacher” as they had questions for her and asked for help when they needed it. This made her feel “more comfortable, relaxed, and it was ok to try new things with them” (Journal #1). Samantha definitely had the disposition needed to have a good PEFE, but as the weeks passed by her enthusiasm started to fade as pretty much all the ecological characteristics worked against her. The context, especially the element of time, was an important factor in Samantha’s not being able to implement more Spanish activities. Due to work responsibilities, she was unable to attend the center in the morning, which left her only one option for classroom placement, since in the rest of the rooms the children took naps in the afternoon. Moreover, during most of the time that she was in her classroom, a Kinesiology future teacher was busy working on his practicum, which left her with little time to establish her own activities.

Implementing the Spanish language in this classroom has not been easy. There were many factors for this. It was not easy for me to implement an activity, since they were at their gym class while I was there. Unfortunately, by the time that their gym class was over and I had them to myself I felt like it was too late to take the role as a teacher. They had already portrayed me as another college student in the classroom that was there to play with them and play “tag” during their free time in the playground. (Journal #9)

As the weeks progressed she felt less like a “teacher” and more like someone the children wanted to play with. Trying to use Spanish in the classroom with such limited
time was a real challenge, and when she was finally able to implement an activity, she noticed that the children got bored and left as quickly as possible. Sadly, her activity was similar to the body tracing activity that both Jason and Elizabeth had also tried with little success.

I had one of the students laid on a big sheet of paper while the others outlined his body. Then I had labels that they used to label it as I told them what they were in Spanish. I had planned to play Simon says with them after labeling the body, but they were so anxious to go play at the centers that they were not interested in doing anything with me. After the activity I went to at least 3 of the kids that were participating and I asked them what they thought of it. They all told me the same thing that they liked it but that they would’ve preferred to be playing at the centers with their friends. I think that if they would have of all been participating in the activity I might have received a different response. From my part the fact that I was so nervous did not let me think straight. That was my first time ever trying to teach something and I was not expecting their reactions. I had no idea what to say to get their attention or to maintain the same enthusiasm they had when asked to take part on an activity I had planned. The fact they kept asking me if we were done or if they can go made me more nervous and clueless of what to say. (Journal #7)

After these tries (as the instructor who gave the FLT this activity idea), I realized that it was not a good choice for teaching children the body parts in another language, as the children in all three cases got bored and just wanted to leave. Even though the children’s wanting to be with their friends was also a factor, the tracing activity had not captivated their interest. As Zeichner (1987) reminded us, it is extremely important to see how the field experience curriculum is actually implemented, and the body tracing activity is the perfect example of how an idea practiced during a seminar workshop did not quite work in the ECE Centers.

Nonetheless, Samantha did feel she was successful using Spanish in one-on-one situations when she used the context materials. For example, she use Spanish colors when the children were playing with their wooden blocks, LEGO games, and coloring books.
Samantha would also point out a color on the clothes the children were wearing. She believed that “telling the meaning in Spanish of whatever they were using or doing at the moment” was more significant than saying random, unfamiliar words with no meaning for them, and that the children paid more attention because the words were used for “something that they could relate to” (Journal #8). One of her best experiences was when, one day, she had a short interaction with a boy who was playing with a LEGO game. As she started helping him build a cart, handing him the different colored LEGOs, she told him the names of the colors in Spanish; as “this one is amarillo, get another amarillo” (Interview #2). Afterwards she proceeded to ask him what color the LEGO was and he would tell her. Samantha was happy, as this little boy was one of the few children with whom she would feel a “positive attitude when I approach them and bring up the Spanish. I had positive response to what I was trying to do, to what I was supposed to be doing in the classroom…that was one of the best things” (Interview #2). This successful moment was extremely important for her, because other than these and other small instances, she felt that she had not built good relationships with the children and her mentor teacher.

Samantha’s experiences during her PEFE were affected by what she identified as “not being able to build a relationship and environment for the students to feel comfortable and be willing to learn a new language. This is in part because I have not spent enough one-to-one time with the students” (Journal #5). Her scheduled time affected tremendously her relationship with the children, as they did not see her as a teacher and “that did not help whenever I tried to act as one” (Journal #9). Unfortunately, the majority of the children “rejected” her attempts to converse in Spanish with them, to
the point that on her last day at the ECE Center #1, one of the little girls told her, “Yes, I am glad you are leaving.” Samantha did not want to take it personally, but she felt that the little girl did not feel comfortable with her (Interview #2). In addition, throughout her journals and during the interviews she mentioned how the children “nicely” rejected her attempts to teach them a word or two in Spanish:

I guess it would be different if they would walk away or rudely ask me to stop, but on the contrary, they are very nice about it and that’s what makes it harder for me to continue…. What do I do when the student asked me to stop or when their friends play an important part in their decision making? Do I keep insisting or do I move on to the next group? (Journal #5)

During seminar time and the focus group interview we discussed this situation as a group, since not only Samantha, but many of the FLT were constantly receiving rejections from the children. The following exchange during the focus group is worth citing at length as the FLT discussed among themselves this situation. Please also note how Samantha was personally affected by these “rejections” as she said several times:

Amy: It is usually they are doing something already, like I am busy. I don’t know what I was doing, I think we were cutting out parts I think with different color paper and I was like “do you want to know how to do that in Spanish?” and she was like “NO.” We are about to cut it, and I was like that was it.

Samantha: I had one that invited me to color with her. So, I started like “Do you know how to say red in Spanish, is rojo, that’s the same as red in Spanish. And she is like “Could you please help me color? I don’t want to learn Spanish. [Laughter] I am like ok, like where do I go from here? And then like I went on to another color, and she just walked away from me.

Kaylynn: I think a lot of our kids, like I said in my journal; they are used to this every semester, like they get a new person every semester.

Helen: Like maybe they expect you to have like have like a Spanish time.

Samantha: The routine, they cannot just run something into the classroom, and expect it to be interesting, like they have to see it more than once.

Amy: I feel like of they get someone there every semester basically, shouldn’t they know that and maybe set some time aside, you know what I mean. Like, I don’t know is kind of hard to do.

Jocelyn: I noticed the difference in mine, where I think even with my structured activities in centers they did not learn as much. Like in my classroom, when I had all the kids focusing on me, so I was able to incorporate Spanish into their
calendar time that’s all stuff they know, and the couldn’t say no because they had
to. Those were things that we were going to do.
*Samantha:* One thing that I have noticed with my kids is that they don’t interact
with me as much as they wanted to at the beginning. I think that they see me as,
“oh, that’s the girl that’s going to try to teach me Spanish.” [laughter] That makes
me wonder like wow! What do I say, what do I do? But, I noticed that a lot.
They don’t interact with me as much as the beginning, ‘cause of that. It is not
something that I try to do in front of them every time that I am with them. I try
one day, then try the next day, but they know already, “here she comes to try to
teach me something in Spanish.” I am there during their playtime, their center
time, they want to play, that’s the only time they really have to play the way they
want to. Run around, do whatever they want. They don’t want to be taught
anything right now; they just want to have fun.
*Helen:* It sounds like you had a hard time, having them talk to you. I see that
between the kids too. There is a girl who has a best friend, when her friend is out,
she kind of wanders around for a little bit, but afterwards, she picks up the shovel
and starts digging out with another girl or something. That’s what I pretty much
do, I try like do what they did and like when they start talking, I don’t even be like
“do you want to know what this is?” I’ll be like “oh, *amarillo.*”
*Samantha:* I do that too, but then they look at me like “oh, really? ‘Cause I did
not ask you that.” [laughter] I am serious! They tell me that “Could you please
play with me?” I think they think “just play with me, I don’t want to learn
Spanish.”
*Kaylynn:* My kids they did the same thing to me at the beginning. The older girls
hanged out with me non-stop, and then when I started speaking Spanish they
stopped. Then they started having the big attitude and that got to my last nerve.
But, I came in one day with my nails done and that caught all their attention like
they started “what color is that in Spanish? Ha? Ha? Ha? Trying to like …
[laughter] Then I kept changing my colors like every week or so and that’s what I
did for the whole entire time. I kept changing the colors of the nails, then they will
sit there and asked me the colors, and then they would repeat it after me. They
were like “Are you going to change the colors?”
[laughter]
*Helen:* I tried like every single click, and they’ll say “just play with the sand,
don’t do that right now.” But like there was this one boy, who was caught on, he
just thought it was the greatest thing. We were playing with LEGOs this one day,
I did not expect it, and then he goes *azul,* and I was like “what, what did you say?
and I kept saying it with him, and we had fun, and I think that like when the other
kids saw that, it did not have to be all about learning, “it is like the words I use.”
*Kate:* I think they see Spanish more as something I speak, rather than something
they have to learn.
*Kaylynn:* I think my kids think that we are supposed to be like the rest of the
people that just come in and just play with them. I think that’s the big problem,
‘cause I notice when my teacher says, “Why don’t you ask Miss Kaylynn how to
say the farm animals in Spanish?” They sit down and listen to it.
Samantha: I would have liked if the teachers would have done, like I don’t know maybe when we are walking, I would have like if the teachers would ask me how to say this in Spanish. Or even in the classroom when they are doing this and that. Of course I try, I really try to speak to this kids, and try to incorporate it little by little, but it is obvious to me they don’t want to do it, ‘cause I am just telling them random words.

Helen: I pretended that I did not know the colors in English. Like I just gave up, I said, “I am just going to pretend like Spanish is my first language, the only language I speak, and I was like “Hola, ¿cómo estás? And I start saying things, like “stupid” things like “oh, azul” and they were like “no, its blue” and I was like “azul, that’s how I say it,” “no, we say blue.” And I was like “how do you say it?” and I was like “oh, es azul.” So, I kept saying that and I think they got that. I did that, and I think the kids liked that, because I think they kind of felt like they were trying to teach me English. I thought that was kind of funny.

Kaylynn: My kids had a problem that the time I went, eight o’clock in the morning. They would look at me and be like “Would you stop talking to me?”[laughter] I noticed when I went in the afternoon one day, like they were totally different. They actually care to say the words in Spanish, like the food we were eating and stuff like that, and they were really neat about that. So, I don’t know. (Focus group)

Definitely, these rejections did not help Samantha or any of the FLT in their efforts to establish good relationships with all of the children. These comments are very similar to those expressed by Irving’s students (1977). Nonetheless, they arrived at the conclusion that they should move to other children, avoid asking the children if they wanted to learn some Spanish, and just include words in their interactions as normally as possible, or try to grab the children’s interest through activities that children would enjoy. However, Samantha would have appreciated having more help from her mentor with the children’s rejection.

Samantha was really “hoping to be closer to the teacher.” Even though she did learn from observing her mentor teacher about classroom management, Samantha’s teacher did not make her feel “welcome” with something as simple as introducing her to the children and giving her “an overview of the things that the kids do, the things they like to do, and not expect me to learn on my own”(Interview #1). Maxie (2001) argued
that a mentor teacher’s first step in improving the relationship between the FLT and the children should be to “appropriately introduce” them as a teacher when they first arrive in the classroom because it could help to build the FLT’s “teaching image” (p. 120). Instead of helping Samantha build her image through an introduction and support, her teacher made her feel:

like I was alone. That I was just left just to learn on my own. Even when I many times requested feedback, and I never got anything. And when I shared my one activity plan, I just got an “ok, that sounds great.” (Focus group).

Samantha’s relationship with her teacher was not reciprocal. Moreover, I am not quite sure if it could fit it into any of the Hall and Davis (1995) categories; it was neither complementary nor reciprocal since the mentor teacher did not even acknowledge Samantha’s presence in the classroom. All these aspects contributed to Samantha’s disappointment during the PEFE. I must admit that I also felt responsible for her experience, as I was taking a class during her time at the center and I was unable to keep a close eye on her. I also did not ask Samantha’s mentor teacher to include her in the classroom activities. During one of my morning times at the ECE Center #1, her mentor teacher mentioned to me that Samantha was very good in interacting with the children. That would have been a good opportunity for me to become a “mediator” and ask the mentor teacher for more time with Samantha in implementing her activities, but I did not take advantage of this opportunity.

At the end of the PEFE, when Samantha reflected on her experiences it was very hard for her to feel that she had not made the type of difference she wanted to make at the beginning of the semester:

One of the negative aspects of this experience was the time that I was supposed to be in the classroom with them. Not being able to set a relationship with the kids
where they would expect me at a certain time and know that I was there to teach them another language disappoints me. I wanted to leave knowing that I made a difference, I might have but not as I wanted. At the end I just wanted it to be over to a certain extend because I knew that what I wanted to leave behind was not going to happen. (Journal #10)

But, not all was disappointing. Even though she was not successful in implementing her activities or creating good relationships with the children and her mentor teacher, she made connections in her field experience with her teacher education classes, especially WL ED 300W. Samantha observed how, when children learn a language, they “come up with their own words, put words together, the way they try to spell words, and write the words the way they sound; that’s a good example of the things I have learned in 300” (Interview #1). In addition, she recognized the role of context in teaching, especially in language teaching. Samantha learned through her PEFE and WL ED 300W that “context is the foundation for learning a language; it determines meaning” (Journal #8).

All ecological characteristics worked against Samantha in her PEFE. It was extremely difficult for her to implement her activities due to her time at the centers and the rejections she received from the children. Moreover, her teacher did not acknowledge her presence in the classroom, which made the task of establishing relationships with the children harder than she originally imagined. However, even with these challenges Samantha’s “helping” spirit was still there at the end of the PEFE as she explains:

One thing that I learned about myself as a language teacher was that my focus should not be in just trying to teach a language, but rather trying to teach them about what surrounds them and how they could apply it. I learned that being a teacher is more than just teaching, being a teacher is also being able to guide, assist someone when they need help whether is a child or an adult. (Journal #9)
It would have unfortunate if as a consequence of the PEFE, Samantha’s goal of helping others had diminished.

Jocelyn Harris

Jocelyn had a unique situation which I believe contributed immensely to the ecological characteristics of the PEFE: her personal experience as a mother of a six-year-old. This fact, in conjunction with the ECE context in which she was placed for her PEFE, and excellent communication with her mentor teacher contributed to her good experience. Jocelyn acknowledged the fact that her personal experience as a mother was an advantage as she was “able to relate to the children and they seem very eager to learn. I don’t think that we are going to have any problems establishing instructor/students relationships” (Journal #2). Her hometown ECE Center was also one referred to by many of the FLT as “structured,” which basically meant the children had specific scheduled activities to follow with very little “free” play time. The similarities with a kindergarten environment were greater than at the ECE Centers on campus attended by the rest of the FLT. Jocelyn even told her classmates who complained about the lack of structure in their placements to move to her town.

I think that my experience was definitely a lot different, because I think you guys should move to my town. It was just like a structured kindergarten, because they were trying to get the kids ready for kindergarten, so they called it pre-K. So, they have like their opening things, and that’s why I find this to be odd, because I know with my son, when I would take him to daycare it was nothing like school. But, these kids I think they set something up. I think like the parents and the teachers set something up for them, because there are teams. There is a structure, I think that’s why it was easy for me, because the teacher let me take over, and instead of focusing on her they focused on me. (Focus group)
Moreover, because she was placed at this center, she did not have five more FLT trying to teach Spanish or French and was given all the time that she needed to implement her activities. One of her activities included a cultural element as she prepared “maracas” with the children and explained their musical use. Jocelyn then used the maracas to teach the numbers, as the children had to shake the maracas as many times as the number she called out. In addition, the classroom structure helped her to include Spanish in the daily activities of the children, as she incorporated greetings and feelings during the morning routine through songs.

Every time I go to the center, the children and I sing “The Hello Song”. I taught them the song during the second week of my experience and they now have the song down pat. It’s very simple. The song first is in English then in Spanish. The children and I also sing “The Good-bye Song” when I leave. (Journal #5)

Also, I’ve found that the children really enjoy telling me how they feel in Spanish. The children and I sing a song asking how we feel and the children are able to tell me if they feel “bien,” “mal,” or “ásí así.” I think they were able to understand this lesson because it is something that refers to context rather than simple memorization. (Journal #9)

Her mentor teacher not only encouraged her to teach the children Spanish, but also wanted to learn it herself. This student/mentor relationship was also reciprocal, as both of them wanted to learn from the other and respected each other’s knowledge. Moreover, as with Elizabeth, her teacher practiced some of the Spanish words with the children during the times Jocelyn was not there. However, Jocelyn had two main concerns regarding her mentor teacher. The first one was the “joke” approach her teacher used to manage children’s behavior.

She usually makes a joke out of whatever the children are doing that they shouldn’t be doing. This usually gets their attention. The only down-fall to this approach, that I’ve noticed, is that the children tend to get hyper or laugh for a really long time after the joke, which then cuts into the lesson time anyway. (Journal #2)
Jocelyn, on the other hand, would have used what she called “the feelings approach,” through which she would make the children aware that their behavior was not appropriate.

For example, if “Johnny” is acting up, simply say, “Wow, that really makes me feel sad when you act that way. It also makes me feel disappointed.” The kids will hopefully then ask what disappointed means. I’ve noticed that they usually do ask, especially if they really are concerned that your feelings are hurt. (Journal #4)

Jocelyn’s second complaint about her teacher was that even though she was glad that her teacher encouraged the children to ask her words in Spanish, these words were random and not necessarily related to the context. And she had learned from her coursework that language should be used within a context or relationship with which the students were familiar. She explained:

I noticed that with learning colors. Like different things like counting one to five. That was something that they did for mathematical lessons, they were familiar with that. Not so much contextually, but they were familiar with it and I was able to kind of use them together and just realized that I did not want to teach the kids things like, I can’t think of something right now. But things that they don’t, like caterpillar, that is something cute, but they are not going to remember that. Or fairies. (Interview #2)

In the above quote, we see the influence that her other world language courses were having on her practice. Jocelyn was able to also connect her experiences at the ECE Center #3 with the other courses she had been taking. At the end of the PEFE Jocelyn summarized her experience as follows:

Now, at the end of the field experience, I have learned a great deal of new information. I have learned that teaching language to younger students can be very difficult. I’ve learned that I, as a teacher, have to be prepared for every event. I’ve learned that teachers have to be aware of what is going on in the classrooms at all times. Most of all, I’ve learned that even when you think a child is not listening to you or paying attention, he or she is soaking in all of the information that you’ve given them. This semester’s experience has been wonderful and I am so glad I had the opportunity to take the course. (Journal #10)
Nonetheless, even though Jocelyn had what could be considered a successful PEFE from all aspects of the ecological approach, as her ECE Center proved to be a good context in which to use Spanish, her mentor teacher was very supportive and the children participated enthusiastically in her activities, during our last individual interview she let me know that she had decided not to become a teacher. It was mainly the content that had moved Jocelyn to make this decision, because she realized that teaching was a lot more work than she had initially thought. Before the PEFE semester, she felt “teaching, oh that would be easy,” but she realized it entailed more paperwork and time than she could take at that moment in her life. Therefore, to be able to finish her college degree and provide for her family she decided to just finish her psychology degree and eventually go back to school and finish her teaching certification classes.

Kate Mathews

Kate had been very positive about the PEFE from its beginning, but throughout the semester she began to notice how she actually enjoyed it more than she originally had thought she would. She enjoyed planning and implementing all her activity plans, took advantage of the context to learn more about cultural diversity, established a nice relationship with the children, and received a lot of support from her mentor teacher. Even though she went into the ECE Center #1 with “no expectations,” after her first visit she was looking forward to the experience:

I can’t wait to see what the semester will bring. I have several ideas for activities, but I think I will wait another week to bring them in, just to see where the kids are ability-wise, and what kinds of activities they might enjoy. I hope the rest of the semester goes as well as my first day! (Journal #1)
After observing the children for about two weeks, Kate decided it was time to bring one of the activities she had planned—a game to teach Spanish numbers based on the book, “The Very Hungry Caterpillar.” Even though it did not go as precisely as she had hoped, she was not disappointed. Her main problems were that the children had some problem following instructions, especially taking turns and rolling the dice only once, but they did enjoy playing the game and repeated several of the Spanish number words (Journal #3). What made her happy, but also surprised, was the children’s “interest level in learning Spanish” and she was optimistic that “after working with them for several weeks they will begin to pick up and remember at least some of the words” (Journal #3). After noticing how Jason regretted his activity choice for the body parts activity plan, it was interesting to read in Kate’s Journal #9 how she felt that her most successful activity was teaching body part names through the Spanish version of “Head, Shoulders, Knees, Feet” (Cabeza, Hombros, Rodillas, Pies). The children showed plenty of enthusiasm for the activity and as Kate rationalized it, she felt that it was successful because the children were familiar with the tune and had to move and point to their body parts. Kate felt very happy when one day a teacher began singing the song in English during the assigned circle time and a little girl asked if they could sing the song Kate’s way, “meaning in Spanish. I thought that was cute” (Journal #7)! She considered that her less successful activity was her “Old Macdonald Had a Farm” animals’ activity. As with her first numbers’ activity the most difficult part was managing the children’s behavior:

With one of the activities I realize that the kids were just, like kind of not behaving. I don’t know, I kind of freak out, because I did not know what to do, I did not know how to handle the behavior. I was like “SHOOT! I should have established rules in the beginning, so now they don’t know how to behave.” I don’t know if it was that they did not like the activity, but it was kind of out of control. That one activity I was doing was in the corner, and I don’t know it was
kind of like all these things were going through my mind, “how do I make them sit down, how do I control them, what should I do?” I just kind of wanted to run away and had just Mr. Jeff come over. ‘Cause I did not know what to do. (Interview #2)

Even though this activity did not work as well, Kate did not give up and kept incorporating Spanish into the children’s daily activities. She recognized that there were “many unobtrusive ways to incorporate language into the classroom” (Journal #6). One of these unobtrusive ways was breakfast time, and she realized that it was important to use the “target language whenever possible and to always keep my eyes open looking for new opportunities to do this” (Journal #6). Moreover, she would practice constantly the colors in Spanish by asking the children about the colors in their outfits. This conversational approach to teaching the children Spanish also helped Kate establish good relationships with the children as she would smile and laugh constantly with them and they in turn started asking her how to say something in Spanish. This was one of the instances that made her really happy, because the children were the ones who initiated the conversations to learn more Spanish words.

In addition to teaching the children some Spanish, Kate was excited to see “the things happening” as she was able to observe in practice some of the theories she was learning in her educational psychology, education theory and policy, special education, and world languages courses. She thought it was “really neat to see the overlap and just taking the ed psychology stuff into my field experience. And also other things that I am learning in the theory class into the field experience” (Interview #1). She also felt that learning about language development in her WL ED 300W class was applicable to how the children at the ECE Center were learning their first and second languages. Kate felt it was interesting to recognize and name “what’s going on, this is what they are doing; I
know why they are doing that” (Interview #2). For example, she identified occasions in which the children made overgeneralizations in English and wrote them down. One of these examples was when the children would say “runned” rather than ran. She also talked about an instance in which she made the connection directly to what she was learning in her WL ED 300W class with an interaction she had with a little boy. Here is her account of this moment and the theoretical connections she made:

We are learning about connecting the phonemes and the graphemes, which are the sounds and the actual letters. I was with a little boy and we were going to make a birthday card. We folded the card and he started writing letters and I was “do you want me to tell you how to spell happy birthday” and he was like “no that’s what I just wrote” and he is like “happy birthday” and pointed to the letters making the sounds even though it did not spell it at all, so I don’t know, I just thought that was funny. That was something that I could connect back to the class. I just think that is interesting that they know what letters are and they can know what sounds they make, but don’t necessarily understand the concepts of words. It has been helpful just because if I was to teach that age, I may have high expectations, I may be like “what do you mean, this doesn’t spell happy birthday? (laughs). I think it is good to realize, just to see the level they are at. (Interview #1)

Through this account, Kate showed how she not only connected this moment with the knowledge she was acquiring about language acquisition, but with her future as a teacher who is considering teaching at the elementary school level. She showed that these new theory/practice connections were helping her to grow as a teacher. Another aspect that she believed was wonderful in the PEFE was attending an ECE Center where there was a lot of racial diversity among the children. This aspect of the context surprised her as she had grown up in “a small town where the majority people are just white upper class Americans” and she went to pre-school with very few minority students… “maybe one Chinese boy, one little Black boy” (Interview #1). Kate felt that she was fortunate that her family liked to travel and she was open to other cultures, but other children did not have that opportunity. She found it wonderful, interesting, and unique that at the ECE
Center #1 the children were exposed to diversity from an early age and that the children liked to share their different cultures with her. For example, she would ask a little Turkish girl “how do you say this in …” and she’d talk to her about it or a little boy would say, “I am from China” and he pointed out China on a world map. Kate thought that it was “really neat that the kids have that whole global picture,” which she did not have when she was their age. When she was in preschool she did not know that there were “other people in the world,” and that there were “other countries besides the United States.” Kate felt that it was extremely necessary to include awareness of other cultures in her future classroom, because her students “will hopefully be more aware and accepting of cultural differences. I also hope that this will help me as I try to teach them Spanish” (Journal #2).

One day as she participated in the celebration of the Chinese New Year, Kate kept thinking about how the preschool in which her mother was a teacher and she went to school did not “do very much there to celebrate cultural diversity, which may be in part due to the lack of diversity in our town” (Journal #3). She loved how the teachers incorporated Chinese New Year special events into all the daily activities. Several Chinese students were excited to have the spotlight in the classroom and to “share a part of their culture with the other students.” Some of the FLT also noted the diversity in the ECE Centers:

Kaylynn: I think one advantage of working at the ECE Center #1, was that there were children from every background possible and that made working with them even more interesting. (Interview #2)

Amy: My class is pretty diverse, like there is like a huge map of the world and then all the kids’ names and wherever they are all from in different parts, and that’s interesting. (Focus group)
Amy: And they have those flags, they have flags of different countries. They’ll pick two for the day, and on the back of them they have how to say hello in that language, so they all know how to say hello in every language. They hold it out and one of the teachers then will ask, “who knows what the country is and they always know, they raise their hands. If they don’t know, one of them will get it eventually. And they know how to say hello in all those different language, which I think it is amazing. They will remember every time how to say hello in all those languages. That surprised me, because a lot of these kids don’t even know what this language is, but they know a lot, they now how to say hello in five, 15 different languages. (Interview #1)

Adriana: Algo más que también no esperaba es la diversidad cultural que encontré entre los niños, me imaginaba habría algunos uno o dos niños asiáticos, además de alguno que otra minoría y el resto sería blanco, sin embargo no fue así. A pesar de la diversidad cultural que encontré en el centro, para decepción mía no encontré ningún niño que fuera latino, eso me hubiese alegrado mucho. Something else that I did not expect was the cultural diversity among the children I imagined there may be one or two Asian children, and maybe another minority group, and the rest would be white children, but it was not like that. But, although there I found cultural diversity at the center, I was very upset that there were no Latino children, which would have made me very happy. (Journal #1).

Helen: Our room has stuff like international. Like in our room there are like four languages everywhere. (Focus group)

However, among all the FLT only Kate manifested a strong motivation to incorporate into her future teaching practice some of the ideas she learned at the Center on incorporating cultural diversity into the curriculum.

Kate’s relationship with the teachers in the classroom was good from the beginning as the head teacher took time during her first visit to explain to her the “three rules of the classroom: don’t hurt yourself, don’t hurt others, and use toys/tools appropriately” (Journal #1). These simple rules helped her as she observed how the teachers handled different situations. She also thought it was a good idea that the teachers called everyone “friends” (Interview#1). Moreover, she felt that the “adults” in the classroom were very friendly toward her and answered any questions she had. From the beginning they asked to let them know when she wanted to implemented her language
activities and made her “feel welcome and that I have a place in the classroom” (Journal #2). She was even given the opportunity to lead “circle time,” which was one of the main classroom activities at the ECE Center #1.

Yesterday I took over circle time for one of the teachers and had a ball! I couldn’t believe that the kids actually listened and paid attention to me. I introduced a new song to them, which is similar to their usual circle song, but I included a few Spanish words. I think the kids really liked it! I also played head shoulders knees and toes with them and was surprised at their interest level. As our book says, TPR activities are great ways to get kids involved. Many of the kids were even able, or tried, to say the names of the body parts with me. I hope that after a few times of singing this song I can introduce Simon says to see if they understand the body parts out of the context of the song. (Journal #6)

Nonetheless, she was confused about which teacher to report to—in other words, who was her mentor teacher. Her confusion is understandable because after two weeks the first teacher who had been assigned to be her mentor decided to pass this duty to another teacher. Her new mentor teacher did give her feedback, but she felt it was more like:

“Oh, I really like that,” but never any guide, guidance, like “you should have done this” or I don’t know. But, it was good that they were interested in my activities. But, I don’t know if they felt like they had to give me any kind of feedback. (Focus group)

According to the Hall and Davis (1995) categories her teacher may be considered a motivator in a reciprocal relationship with Kate. Even though this description could be considered very positive, Kate would have liked more specific guidance and support. She would have appreciated his help when she felt she lost control of the children during her animals activity, as she felt that she “wanted to run away and just have Mr. Jeff come over,” but she never mentioned if he did help her or not. This situation did not affect her desire to keep implementing her activities and by mid-semester she was rethinking her decision to become a high school Spanish teacher because she was “having fun coming up with creative activities to teach Spanish to the kids, and I know that at the high school
level I will not be able to do a lot of the same activities I am doing with these younger kids” (Journal #6). Her thoughts did not change and by the end of the PEFE she wrote: “I really enjoyed working with the kids and trying to teach them Spanish” (Journal #10).

Nevertheless, Kate did admit that she had mixed feelings by the end of the field experience.

I am relieved that it is over and that I do not have to make the journey to the Center at 8am Monday and Wednesday mornings, but I also am really going to miss the kids. They are so cute and it was hard to say goodbye to them! There were times when it was frustrating working with them, when I felt like I did not have the patience to deal with their short attention spans and wandering minds, but just stepping back to see how cute they are helped me to overcome my frustrations. (Journal #10)

Even with what Kate called her frustrations, it is not difficult to see that most of the ecological characteristics worked in her favor, as she actually enjoyed following all the content requirements, especially working in her activities. She also took time to learn about the classroom context rules and schedule and used these to her advantage when teaching Spanish to the children, as she implemented her activities during the daily activities such as breakfast time, circle time, and center time. Kate was without a doubt very proactive in incorporating the use of Spanish through planned activities and the daily activities children engaged in at the ECE Center #1. This character trait in conjunction with her observations of the context and its people, the connections she made with her education courses, the opportunities her teacher gave her to implement her activities, and learning about the children’s backgrounds helped Kate to consider teaching in a FLES context. The PEFE became a perfect opportunity to improve her teaching skills and make decisions about which age group to teach.
Helen Nomi

Since the beginning of the PEFE Helen had mentioned that her shyness might affect her experience, but from her first visit to the ECE Center #2 she began to interact with the children. From that moment on, with the help of her mentor teacher Helen let go of her anxiety and started to observe her classroom in order to learn more about the children. It also helped that she had received a binder with information on the ECE Center #2 with “guidelines and helpful hints” which she connected to some of the information she was learning in WL ED 300W.

I learned that at the center they try to use positive comments rather than intrusive comments such as “don’t do that, do this!” As we learned in WL ED 300, the later way of talking may hinder a child’s language acquisitions, and I will try to stay away from the “don’ts.” (Journal #2)

Helen continued making connections with what she was learning in WL ED 300W as she mentioned how the children did not know the “semantic meaning of the sounds,” meaning that they did not know what the word perro (dog) meant, but they were able to repeat it. In another instance she observed what they had discussed in WL ED 300 about how the children would pronounce words incorrectly, thinking that it was right, and if she corrected them they did not like it (Interview #1).

As she kept observing and receiving hints from her teacher she was able to implement two of her activities, and at the end of the experience she regretted not implementing more because she was very successful with them, especially with her “Make Your Own Cuerpo” (Make Your Own Body) activity (see Appendix C, Sample Implemented Activities). She felt that this particular activity was successful because “I made sure my activity did not bore them” as the “little people” were able to cut the body parts and be creative, which they loved to do. Helen was also able to incorporate Spanish
into other activities at the Center, but through these experiences she learned that there were two main approaches to use in introducing Spanish to the children—one worked better than the other.

The first is introducing a Spanish word with the phrase “in Spanish, it’s ______.” This did not work that great, because the instant I said “in Spanish,” the kids kind of tuned out because they lost interest, or because it was just so off-topic from what we were doing. For example, we were playing house, and I was a “bad kitty,” but instead of going with the flow, I paused and said “oh, in Spanish, this is rosa,” (as I pointed to a pink garment), and immediately the kids gave me this stare of confusion and lack of interest. That was a shocker to me, but it makes sense now. The kids don’t want their play to be interrupted.

The second way, which was better, is to say a Spanish word whenever a child mimicked or talked about a specific thing, and then having them tell me what it is in English. For example, I was pushing two girls on the swings, and they started crying like a horse. I gave them a confused look (on purpose), and said “el caballo.” The two repeated after me with great joy, “el caballo!” Then I asked them what it meant, and they told me it was a horse. Even afterwards the two girls said “el caballo,” and mimicked a horse for me. I think this worked mainly because I did not take the emphasis away from the play, rather I joined in (I mimicked a horse too) and acted like el caballo is the same word as horse. I also think that the kids like to feel like they know more, and so having them tell me what it is in English was a big key.

If I could repeat these nine weeks, I would have just stuck to naturally incorporating Spanish words instead of stopping the play and enforcing the vocabulary on them. (Journal #9)

Helen felt that this last “very informal” Spanish activity was her most memorable experience “because they actually remember. I was not forcing them to say anything” (Interview #2). Other FLT also received the same reactions from the children whenever they mentioned the word “Spanish.” Here are some examples:

Amy: I have also learned that the kids are more than likely not going to ask me things about the Spanish language, and that I simply need to volunteer the information to them on my own. (Journal #9)

Adriana: I also learned that if you tell kids what to say is not going to work as well if you tell kids that we are playing a game, and that is to speak another language or repeat another language, in this case would be Spanish. I also learn
not to ask the kids if they want to say something in Spanish, or play something because they would said no, instead I learn to tell them lets do this, or lets said this in Spanish and make it seem interesting and fun and then the kids would want to join you. (Journal #6)

Samantha: I realized that one should not ask if they want to learn something in Spanish because most of the times they will give a no as a straight up answer. I have learned to just try to incorporate the language as they are doing something; bringing it up without out any question will have them wondering what is being said. Another thing that I have come to realized is that when a student keeps saying no, one should know when to draw the line when persisting because at the end of the day they will dislike you. (Journal #6)

It is interesting that these students learned after many weeks not to “ask, but tell” the words in the world language, when from the beginning of the PEFE they were advised by the teachers to:

use the language in the playground, in the classroom, in the walks to point out objects around. “Just speak in your language,” do not ask the children if they “would like to learn the French word for ______?” Asking questions to young children usually gets a “no” or at least no interest. (Requirements Package)

This example shows that what is commonly said is true—we learn through experience. It was not until the FLT encountered the reactions from the children that they changed their approach to incorporating the language into the daily activities. Moreover, as they learned how to use their language in these situations the children began to associate them with it. Helen is one of the best examples of this, as she talked several times about how the children started to call her, a Japanese Australian girl, “the Spanish girl.”

They call me the Spanish girl, I am obviously not Spanish. I don’t mind. I think is funny. There are two Spanish girls, but we don’t look the same. (Interview #1)

Throughout the last nine weeks, I have seen many different reactions to Spanish. I tried to emphasize the fact that I was there not only as a caregiver, but also with an additional agenda of teaching a second language. Around the third week the kids did start to realize that I was not just another student coming in to get experience in working at a day care center. A girl called me the Spanish girl, because she did not know my name. (Journal #9)
I had a girl that started calling me “the Spanish girl” and her mom started calling me the Spanish girl. (Focus group)

Helen’s experience is similar to other FLT. These are just some examples of other instances in which the FLT were identified by the language they were teaching.

Adriana: And they are like “hey, you speak Spanish.” Even though, they don’t remember my name, but they know that I speak Spanish. (Interview #1)

Kate: Like even in one day they can have seven different college students and they think is neat though like a few of the students have picked up that I am the Spanish girl, they associate me with Spanish, and they know that I’ll be pointing to stuff in Spanish. A few of them know my name now, so that’s exciting to think that yeah that maybe I do have an impact. (Interview #1)

Jocelyn: Somebody asked me if I was born in Germany or something, and this one little kid goes “No, she is Spanish.” (Focus Group)

Nevertheless, Helen’s relationship with the children was not only affected by them associating her with Spanish, but also with her Japanese ethnicity.

I found out that my ethnicity gets in the way of them learning. There are two girls of the same ethnicity and like today they would point me to where they were playing, and when I am teaching an activity they will come, but they don’t want to learn Spanish, because that will be their THIRD language, which is mine too. But, they don’t understand that, I am not there to like be their friend, to speak their own language, and they always speak to me in Japanese, and I always respond in English, and I am like, “you know, I am here to speak Spanish, but towards the end I think like you know I think that the kids warmed up to me, instead of all the Asian kids swarming me at first, like “Oh, my gosh, an Asian adult.” I think it was a big shock for them at first. Like towards the end, this girl would repeat everything that I said, and she is Asian, and she is like four or something. Towards the middle I guess, I was like I don’t know if I can do this, like teaching Spanish at all, but I think I just have to stick with it and let Asian people know that I am not there to you know be an ESL teacher. (Focus group)

With this statement Helen wanted to avoid the stereotype of the Asian ESL teacher, and made it very clear that her specialty was Spanish. Helen was probably the only person who felt that her relationship with the children was affected by her ethnic background—this is an area that needs to be further researched. Nonetheless, a positive aspect of her
placement was the help that she received from her mentor teacher, who encouraged the children to participate in Helen’s activities.

Helen mentioned the support she received from her mentor teacher more often than the other FLT. Helen’s mentor teacher, contrary to Kate’s, did give her specific suggestions before and after each activity. Her mentor teacher guided her and offered suggestions on how to plan and improve her activities. For example, for her body parts activity, Helen was not quite sure if she should let the children cut out the drawings. Her teacher reassured her that the children knew how to use the scissors and that they enjoyed being able to use them in creative works. Her mentor teacher also gave Helen some suggestions on the number of children she should have and while she was teaching the teacher would give her “nods and smiles” and encourage her to go continue (Focus group). Moreover, after the activity her mentor teacher took time to meet with Helen at her office and they talked about what had happened that day. Helen thought that was very “helpful and neat.” In addition, her teacher would help her by introducing the activity topic during group time with the children, before Helen taught it.

My teacher what she really did was, that at group time, she sat the kids down. I think she kind of impromptu, but she had everything written, so she kind of follow my whole color thing, and she is like “ok, what color all are these things” and they are like “verde” and then she is like ok “well, how many are there?,” and she had them count them and my thing was counting, and she had them count over and over again, and then she goes, “I think you get the point now today Helen has a little activity about numbers, and she kind of led it into me, she kept saying everything in Spanish, and she really did not know all that much. (Focus group)

Helen’s relationship with her mentor teacher may be considered more complementary than reciprocal, but her teacher guided and motivated her every step of the way and Helen appreciated it.
By the end of the semester Helen affirmed that even though she did not think it was possible, the ECE Center #2 was “a different context that you modified by teaching Spanish to little kids” (Interview #2).

This experience was great in that I saw that younger students can in fact learn a different language. This should not have been a surprise to me, because I myself am bilingual from birth. However at the age that the students were at the center (three to five), they are on their way to master their first language, and I never thought introducing a totally new language (one that is not spoken at home) would be successful. (E-Portfolio, final reflection)

These statements are in sharp contrast to Jason’s view that the ECE context was not ideal for teaching a world language. This difference in opinion and experience may be due to how Helen handled the teaching of the content and the relationships that she developed with the children and her mentor teacher. Having a positive experience as she learned about the context and the type of activities that children liked made her approach the teaching of Spanish in formal and informal situations with a different outlook. Moreover, her teacher supported her every step of the way; with her nods and smiles of approval she made Helen feel that teaching Spanish to children at the ECE Center #2 was a good thing. Helen’s experiences also demonstrated how her “shyness” was never an obstacle as “the days went by, the weeks flew by, and it seemed like my shyness (however much of it I had, anyway) vanished with them!” (E-Portfolio, B4). She also took also every opportunity to connect her observations at the center with her WL ED 300W class. Therefore, it is possible to affirm that the ecological characteristics of Helen’s PEFE experience worked in her favor and it opened her eyes to the importance of context in her teaching. Moreover, Helen felt that although she learned a lot from this experience she could never teach children, because her attention span was less than the children’s. As she once mentioned during the PEFE seminar, she had been diagnosed with ADD
(Attention Deficit Disorder) and she was ADDing the children, and that was not a good characteristic for a teacher who worked with small children.

**FLT PEFE’s Experiences Summaries**

The following summaries present the experiences of the other four FLT to show how each viewed their experiences differently, but at the same time they also shared some commonalities with Jason, Elizabeth, Samantha, Jocelyn, Kate, and Helen’s stories as they became frustrated or had moments in which they felt they were very successful in teaching the children. Most importantly, their experiences also illustrate how the ecological characteristics influenced the way in which they viewed their entire PEFE.

**Phillis Brezina**

Phillis started the PEFE with a lot of enthusiasm, but in his case it was not that he did not like the context or lacked the ability to establish relationships, because he was able do this right away. In addition, even though at the beginning of the PEFE he was never sure when the “right time” to incorporate Spanish was, he did use the language as much as possible. By mid-semester, his use of Spanish had diminished significantly. He explained:

I kind of lost the idea of Phillis and Spanish that they go together, they connect. I don’t do a lot of Spanish with them. The first days I was speaking a lot of Spanish with them, and really it was working well, and then I just kind of stop. (Interview #1)

Phillis was also having a very hard time keeping up with his morning scheduled time due to a business venture that he had started with some friends. Additionally, he was involved with different student organizations. As a consequence, when he was at the
center he was exhausted, to the point that one day I went into the teachers’ lounge and found him taking a nap. After yelling at him, I sent him out of the room to splash some water in his eyes and return to his classroom as soon as possible. Moreover, the only activity that he planned and implemented, a “hop scotch” game to teach numbers, was poorly executed. It was difficult for him to realize that his activity would have been more successful if he had taken more time to think about the skill level of the children. It was not until the end of the semester that he prepared, rather quickly, the required five activity plans with accompanying instructional materials. His teacher offered to help him several times, but when he did not take the offer she stopped trying. I apologized repeatedly to his mentor teacher for the lack of “quality” of the FLT I had placed at her classroom. I did not want to break a professional relationship that could benefit other FLT. I was extremely upset and considered it irresponsible on his part not to attend to his PEFE responsibilities. Therefore, I talked to him about this matter several times and gave him a “C” grade for his poor performance during the PEFE. The following e-mail message exchange showed how upset I was that he was not attending the center, because he was taking the time to work on class projects not previously completed due to his other responsibilities:

April 20th, 2005
Phillis,

You have not gone to the field experience since last Monday. That’s not good at all! Let your teachers and me know what is happening.

-Sandra

Phillis Response:
I am sorry for not getting in touch with you or my teacher since last Monday but I have been working on my E-Portfolio and the project that is due this Thursday for WLED 300 during the time I am usually at the ECE Center #1. I will not be
there this coming Monday either because I am leading a trip with the Penn State ____Club and will not be back until Monday morning. Will the following Wednesday and finals week be my last opportunities to work with the students?

My response:  
**Phillis:**  
I am not very happy with this news that you are giving me. Finals week don’t count, because you had plenty of time to make up for the time you have missed and I need to get the grades in as soon as possible. In addition, I am not excusing you from your field experience, because you are doing work for 295 and 300.

I know how important is the student club and your business for you, but you really need to be responsible with your class commitments. If teaching is what you want to do, you need to “buckle up” and take this and other field experiences seriously.  
-Sandra

Moreover, even though Phillis did establish a good relationship with the children, he was more like a “big brother” to them than a teacher or mentor. He was very playful with the kids—so much so that his mentor teacher complained that he was “too playful,” which disrupted the classroom order. Phillis confirmed his own behavior as he felt he “not only learned a lot about how to get young kids to pay attention and stay on task, I also learned how to have fun and play as if I were a 5 year old again” (Journal #10). As a result, the type of relationship he created with the children was only conducive to learning if he used this playful mode to also teach them Spanish.

Therefore, it was the interactions of the relationships and student characteristics that affected Phillis’s development and led him to become an obstacle to his PEFE (Zeichner, 1987). Even though he had many opportunities to implement more activities during his time at the center, his personal commitments did not leave him with much time to plan activities and implement them. Phillis’s experiences are an illustration of how, when relationships and personal characteristics interact, they affect the success of a field
experience. Nonetheless, he felt that he did “learn more than grades could ever show” (Journal #10). This knowledge included learning from the teachers to be patient and listen to the children, maintaining children’s enthusiasm, and making connections with the concepts that he was learning in the WL ED 300W course. Therefore, even though his relationships were not very helpful, he barely implemented any learning activity, and he did not take advantage of the ECE context as much as he could have, he did demonstrate that he learned from other components of the WL ED program structure and from observing the teachers’ classroom management techniques. Hopefully, his PEFE experiences were useful because in the following fall semester Phillis also decided to pursue his degree in the Spanish language program and not in WL ED.

Adriana Reyes

One of the first details that I noted as I went through Adriana’s research data was that she wrote some of her journals in Spanish and some in English. This detail demonstrated how as a Spanish native speaker she was very comfortable using her language and she wanted to use it in formal situations. However, it was disappointing that at the ECE Center #2 she did not use Spanish as much as she could have and only implemented one of her activity plans. There was also very little evidence in her journals and interviews of the type of relationship she had with her mentor teacher. Adriana was aware that she was the “quiet” type, and she thought this might get her on her way to establishing relationships with the children, but she stated in her last journal that she did not have any trouble talking to the children. Therefore, this character trait was not the reason for not using Spanish more frequently. Moreover, she described the teachers in her
classroom as “very open and in the last weeks they have encouraged me to talk to them in Spanish” (Interview #1).

Adriana also kept writing in her journals (#3, #6, and #7) how she wanted to teach the children the numbers through the Los Elefantes song (The Elephant Song). We had practiced this song during one of our seminar workshops, and I had let her borrow all the teaching materials, but she did not teach the activity until her 9th week at the ECE Center.

*Adriana*: I am just trying to see what kids like so I can do a fun activity that they can enjoy and learn at the same time. I have observed that many kids like dancing and music. One of the days that I was there, a group of dancers and musicians came, they played and danced some African music and the kids really enjoyed. Therefore, one of my plans is to do a song name Los Elefantes, since many of the kids already know the numbers in Spanish, I think it would be easier for them to teach the song and it would serve as a review of the numbers. I just hope that the kids like and enjoy this activity, and also that they learn or remember the song. (Journal #7)

In week seven of the PEFE, Adriana was still “trying” to find out what the children liked. When she finally implemented her activity she felt it was successful because she “really enjoyed doing it, and I think the kids also enjoyed it” as the majority of the children participated in it (Journal #9). She believed that the reason for the success was that they “were familiar with the song, so that made it easier for me to do the song and engage the children in it” (Activity plan reflection). Searching for other reasons why Adriana waited until the end of the semester to implement only one activity, I recalled how during the semester she had asked to meet with me, so that I might help her to come up with activity ideas because she felt insecure about her ability to plan “creative” activities. In addition, she was not sure how the children were going to react to her activities because they were so limited and she did not know if they were going to be able to understand her. During
the 5th week Adriana wrote in her journal that it was difficult to incorporate Spanish because of the children’s short attention spans. Another reason might have been that even though she was able to approach the children, she also received some rejection from them. In her 3rd week she wrote in her journal:

También estoy decepcionada por que hay dos niñas que no les interesó cuando trate de hablárles o decirles algo en español, pero pienso que es normal esto, no a todos los niños les interesa lo mismo. /I am also disappointed, because there were two girls that were not interested when I tried talking to them or tell them something in Spanish, but I think that is normal, not all kids like the same things. (Journal #3)

The rejection continued. One day she approached two Chinese girls who were playing with colored blocks and started to say the colors in Spanish. The little girls then started to speak in Chinese and “just kept playing, they were not interested” (Journal #9). Every now and then in her journal she mentioned ways in which she incorporated Spanish in the classroom with the *hola* and *adiós* greetings, reading books that had words in Spanish, and counting money using Spanish numbers, but if the children were not completely focused she usually ended her reflections with the justification, “I think it is because kids have really short attention spans” (Journal #5). Nonetheless, Adriana did admit that with “more time” she would have liked to implement all the activities she had planned (E-Portfolio, final reflection). While Adriana did not use her Spanish as she could have, she connected her experience with what she was learning in other courses as she did note the “semantic development” of the children and “how they form cliques” (Interview #1). It may be possible that Adriana preferred observing in the classroom or that it took her longer to put into action her activity ideas because of her passive nature. Another possibility is that Adriana was not quite sure how to get started with her activities because she had some difficulties establishing relationships with the children.
I believe that Adriana’s experience at the ECE Center #2 could have been different if I had paid closer attention to what she was accomplishing or not at the center. With more direct supervision, I could have noticed earlier that Adriana was barely using Spanish in the classroom, but I was only there two times for about half an hour. Another important detail is that she was placed in the same classroom at the same times as Helen; therefore, she may have had to “compete” for the attention of the children to teach them Spanish. Thus, in looking at this from an ecological approach Adriana was not able to establish good relationships that could have helped her to implement more content. However, even under these circumstances she did connect some theories that she was learning in other courses with what she observed in her classroom. Other than these connections, Adriana’s experience did not show that she had learned from implementing Spanish content, using the context to plan her activities, and/or establishing relationships with the children.

Kaylynn Rossi

Kaylynn was very skeptical before the PEFE and was not quite sure what to expect, especially because she thought she “would be entering a classroom and teaching children Spanish right off the bat, but that’s not how it is” (Journal #1). She acknowledged that she had “problems at first with the teaching context, but I have really learned to like it a lot” (Journal #8). Furthermore, she learned very quickly that it was very important to plan her activities according to what was happening in the classroom context. For example, when she noticed that Dinosaur Day was coming up, she took the chance to plan around a Dinosaur theme a numbers activity using stickers. In addition,
through the context she learned “fun ways” to include aspects beyond language skills in her activities (e.g., culture, music, art). Kaylynn believed that “learning the teaching context will help me for later in my career and it will definitely help me keep myself organized so that I can keep my class under control” (Journal #8). Learning about the vital role of the teaching context was important for Kaylynn not only for this particular field experience, but for her future teaching experiences. This “context” knowledge promoted growth in her experiences.

In addition to the teaching context, Kaylynn paid attention to what the children were interested in at specific times, and she included Spanish words and phrases specific to their interests into their activities. The children eventually started to ask her how to say more words in Spanish, which made her feel that she was “wanted in the classroom” (Journal #5). Little by little she also won over again some of the older girls, who at the beginning of the PEFE had “hung out with me non-stop, and then when I started speaking Spanish they stopped. Then they started having the big attitude and that got to my last nerve” (Focus group). Kaylynn won them over again when one day she came into the classroom with her nails done and the girls wanted to know “what color is that in Spanish?” This little “nail color game” continued as Kaylynn then decided to change her nail color every week and the girls would ask her for the nail color names in Spanish and even asked her, “Are you going to change the colors?” This was an “aha” moment for Kaylynn as she discovered a new way to teach the children Spanish words through something that caught their attention. She noticed that in her “classroom the children enjoy playing games to some point, but they would rather do activities that are oriented around their favorite animals or favorite cartoon character” (Journal #7). As a result,
Kaylynn decided to use this knowledge of their interests to plan her activities and establish relationships with them. However, she did not have as much luck with the little boys as “they were not interested in me whatsoever. The little boys actually did their own thing. They appeared to like playing on the computer a lot” (Journal #1). As the other FLT, Kaylynn also took her time at the center to make connections with the concepts she was learning in WL ED 300W and even went into the classroom with “her ears and eyes open to see what examples of communicative competence I saw happening throughout the classroom” (Kaylynn, E-Portfolio, A2).

Even though in her journals Kaylynn did not talk much about her mentor teacher, during the interviews she admitted that though she learned many strategies for classroom management through her, she felt that her teacher did not provide any support. Moreover she started feeling like “one of the helpers” in the classroom. The teachers in her classroom were never there. Kaylynn then decided to write them an e-mail; their response was, “Hey, go wherever you want in the room;” Kaylynn definitely did not like this response (Focus group). The teachers were also more focused on an Early Childhood Education student teacher than on Kaylynn—they would give her specific guidance on her lesson plans and how to interact with the children. Kaylynn felt left out and thought “ok, thanks for helping me” (Focus group). As with Samantha, I am not sure if this mentor/future teacher relationship fit the Hall and Davis categories (1995) because Kaylynn also did not feel any support or encouragement from the teachers in the classroom. Nonetheless, she did feel they were role models for her or “experts” through whom she learned “structure and everything, like how to be organized” (Interview #1). Moreover, Kaylynn admired how the teachers’ love for art reflected on the children and
also how they knew the children and their parents well enough (Journal #2).

Therefore, even though the context was helpful for Kaylynn, at the end of the PEFE the lack of support from her mentor teacher left her with mixed feelings about it. Additionally, another element affected her attitude towards the field experience—her coursework. Kaylynn admitted that she wanted to “spend more time on my studies than with the children” (Interview #2). Nonetheless, Kaylynn felt that the field experience “helped me re-live my childhood” and taught her a lot about herself as she “loved children and couldn’t wait to do the little artsy lesson plans,” but “realized how hard it was to make up lesson plans especially for children that young” (Journal #10). Kaylynn’s reflections exemplify the difficulty of determining whether the PEFE was a positive or negative experience, as her reactions to it were “mixed” and the ecological aspects manifested in different ways throughout the field experiences.

Amy Taylor

Amy’s PEFE started with some disappointments, as she felt that the children did not receive her with “open arms” as she had expected them to do (Interview #1). Some children were nice, but others “were banging their heads off of me, and others were yelling at the top of their lungs at me” (Journal #1). She also had a very hard time coming up with activities, and in her midterm feedback her mentor teacher specifically questioned how committed Amy was to the field experience as she was not showing any initiative in teaching the children Spanish. After I received this feedback from her teachers, I decided to meet with her to brainstorm some ideas for activities and I also
started to visit her more often in her classroom. Amy’s commitment to the PEFE was not
questioned afterwards as she:

Thought about a good activity for the animals, and I wrote up a story that I am
going to read and then have the kids do an activity with it. When I went to the
classroom on Thursday, I mentioned my idea to the teacher and she seemed really
excited about it. It made me feel like I can really do this, and I can’t wait to do the
activity with the kids. I am hoping that by me taking the initiative to share my
idea with my teacher, it will show her that I am trying harder. (Journal #7)

What started as an activity created to please her teacher turned into a big event in the
classroom as the children enjoyed listening to her story about several animals that
escaped from a zoo and who were hiding in the classroom. The children had to look for
them around the classroom and return them to the zoo. As the children found the animals
Amy would say the names in Spanish, and the children had to repeat the words. She was
extremely happy when “one of the boys came up to me afterwards and told me that he
liked my animals. It made me felt very good, especially because I was having trouble
coming up with creative activities for the kids” (Journal #9). This activity motivated Amy
to do another group activity that involved teaching the colors in Spanish through a
fashion show in which the classroom teachers served as models that put on “dress-up”
clothes and the children had to name the colors of their outfits. After the teachers
modeled, the children then volunteered to model and practice the colors in Spanish. Amy
believed this activity was successful because the teachers looked “really funny and the
kids seemed to really get a kick out of it” (Activity plan reflection). The teachers’ support
of this activity showed the change in their relationship with Amy as they became
mediators between her and the children. Their involvement also made the children more
comfortable around Amy and gave her the confidence she needed to lead the activities. In
addition to her formal activities, Amy used Spanish in daily activities such as reading. In
addition, she was also able to observe language acquisition in English as she noticed how the children used the wrong tense with irregular verbs. Amy was of the opinion that the children in her classroom “were exposed to more language than I feel a lot more kids will be” (Interview #1).

At the end of the PEFE, Amy thought that her whole experience was good. Even though at first “it was kind of tough, as the weeks went by and I started to form a relationship with the kids, it turned out to be really great” (Journal #10):

At first, I was just like “I can’t do this, I can’t come up with activities, like I am not creative enough, this isn’t what I want to do.” Like I just kept it at my head “I don’t want to teach these young kids, I don’t want to do this, I can’t do it right now.” Like I knew this isn’t what I want to do in the future. I kind of held on to that. But, I kind of had to let that go, and said “I HAVE to.” “I need to get a grade here, and really have to step it up.” So, I kind of have to let that go, so I just somehow got ideas and did some and they went really well, and felt great about it. ‘Cause it was like a complete change, and I think the teachers were, because I was talking more to them about what I was going to do, how I was going to do it. So, they were more excited about the activities, ‘cause they obviously wanted to see me do new things. At the end it was a good experience, because I was able to show myself that I could actually do those things. It was not like it was painful in the way; I don’t know why I thought it would be terrible. (Focus group)

Therefore, even if her motivation was her PEFE course grade, Amy surprised herself by being able to plan creative activities that captured the attention of the children. In Amy’s case it also helped that her teachers and I called her attention and guided her to improve her “initiative” in using Spanish in the classroom. The children’s positive reactions towards her activities motivated Amy; what started as a disappointing PEFE became a good one. Amy’s experiences are an example of how, with the necessary “intervention,” a field experience’s ecological characteristics may be changed from negative to positive.
Summary

The FLT accounts put into evidence the significant need to study how field experiences are actually implemented (Zeichner, 1987). The FLT experienced some challenges that led to frustration with the PEFE. Neither Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto nor I foresaw some of these challenges, which included: finding ways to capture the children’s attention; handling rejection from the children; feeling a lack of support from mentor teachers; needing the presence of other adults in the classroom; handling personal commitments; working within time constraints; planning “creative” activities that were age- and skill-level-appropriate; and others. On the other hand, the FLT also took away from the PEFE many learning experiences that may help them both professionally and personally. These included: lesson planning; getting over their fear of trying new activities and the children’s reactions; making learning fun and related to the children’s interests; coming up with creative ideas for activities; adjusting instructional activities after implementation; teaching skills such as classroom management and patience in working with children; observing language acquisition occurring in first, second, and sometimes third languages; handling the difficulties in teaching languages to children; recognizing and utilizing the diversity of cultures among the children and including them in the curriculum; reflecting on their experiences; making decisions to teach or not; and learning about children in general. All these challenges and learning experiences reflect the characteristics of an ecological approach to the study of field experiences and how they affected the PEFE experience of each of the FLT. The next chapter includes conclusions drawn from these analyses of findings examined according to an ecological
approach; explores whether the PEFE was an educative experience; provides suggestions for improving the PEFE; and makes recommendations for future research studies.

See Appendix C for the activity plans presented in chapter 4.
CHAPTER VI

Discussion

An ecological approach to research on field experiences guided the analysis of the research data. This final chapter presents conclusions around the ecological characteristics of the field experience, an examination of the PEFE through Dewey’s theory of experience, and an exploration of its educative value for FLT. This chapter also includes the FLT’s and course instructor’s suggestions for improving the PEFE, offers implications for LTE, and provides recommendations for further research for LTE.

Ecological Characteristics: Challenges and Learning Experiences

Studying a field experience via its ecological characteristics enables a closer look at how structure, content, context, and relationships can affect the type of experience that future teachers have during their field experiences. At the end of the PEFE, some of the FLT described the PEFE as “challenging” (See Appendix D, PEFE Challenges). The reason was that they experienced several challenges in all ecological aspects that made it difficult for them to accomplish their expectations and field experience goals as planned by the language teacher educators. Nonetheless, even with these challenges, the FLT felt that the PEFE was a “learning experience” because they “learned about children, lesson planning, and most importantly yourself” (Kaylynn, Journal #6). The FLT took away learning experiences that they believed would help them develop professional and personal skills (See Appendix D, Skills the FLT take away from the experience). Field experience research and evaluation should look more closely at all these ecological
aspects, which are in constant interaction and affect the experiences of future teachers during their teacher education programs.

*Structure*

The structure of the WL ED program that was put into place that year was in its pilot phase. Even then, the FLT began to recognize how one WL ED program course complemented others. The research data include examples of occasions on which the FLT named concepts that they were learning in other core courses, such as educational psychology and education theory and policy. For example, Jason observed that the children in his classroom tended to be “egocentric” and were “developing their sense of me: their individuality according to Piaget” (Journal #9). Piaget’s theory of cognitive development is one of the learning theories future teachers need to learn in their required education psychology course.

Additionally, even though the WL ED course instructors did not made a direct effort to plan their courses in a manner that connected the content of the program’s coursework, the majority of the FLT recognized language acquisition theories and practices that they were learning in their WL ED 300W class in their PEFE. The FLT formulated many theory/practice connections on their own and mentioned the children’s tendency to over-generalize, especially in the past tense of the verbs. Moreover, the FLT were very conscious that the children repeated words in French and Spanish without knowing what they meant—in other words its semantic meanings. Therefore, some of the FLT, especially Kate and Helen, believed that the children needed to move beyond repeating words in Spanish to being able to describe and use them in connection with
their meaning. As the FLT recognized these language acquisition theories in the PEFE, they fulfilled one of Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto’s goals for the course: to be able to see language acquisition in action. These connections among courses confirm Spielman’s statement (2006) that “our individual and joint work with preservice teachers extends beyond the particular course or field placement assignments for which we are responsible” (pp. 3–4). As teacher educators, it is vital that these links be made more evident and plan the course goals to move beyond particular courses and field experiences. These results also show that more collaboration is needed to connect the block courses and other education core courses around specific course requirements that could integrate the theories and concepts learned in these classes with the field experience components. If I had taken into consideration other courses in the program structure, I might have planned the PEFE content differently. As a result, I learned the hard way that my “hidden agenda” to motivate the FLT to consider teaching FLES with the course content was going to be barely accomplished.

Content

One of the conclusions that many of the FLT reached during the PEFE was that they did not want to teach little children and preferred teaching in secondary schools. Their reasoning was similar to that expressed by Irving’s (1977) students and it shattered my goal of motivating FLT to become FLES teachers (see Appendix D, On teaching children). Not all students rejected this possibility midway in their experiences—Kate and Jason began to consider teaching FLES as an option. Specifically, Kate enjoyed the experience of coming up with creative activities to use in teaching Spanish. Kate felt that
with secondary school students she might not be able to use this newfound skill or achieve the same level of enthusiasm about learning Spanish that she was receiving from the children at the ECE Center #1. Kate was definitely an exception to the rest of the FLT who clearly were not interested in teaching FLES for different reasons, both personal and professional. For example, Helen felt she lacked the necessary “attention span” to keep the children’s attention; Phillis felt he lacked the mental and physical energy to keep up with children. Others (Amy, Jocelyn, Elizabeth) did not feel that they could communicate as effectively with children as they could with high school and college students. Nonetheless, this PEFE outcome could not be viewed as disappointing because even though the PEFE content did not serve to motivate FLT to become FLES teachers, it served the program goal of helping FLT—early in their teacher education program—to define what age group they preferred to teach. Moreover, Jason, Phillis, and Jocelyn decided that teaching was not for them. Jason felt that he loved the French language for what he called “selfish” reasons, and he wanted to study the language itself, not teach it, especially if it meant exposing it to students at different levels who would not appreciate and value the language as much as he did. Jason cared so deeply about the language content that he could not bear the thought of anyone rejecting it; therefore, he decided to change majors and study French through literature and linguistics. Phillis and Jocelyn’s reasons for not becoming world language teachers was mainly the realization that teaching was more “work” than they had initially expected; at the moment, both of them did not have the time to devote to it. These early decisions to either decide the age group to teach or decide not to teach are one of the rationales for the inclusion of EFEs in teacher education programs (Benton & Osborn, 1979).
Nonetheless, even though it was part of the challenges that they experienced in the PEFE, the FLT appreciated the fact that through the content requirements they had the opportunity to learn about handling procedural concerns such as lesson planning and classroom management (Moore, 2003). Amy is one of the best examples of how, at the beginning of the PEFE, she felt that coming up with “creative” activities through which to teach Spanish to the children in her classroom was an impossible challenge. However, she proved herself wrong as she planned and implemented very original and creative activities that captured the attention not only of one or two children, but the entire group. The issue of capturing the children’s attention was a constant challenge for the FLT as they felt that they needed to learn how to manage the children’s behavior and also explore the children’s interests in order to at least teach them some words in their world language. Some of the FLT were more successful than others in learning these teaching skills because they observed the teachers and learned how to manage the children’s behavior via the techniques used by the teachers. It was interesting to observe how FLT who planned an activity similar to one practiced during the PEFE seminar (e.g., Body Parts tracing activity) were not as successful in implementing it, in comparison to those occasions in which they had paid closer attention to what the children liked. For example, the FLT discovered that teaching through art, movement, and TV children’s characters like Dora the Explorer (see Appendix D, Dora influence) could make a big difference in capturing the children’s attention. Therefore, my goal of providing the FLT with “tools of the trade” as early as possible did become a reality, not necessarily through what was taught during the PEFE seminar, but through the planning and implementation of activities in their PEFE, which took into consideration the children’s interests.
Additionally, through the planning and implementation of their activities the FLT learned that they needed to consider the important role the ECE context played in the success of their experiences.

**Context**

The ecological characteristic of context played a key role during the PEFE, as the ECE contexts proved to be more challenging than both Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto and I anticipated. First, the FLT expected to have “more structure” in the ECE classrooms to implement their lessons. The FLT defined more structure as having a regular classroom setup with children sitting in chairs and a set schedule with time allotted for formal lessons on a specified curriculum topic. It was difficult for the FLT to understand that in the ECE Centers, children learned through play and “unstructured” time provided unique learning opportunities. This does not mean that the ECE Centers did not have a schedule of activities, as they did plan a schedule that included meal times, center time, circle time, and “free time.” Some FLT took advantage of these periods, using their world languages in these daily activities. Moreover, the classrooms centers’ setup helped some of the FLT to plan activities according to the objects already available at the different centers. For example, Elizabeth used the Candy Land game available at one of the stations to review the colors in French. Nonetheless, she never stopped wishing to teach complete language lessons as she was accustomed to doing with her undergraduate students. Nonetheless, Elizabeth felt that determining the best approach for teaching young children through games was part of her learning experience. On the other hand, Jocelyn did feel that her
ECE Center had a structure—this fact allowed her to know at what time and in which class she could include Spanish.

The second aspect of context during this PEFE that provoked a strong reaction from the FLT was the inclusion of a diverse group of children in the physical environment and curricula of ECE Centers #1 and #2. The FLT noted as they walked through the halls of the ECE Centers for the first time that many of the displays included artifacts from different cultures around the world, such as paintings, clothing, ceramic figures, books, and other objects. As they entered their classroom the FLT noted how these artifacts represented the cultural backgrounds of the children who attended the ECE Centers. Moreover, classroom decorations, class activities and materials often revolved around cultural celebrations such as the Chinese New Year, during which Chinese children were given the opportunity to share their culture with the rest of their classmates. The FLT admired this diversity aspect of their contexts—some admitted that their schools were usually attended by white middle-class children and cultural celebrations were not part of the curriculum. As a result of observing and participating in some of these diversity activities, the FLT wanted to begin to include diversity themes in their future teaching experiences.

A third contextual influence was the extent of the time available to some FLT for work at the ECE Centers. In Phillis’s case, his personal commitments and early morning time at the ECE Center #1 were a challenge—he was often too tired and sleepy to keep up with the children’s energy level. Rather than overcoming this challenge by letting go of some of his personal commitments and becoming more responsible for his PEFE requirements, he decided by the end of the experience that teaching was not for him.
Samantha’s scheduled time was, without doubt, a major challenge since during her time at the ECE Center #1 there was a Kinesiology major student teacher. This fact became an obstacle for her when her teacher image was not acknowledged and she was not given much time to implement an activity. Therefore, when Samantha attempted to incorporate Spanish she encountered children’s rejections.

These findings confirm Spielman’s (2006) finding that contexts “interfere with the accomplishment of program objectives and program objectives proved unrealistic for schools” (p. 5). It is possible that the PEFE led Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto to realize that even the ECE Centers were not a “safe” context for many FLT, since they felt that the centers lacked a structure that could help them to plan their activities, and they experienced time constraints and rejections from the children. Nonetheless, the ECE Centers’ curricula, which emphasized the inclusion of the children’s interests and diversity, helped the FLT to overcome some of these challenges that were interfering with program objectives, because they learned to use these aspects to their advantage when they planned their activities.

**Relationships**

The challenges encountered by the FLT in forming relationships during their PEFE proved to be the most salient aspect of the ecological approach to the study of field experience. As the seminar course instructor and only university supervisor visiting the ECE centers, I admit that I had “problems coordinating all of the elements and actors involved in the field experience” (Lasley, Applegate, & Ellison, 1986, p. 137). It was not possible to be in five classrooms at the same time, regardless of my awareness that with
more help and better communication among teachers and FLT, more reciprocal mentorship relationships could have developed (Hall & Davis, 1995). Samantha, Kaylynn, and Jason had difficult relationships with their mentor teachers as they had difficulties communicating with them. The teachers barely acknowledged their presence in the classrooms and did not provide the feedback that they needed to implement successful activities with the children. Samantha had an especially hard time establishing relationships with the children and, among all the FLT, expressed very strongly her concern about having the children constantly reject her attempts to teach them Spanish. On the other hand, Helen’s, Kate’s, Jocelyn’s, Amy’s, and Elizabeth’s mentor teachers’ support made a big difference in their experiences as they guided them through the contexts, help them use their world languages through formal activities and during daily activities, and influenced the relationships the FLT developed with the children. Phillis’s and Adriana’s relationships with their mentor teachers did not develop successfully because they did not take advantage of the help they were offered. Nonetheless, Elizabeth and Helen are good examples of how the guidance of their mentor teachers helped them to develop relationships with the children. Elizabeth felt that if her mentor teacher was not present when she implemented an activity, the children were not as receptive to it. Her mentor teacher was also her cheerleader as he motivated her to overcome her fear of children and interact as much as possible with the “little people.” In addition, his help went beyond the time Elizabeth attended his classroom, as he practiced during the week the French activities that she had planned. His help made it easier for her to use the French words she had taught the children. In Helen’s case, her teacher took the time to sit
down with her to give her useful tips that helped her to think about the children’s interests and learning skills as she planned her activities.

Nevertheless, course instructors/supervisors should not only have expectations for their students (Lasley, Applegate, & Ellison, 1986), but also serve as mediators when relationships in the field experience are not developing in a manner that promotes growth. Due to time constraints, I did not serve as the mediator that some FLT needed to improve their relationships not only with their mentor teachers, but also with the children who kept rejecting their attempts to include their world languages in the ECE classrooms. Those FLT who did establish good relationships with the children and their mentor teachers implemented their activities and expressed very positive comments about the PEFE. Nonetheless, as was the case with Phillis and Adriana, personal characteristics sometimes conflicted with how much of their world languages they spoke in their ECE classrooms. As Lasley and Applegate (1985) asserted, “the success of most field experiences depends on three persons: the university supervisor, the cooperating teacher, and the prospective teacher” (p. 221). Course instructors/supervisors should be more attentive to the relationships that develop in the field placements since, as shown through this PEFE, relationships may be the source of FLT’s frustrations.

In conclusion, structure, content, context, and relationships did affect the PEFE of each of the FLT. However, regardless of these different influences, ultimately, the FLT were the ones who had the last word on the educative value that the PEFE had on their development as teachers and human beings.
PEFE as an Educative Experience

Using John Dewey’s theory of experience (1938/1997b), one can study how this particular PEFE could be considered educative, mis-educative, or non-educative, taking into consideration how experiences promote growth, impede growth, or do not promote growth, but stops it either; Dewey acknowledged that there are experiences that educate and others that do not. As a whole, I cannot assert that the PEFE was an educative experience that promoted the growth of the FLT and ensured the quality of the experience through the elements of continuity and interaction.

Through this PEFE, the FLT were challenged to engage in an unexpected situation that could result in new experiences. The FLT were asked to work at an ECE Center to teach small children concepts in their world languages, have the new experience, as Helen called it, of “modifying the environment” with this language, and observe language acquisition in action. Some of the FLT did have these new experiences, but others like Adriana and Phillis did not take the challenge. Nevertheless, this was a not a mis-educative PEFE for them because they did not have negative models of teaching that could impede their growth. It was the interaction of their personal traits and commitments with the ecological characteristics of the PEFE that did not permit them to grow from the PEFE. However, there is no evidence that the PEFE could impede further growth as they participated in other course work and field experiences. On the contrary, while Adriana and Phillis showed no real growth in their placement, the PEFE did not stop them from also making connections with what they were learning in education classes. Both cited examples of theories they observed in action during their PEFE. Therefore, the PEFE was more non-educative experience for Adriana and Phillis.
As I looked into how the FLTs described their PEFE, I observed how many times it was their commitment to grow personally and professionally, and the relationships that they developed, which made the PEFE educative for them. The program’s structure and content were planned aimed to meet certain knowledge and community needs, but it was in the implementation of the PEFE that educative value started to surface through each of the FLT. In Elizabeth’s account of her PEFE, the feelings of fear and embarrassment in her interactions with the children were very present, but she wanted to overcome these reactions as a personal growth experience. With the help of the relationship Elizabeth developed with her mentor teacher, she interacted with the children and learned what they liked to do, which not only helped her to overcome her fear and embarrassment, but also to learn some basic teaching skills like lesson planning. These teaching skills helped Elizabeth to put together her French language knowledge with what she called the pedagogy to teach it. Elizabeth believed that these two aspects, language and teaching, were essential in teaching French at any level of education. She could not believe that some of her friends majored just in French and could teach without attending any education classes about lesson planning and other pedagogical aspects.

Another FLT who demonstrated her commitment to learning to become a teacher to make an impact on her students’ lives was Samantha. Even with her difficult PEFE, Samantha learned how important it was not to be scared to try new things and to keep trying to teach the children even if they reject her attempts. These rejections or “negative responses” should not be the end of a teacher trying to teach students, because he/she “could not to stop there, but try to improve yourself because you know what went wrong, or you could make the lesson better to get a different response. Try to be like a kid, to go
ahead and not to just hold yourself” (Interview #1). It was her previous experiences as a student that kept her strong and positive through the semester as all the ecological aspects of the PEFE worked against her. Another example was Jason, who, even after making the decision not to become a world language teacher, continued attending the ECE Center #1 because he was fascinated by the children and seeing language learning in action. The PEFE did not stop him from learning; through it he discovered that his interests were in the content of the language, not in its teaching. Therefore, changing majors did not necessarily stop his growth—it just shifted into growing other aspects of language content rather than teaching languages.

In conclusion, the PEFE was not mis-educative, which would have been extremely sad, but its educative value was more at the individual level rather than overall. The PEFE did accomplish the goal of having its FLT observe language acquisition taking place and establishing relationships with teachers and children who taught them about classroom management, child development, planning lessons, and other teaching skills. Nonetheless, each FLT account showed how the PEFE entailed different educative experiences for them. Some grew at a personal level as they found the confidence needed to explore their own creativity and learn about children in general. Moreover, for others their exposure to diversity, together with the opportunity to reflect each week on their experiences at the centers, helped them realize the importance of preparing themselves to teach all types of students (Gallego, 2001; Hudson, Bergin, & Chryst, 1993) and engage in constant reflection on their teaching practices (Armaline & Hoover, 1989; Goodman, 1985).
At the end of the PEFE, the FLT did not want to stop “growing” in the Deweyan sense. The FLT expressed a desire to keep learning after the PEFE (see Appendix D, Aspects to keep learning to become a teacher). They wanted to learn more theories and methodologies to apply in their teaching, become more proficient in their languages through more classes and study abroad experiences, have more teaching experiences in order to keep learning more pedagogical skills, be exposed to different age groups, and incorporate diversity into their own teaching. Moreover, they looked forward to new experiences that could challenge their views. As one of the students said, it is through challenges that learning keeps occurring.

*Suggestions for improving PEFE*

Although it would not be possible or desirable to structure programs to address all the preservice expectations, it may be deleterious to ignore students’ expectations that have a strong relationship to their perceived ability to perform successfully in the classroom (Applegate & Lasley, 1985, p. 35).

I agree with Applegate and Lasley that teacher educators cannot ignore the expectations and recommendations of future teachers. The FLT in this research study were very vocal about what they considered helpful in improving the PEFE and submitted suggestions in different areas that included the following: improve communication with mentor teachers through meetings with the field experience supervisor; make stronger connections between WL ED 300W and WL ED 295A; change the location of the PEFE to elementary schools; establish block times for the PEFE on their official student schedule; make the evaluation more clear and explicit; change the language of the WL ED Performance Framework to make it user-friendly; extend the time spent in the ECE Centers; and inform the parents of the children in the PEFE about
the FLT’s role in the classroom (See Appendix D, Suggestions to improve the PEFE). All these recommendations were valid, as a successful field experience depends tremendously on the structure, content, context and, especially, in the relationships that are developed.

Structural changes, such as time allotted for the EFE and official blocking of times on the FLT schedules, could help to avoid what happened to Samantha, whose work responsibilities, led her to attend the ECE Center #1 in the afternoon while there was a Kinesiology teacher working on his lessons. The evaluation forms were based on the WL ED Performance Framework. It may be possible that the framework’s lack of clarity for some FLT stemmed from language use. As one of the FLT suggested, the language needs to be user-friendly for those who are not familiar with the type of language used in performance-based assessment. If performance-based assessment is going to continue to be used in teacher education program evaluations, it needs to be more accessible.

As the FLT, I also felt that it was extremely important to have open communication among FLT, mentor teachers, and field experience supervisors, if this and other field experiences were to contribute to the personal and professional growth of teachers. The recommendations made by the FLT were extremely useful. After a year of teaching the PEFE, I was aware that that there were many aspects to improve. For example, this early field experience required a lot of time from the course instructor/supervisor. Therefore, with the help of additional course instructors/supervisors the students could receive more individual attention. I noticed that often while I was observing a student in one classroom, another student in another classroom was also
implementing an activity. However, I had to accept that, even though I was the only person organizing and supervising this field experience, this situation enabled me to gain the trust of teachers and students alike. Another area that can be improved is the collaboration between the WL ED 300W and WL ED 295A course instructors to better connect these two courses and make the combined theory/practice component more apparent to the students. In addition, the seminar component of the course should include more discussions around some of the major issues the FLT encountered in their field experience, such as children’s negative responses toward learning the new language, advantages and disadvantages of having their EFE in an early childhood experience, classroom management styles, teaching languages in an environment in which they are not part of the everyday curriculum, and including diversity in the curriculum rather than focusing so much on FLES content.

Finally, with the collaboration of faculty, graduate teaching assistants, teachers and students involved in the WL ED program, this EFE and others could have clear goals that connect to the general mission of the program and to the College of Education (Bennett, Ishler, & O’Loughlin, 1992). This collaboration could lead to more coherence in both theory and practice in the WL ED program (Hammerness, 2006). At the same time, it is necessary to keep in mind that the education of future language teachers differs from the preparation of other teacher preparation students (Borg, 2006; Hammadou & Bernhardt, 1987). For example, as a K–12 certification program, world languages teacher education students need to be exposed to methodology and practices with students of different ages. In addition, future language teachers need to develop stronger language skills while also learning how to teach what they are learning. I believe that with the
collaboration of all members of this community of practice, all these areas could be
dressed and the EFE in world languages education will become an essential aspect of
the development of future language teachers.

Implications and Recommendations for Further Research

This PEFE has several implications for teacher education and LTE practice and
research. At the teacher education level this research study examined the ecological
aspects of an early field experience and removes some of the blame from future teachers
who often have been the target of research studies and evaluations that have pointed to
their personal characteristics and previous experiences as the main reason for their lack of
growth as teachers—leading them to teach as they were taught (Lortie, 1975/2002).
Teacher educators sometimes ask why more students decide not to become teachers.
Taking the findings from this research study into consideration, it may be that even
though personal characteristics and background experiences do play an important role in
their final decision, the ecological characteristics of structure, content, context, and
especially relationships could influence their final decisions about teaching. Therefore, as
Bowyer argued, early field experiences “can and do work, but constant attention to
details, to issues, and to problems is a necessary part of any program” because failing to
observe these experiences could “leave the door open for public criticism” (Bowyer &
Van Dyke, 1988, p. 162). Even though conducting research studies on field experiences
from an ecological approach is time-consuming, they provide a more complete picture of
the issues that could motivate future teachers to stay or leave a teaching career. In
addition, as language teacher educators look into when and how to implement EFEs, they
should also take into account whether or not early field experiences should focus on the theory and content knowledge of specific fields of study.

One of the issues at hand here is whether future language teachers should enroll in field experiences that would provide them with the opportunity to critically reflect on the status of current theories and practices in language teaching or whether practitioners in teacher education should plan “general” early field experiences that do not address the needs of this population of teacher education students. Zeichner (1996) recommended the first option—to coordinate field experiences through programs of study rather than central offices because doing so will make it a “well-thought” and articulated experience (p. 224). This is one of the reasons why block courses should be included in LTE programs and language teacher educators should ensure that they are interconnected and guide future teachers towards educative experiences (Gallego, 2001). Since the early days of language teacher education, the word collaboration has come up in many publications (Johnson 1922; Guntermann & ACTFL, 1993). More collaboration and alliances are needed at all levels of language teacher education, language departments, liberal arts departments, teacher education departments, and P-12 schools to provide meaningful connected courses and field experiences. As Morain (1990) argued, “powerful alliances can educate administrators and can gradually but unmistakably, strengthen the preparation of foreign language teachers. The result will be the improvement of language learning at every level” (http://web2.adfl.org/). As history has proven, unless teachers are prepared and confident of their knowledge of the language and its pedagogy, language learning at all levels will continue to be attacked by policy makers. Tedick and her colleagues argued that, “we, as professionals in teacher-development programs, need to
be connected to schools in order to make the kind of changes we have discussed and to make language learning meaningful for students” (Tedick et.al., 1993, p. 63).

LTE is a very young but strong field of inquiry. As we move towards a new decade we must continue to address the dichotomy between theory and practice, as all involved in LTE have to work together to improve the quality of FLT. Raymond (2002) suggested that research on language teacher education practices should start as early as possible if LTE wishes to gain its rightful place in the teacher education field. Early field experiences are a good context in which to start this research. However, it is necessary to gather information on LTE programs that include early field experiences. This information is not readily accessible, making it difficult to determine which types of EFEs are more effectively included in LTE. For example, the PEFE in this dissertation presents the dilemma of having the option of an EFE in which the FLT are placed in a context that is already oriented towards learning world languages, such as immersion programs, after-school language programs, or “structured” world language classes at different grade levels. However, the fact that the FLT were at such an early stage in their teacher education also meant that many lacked the language skills necessary to teach an entire class in their world language. In addition, Armstrong (1989–1990) included Penn State as an example of a large university located in a small community. This fact explains the fact that the:

demand for placement sites often outstrips the number of settings where instructional practices are exemplary….Such institutions often have a limited selection of sites for their early field experience students. Under such circumstances, it is not practical to limit placement locations on the basis of a quality-of-continuing instruction criterion (p. 5).
This circumstance proves challenging because world languages classes are mostly offered in middle school and high school. Even in these schools, the world languages staff is not enough for all FLT. Thus, this was one reason why the mentor teachers for the PEFE were not world language teachers. Nonetheless, one of the purposes of this PEFE was to observe language acquisition in action; that was accomplished at the ECE Center, but I was not anticipating the strong rejection experienced by the FLT from the children when they approached them in their world language. Many experts suggest starting children’s language teaching as early as possible, but what happens when the FLT encounter children who reject the language with a big “NO”?

This issue should be further explored if earlier field experiences for LTE are planned and implemented in contexts in which children are not exposed to world languages. Therefore, the contexts for EFEs in LTE may prove challenging either in schools in which the languages are already part of the curriculum or in schools in which the children are not exposed to the world languages at all. Language teacher educators need to then tailor the field experience to the context, the language proficiency of the FLT, and the teachers available to collaborate in the experiences.

Ideally, a follow-up research study would look into the WL ED early field experience since it has been in place for almost five years. It would be interesting and important to listen to a new group of FLT, course instructors, and (in a new study) their mentor teachers describe how the program’s early field experience is currently implemented and if the challenges expressed by the research participants in this initial case still exist.
**Final Thoughts**

This PEFE could be described using Irving’s words, “ego-building” and “ego-shattering,” not only for the FLT but also for Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto and me. I discovered pretty quickly that it is not easy to convince FLT to teach world languages at the elementary school level or to work with children under the age of five who were constantly rejecting the efforts of the FLT. Some told me directly that they felt I wanted ALL of them to become FLES teachers. At that moment, I wondered whether it was realistic to have these expectations for this early field experience. Does this mean that the WL ED early field experience should be canceled? Not necessarily. I believe it is a step in the right direction as LTE programs develop their curricula, but it is extremely important to continually evaluate the ecological elements of these early field experiences and how they can best promote genuine educative experiences for FLT.

Going back to my research question, *What can be learned from the implementation of an early field experience component into a language teacher program?*, I can say without any doubt that the PEFE was also a learning experience for me as a future language teacher educator. It took me some time to move beyond my goal of motivating the FLT to become FLES teachers towards studying closely the different ecological characteristics of the PEFE. This ecological approach of studying field experiences is a lens that I will continue using for future research and practice as it sheds light on planning and implementing field experiences. In addition, I learned that as they do at the ECE Centers, I should also consider FLT’s interests when planning my coursework content. I missed the opportunity to engage in a discussion on diversity in the curriculum when Kate and others were fascinated by how the ECE Centers celebrated
children’s cultures, and I would not want to miss such an opportunity. Like the FLT, I also learned from this PEFE to never stop learning from theory as it applies to my practice. I know that what I learned through this experience will aid me in my future LTE program work, as I plan and implement experiences for FLT that take into consideration their views and the need to promote their growth toward becoming quality world language teachers for a new generation of language learners.
REFERENCES


Velez-Rendón, G. (2000). *Student teaching in foreign languages: A phenomenological study.* Unpublished Ph.D., Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN.


APPENDIX A: PEFE COURSE MATERIALS

SYLLABUS- SPRING 20__
World Languages Teacher Preparation
Early Field Experience for
(Schedule #)
T- 4:40-5:55pm-- ___

Course Instructor:
Sandra Rodriguez-Arroyo
(Contact Information)

Course Description
This seminar/field experience will provide prospective World Language/ESL teachers with several opportunities to observe/work with pre-school and elementary school children while focusing on language acquisition processes. As part of the field experience, students will have the opportunity to observe and work in an early childhood or elementary school environment. There, students will have opportunities to plan, design and deliver second language related activities.

All these activities will include:
- connections with language acquisition theories,
- Foreign Language National Standards/ESL standards,
- specific cognitive behavioral and communicative goals.

During the seminar/workshop sessions on Tuesdays, students will discuss their experience, develop necessary didactic materials and teaching props, and have guidance on how to develop their E-Portfolios.

The long-term objectives of the course are:
- Develop a learning community in which students, instructors, and the faculty from early childhood settings and elementary ESL programs will be able to observe, experience, discuss, and reflect about education in general and language acquisition in particular.
- Begin preparing prospective world language and ESL teachers for a lifelong, reflective teaching career.

Required Textbook:

Grading Scale
| 94-100 | A | 80-83 | B- |
| 90-93  | A-| 77-79 | C+ |
| 87-89  | B+| 74-76 | C  |
| 84-86  | B | 70-73 | C- |
|        |   | below 60 | F  |
**Requirements**

1. Seminar Attendance/Participation (20%)
2. 10-weeks/Average of 2 hours per week field experience and submission of electronic journals (40%)
3. Electronic portfolio (20%)
4. Didactic Materials Box (20%)

**Seminar Attendance/Participation (20%)**

Seminar attendance and participation are an extremely important element in this course. Three unexcused absences will result in reduction of a grade. Three late arrivals will be considered one unexcused absence. After that, each tardy will be considered one unexcused absence. Written excuses will be accepted, but only for religious, collegian sports, or medical reasons. There will be a 1-point deduction for each late arrival to seminar, and a 2-point deduction for each unexcused absence.

The seminar is designed for active participation through discussions, presentations, reflections on the field experience, development and evaluation of instructional plans and materials, as well as group reflections and self-critique. Therefore, you are an extremely important element in this course and this requires that you prepare ahead of time and read and complete all assignments before our seminar.

**Field Experience (40%):**

There are three ECE Centers that will be hosting this field experience. In addition, an ESL elementary school program in the area will host students pursuing an ESL certificate.

Students are expected to follow the regulations as well as the centers’ professional and personal expectations such as appearance, school attendance and identification requirements. Each student should plan to commit about---2-3 hours/1-3 days every week during the available supervised times---to the assigned pre-school center/school. The attendance requirement also applies to your field experience hours. If you are absent from your field experience you need to call your teachers at the centers/schools, and send an e-mail message to your course instructor, no later than 24 hours after absence or points will be deducted from your field experience.

In addition, as part of the field experience you will submit electronic reflective journals. Journal prompts and deadlines are indicated in the course agenda. The journals will be evaluated for your reflections on the experiences your have in your placement in connection with the prompt (1-point), and deadline submission (1-point).

**Performance Based Framework E-Portfolio (20%):**

The portfolio will include descriptions, reflections, materials and journals. More info will be given during the seminars.

**Didactic Materials Box (20%)**

During the semester you will work on the creation of a box of didactic materials to teach world languages/ESL to children and its accompanying activity plans. More info will be given during the seminars.

***IMPORTANT:*** Read carefully the *WL ED 295A Requirements Guidelines Package* for more information on each of these requirements.
### AGENDA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic/Reading</th>
<th>Homework</th>
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| Week 1 | Intros --- Welcome  
**Defining FLES/WHY FLES?**  
* Pre-Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapters 16-17  
* Collect clearances: Act 34, Act 151, Professional Liability Insurance, Guest/Host Form, TB Test | * Search for a current FLES or ESL program in different states. Select states before leaving. Type name, description of the program, contact information, and reference where you found the program. Post information by Monday, _____-midnight on ANGEL message board  
* Request your web space  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 7 |
| Week 2 | Preparing for the field experience  
* Discussion on FLES Programs  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 7  
* Creating educational materials  
* Workshop: Numbers #1  
* E-Portfolio | * Look for library materials on teaching numbers and bring them to class next week.  
* Schedule meeting with lead teacher of assigned classroom  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapters 13-14 |
| Week 3 | Classroom Games and Activities  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapters 13-14  
* Creating educational materials  
* Workshop: Numbers #2  
**IMPORTANT: FIELD EXPERIENCE BEGINS THIS WEEK** | * Bring developed “Numbers” materials to share in class.  
* **Journal #1:** First impressions of the field experience. Include also a list of at least 50 words in the WL or in English (ESL certificate students) that you may need to use during this experience. Ex. greetings, classroom objects, weather, colors, numbers, animals, parts of the body, commands, action words, etc. Due by Sunday, _____-midnight on journal #1 drop box. |
| Week 4 | E-Portfolio Workshop  
* Work on your E-Portfolio | * **Journal #2:** Who are the teachers, Who are the students in the field experience? Due by Sunday, _____-midnight, on journal #2 drop box.  
* Think on ideas for your “Colors” materials  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 1 |
| Week 5 | Learning about children  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 1  
* Creating educational materials  
* Workshop: Colors | * Bring developed “Numbers” materials to share in class.  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 9  
* Think on ideas for your “Body Parts” materials  
* **Journal #3:** Reflect on your first joys and disappointments as you teach a new language to young children. Due by Sunday, _____-midnight on journal #3 drop box. |
| Week 6 | Children’s behavior  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 9  
* Creating educational materials  
* Workshop: Body Parts | * Bring developed “Colors” materials to share in class.  
* **Journal #4:** Reflect on children’s behavior. Due by Sunday, _____-midnight on journal #4 drop box. |
| Week 7 | E-Portfolio Workshop | * Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapters 2-3  
* Think on ideas for your “Weather” materials  
* **Journal #5:** Reflect on your efforts using L2 during the field experience. Due by Sunday, _____-midnight on journal #5 drop box. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Communication in the FLES classroom</th>
<th>Week 9: Spring Break- No seminar</th>
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</table>
| 8    | * Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapters 2-3  
* Creating educational materials  
**Workshop:** Weather |
|      | * Bring developed “Body Parts” materials to share in class  
* **Journal #6:** Learning from experience. Due by Sunday, _____-midnight on journal #6 drop box. |
| 9    | **Workshop:** Weather |
|      | * Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 15  
* Work on your class requirements  
* **Note: No journal due on Sunday,** |
| 10   | **L2 exposure through technology**  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 15  
**E-Portfolio Workshop**  
* Work on your E-Portfolio |
|      | * Bring developed “Weather” materials to share in class.  
* Search for technology resources you could use in the language classroom. Type name, description of the resource and where to find it and post on message board.  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 10  
**Journal #7:** Reflect on how to implement fun/interesting activities for children. Due by Sunday, _____-midnight on journal #7 drop box. |
| 11   | **Integrating context and culture in the L2 classroom**  
* Discussion of technology resources  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 10  
* Creating educational materials  
**Workshop:** Animals #1 |
|      | * Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 4  
* **Journal #8:** Reflect on how important it is to use the teaching context when planning activities for children. Due by Sunday, _____-midnight on journal #8 drop box. |
| 12   | **Language in Context**  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 4  
* Creating educational materials  
**Workshop:** Animals #2 |
|      | * Bring developed “Animals” materials to share in class. (Paper Bag Animals’ Puppet Show)  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapters 5-6  
**Journal #9:** Explain what type of activities have been more/less successful in the field experience and why. Due by Sunday, _____-midnight on journal #9 drop box. |
| 13   | **Ideas for future activities**  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapters 5-6  
* Planning your last week  
**IMPORTANT:** FIELD EXPERIENCE ENDS THIS WEEK: Do not leave your classroom, without saying the proper goodbyes to the children and the teachers. |
|      | * Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 18  
* **Journal #10:** Final comments and suggestions  
Due by Sunday, _____-midnight on journal #10 drop box.  
* SPECIAL NOTE: The field experience ends this week for those that finished their 10-weeks, if not you need to continue attending until you finish your 10-week field experience. |
| 14   | **E-Portfolio Workshop**  
* Work on your E-Portfolio |
|      | Keep working on your E-Portfolio and Didactic Materials Box |
| 15   | **Assessment of field experience**  
* Reading: Curtain & Dahlberg- Chapter 18 |
|      | Work on your E-Portfolio and Didactic Materials Box final details. |
| 16   | **E-Portfolio Presentations** |
|      | Turn in contents of E-Portfolio in CD-ROM |
| 17   | **Due Date- Finals’ Week** |
|      | Last due date to turn in all class requirements |
WL ED 295A Requirements Guidelines Package

I- Seminar Attendance/Participation (20%)
Seminar attendance and participation are an extremely important element in this course. Three un-excused absences will result in reduction of a grade. Three late arrivals will be considered one un-excused absence. After that, each tardy will be considered one unexcused absence. Written excuses will be accepted, but only for religious, collegian sports, or medical reasons. There will be a 1-point deduction for each late arrival to seminar, and a 2-point deduction for each unexcused absence. The seminar is designed for active participation through discussions, presentations, reflections on the field experience, development and evaluation of instructional plans and materials, as well as group reflections and self-critique. Therefore, you are an extremely important element in this course and this requires that you prepare ahead of time and read and complete all assignments before our seminar.

II- 10-Weeks Field Experience (40%)
Your field experience has two components: (A) Field Experience Participation (20%) and (B) Electronic Reflective Journals (20%):

**Field experience mentor teachers and instructors wrote the following expectations.

A- Field Experience Participation Expectations:
1- Contact teachers as soon as you receive your placements and arrange to visit your center/school. Learn their names as soon as possible.
2- Use your first visit as an observation period, so you can get a feel for the classroom functioning, observe the children, learn their names and start looking for your space within the classroom.
3- The majority of you will be by yourselves, but those that are in pairs I don’t want one to be working and the other just looking around. The percentage toward your field experience is not only for attendance, I expect responsibility, initiative on your part, and interaction with the children ALL the time. Make sure you also communicate with the other students placed in your same classroom to collaborate among each other.
4- Attendance/Hours- Each student should plan to commit about---2-3 hours/1-3 days every week during the available supervised times---to the assigned pre-school center/school. The attendance requirement also applies to your field experience hours. If you are absent from your field experience you need to call your teachers at the centers/schools, and send an e-mail message to your course instructor no later than 24 hours after absence or points will be deducted from your field experience.
5- Always remember to sign in/out the WL ED 295A and center/school attendance sheets.
6- Wear name labels ALL the time during the first weeks.
7- Make a list of necessary classroom vocabulary that you may need to use during this experience the first day that you go to your assigned classroom.
8- Be useful! Help the teachers on the daily routines of the classroom like getting the kids ready for breakfast, etc. Incorporate the language in these tasks too.
9- Activities to do with the children:
   a- Plan and implement formal short activities (not more than 10 minutes) during circle time or class time (talk with your teachers). The teachers have some ideas on how you may have some assignments in the classroom. For example you could label the classroom items, sing a song at circle, reading at circle, make a chart for weather, menu, prepare a mini lesson (for older children), etc. Good communication with your teachers is an essential element for your success incorporating yourself and your language into the classrooms.
*Note: As a class requirement you need to prepare 5 activity plans and its accompanying didactic materials. From these, you are required to implement 3 with the children at your center/school.

b- Learn as soon as possible commands, greetings, songs, poetry, rhymes, games, etc. in the language to use with the children in group and individual activities.
c- Use the language in the playground, in the classroom, in the walks to point out objects around. “Just speak in your language,” do not ask the children if they “would like to learn the French word for _____?” Asking questions to young children usually gets a “no” or at least no interest.
d- You should make efforts to learn the songs and finger plays being used in the classroom, teachers would be able to share this in meetings with you or ask them for it.
e- Use the infant board books for the older children that are easy to translate; the Centers/schools have tons of them.
f- Learn ways to use the computers. The centers/schools have internet access, so you can search for websites that may be of interest to the children. The centers/schools often need one on one interaction with children at the computer anyway.
g- Talk with the teachers about the different projects (emergent curriculum/project-based learning, etc.) they are already working with the kids and incorporate the language you are teaching to these.

B- Electronic reflective journals

As part of the field experience you will submit 10- electronic reflective journals. Journal prompts and deadlines are below. Each journal should be more than a page double space, but not exceed two-page double space. Journals will be evaluated on your reflections of the experiences you have in your placement in connection with the prompt (1-point), and deadline submission (1-point). Every journal should be submitted on its ANGEL drop box by Sunday midnight of the week it is due.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANGEL Deadline</th>
<th>Journal Prompt</th>
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| Date: Sunday, _____ midnight | **Journal #1**: First impressions of the field experience  
After attending the field experience this week, how did you feel? Did the experience meet your previous expectations? Yes/No and Why? What are your fears/hopes? What new things did you learn? |
| Sunday, _____ midnight | **Journal #2**: Who are the teachers? Who are the students in the field experience?  
If you were to describe the adults and the “little people” you are in contact with in your assigned classroom to someone that has not met them, what will you tell them? How do you feel around them? What efforts have you done or plan to do to establish a relationship with them? |
| Sunday, _____ midnight | **Journal #3**: First joys and disappointments  
After three weeks of attending your classroom, reflect on moments in which you have felt joy and disappointment of trying to expose the children to a new language, and also learning how to work with children of this age group. |
| Sunday, _____ midnight | **Journal #4**: Children’s behavior  
How will you describe the behavior of the children in your classroom? Have you learned any classroom management technique that may be useful for your future teaching career? |
| Sunday, _____ midnight | **Journal #5**: Efforts using L2  
Describe the ways in which you incorporate your world language into your classroom. Has the process been easy or difficult? |
Journal #6: Learning from experience

You are now midway through the field experience, what have you learned to do and not to do as you work with children trying to expose them to another language? What have you learned about yourself as a future teacher? What are your next steps in the field experience?

Journal #7: Implementing fun/interesting activities for children

Have you implemented fun/interesting activities for the children? Describe them. How was the children’s reaction? What are the advantages/disadvantages of implementing fun/interesting activities?

Journal #8: Teaching context

Teaching context is the place, people, objects where you are teaching, in your case, the classroom you are in and outdoors where you go with the children, and everything in it. Talk about the role the context you are surrounded with have played as you prepared your activities. In addition, think about how a context like “Penn State” influences what happens with your children.

Journal #9: More/less successful activities

It is almost the end of the field experience. Reflect on those activities or moments that you have incorporated the target language and you felt more/less successful. Why were they successful? What could you do different with the less successful ones if you have a second chance to repeat it?

Journal #10: Final comments and suggestions

It is now the end of the field experience, what did you enjoy more/less about it? What did you learned about teaching languages to younger students? What did you learned about yourself as a language teacher? What suggestions will you give to improve the field experience and the seminar?

C- Field Experience Assessment

You will be evaluated twice during the semester (Midterm and Final). The assessment consists of a three-way evaluation:

1- Course instructor = 100 pts
2- Mentor teacher = 100 pts
3- Pre-service teacher (You) = 100 pts

The midterm evaluation will serve as feedback on your performance and areas to improve on for the rest of the field experience. The final evaluation will count towards your final grade. This is the method that the course instructor will use to obtain the 20% field experience grade from these evaluation forms:

100+100+100=300
300/3= 100
100 × .20 = 20pts

*Note: The evaluation forms are available on ANGEL and are based on the World Languages Education Performance Framework
III- Didactic Materials Box* (20%)

During the semester you will work on the creation of a box of didactic materials and its accompanying activity plans to teach World Languages/ESL to children. The require topics around which you will prepare your materials are: Numbers, Colors, Animals, Body Parts, and Weather. In addition, you could include any other didactics materials you have prepared to implement an activity at the childcare centers/schools. More than one didactic material and activity plan per topic is accepted.

The course instructor will not give you a template to follow in order to write your activity plan, because it is very important that you start developing your own way of planning. However, some elements that you need to include in your activity plan are: Topic, age level, objective(s), National Foreign Language Standards/ESL Standards addressed (refer to the handouts on Angel), materials, and the procedure or summary of how you plan to implement this activity. You may include other aspects like homework, and a reflection of how did your activity worked out if you were able to use this activity in the centers/schools.

The didactic materials box should be presented to the course instructor by Friday, April 29th, 2005. The course instructor will be available at her office (270 Chambers) for appointments to evaluate the contents of the box. The didactic materials box will be returned to you after it is evaluated.

**Evaluation:**
1-5 points- Completeness and quality of didactic materials presented on each topic (Numbers, Colors, Animals, Body Parts, and Weather) Minimum of 1 per topic
1-5 points- Completeness and quality of activity plans presented on each topic (Numbers, Colors, Animals, Body Parts, and Weather) Minimum of 1 per topic
1-5 points- Creativity/Originality
1-5 points- Oral Presentation

**Notes:**
1- You do not have to store your didactic materials in a “box.” You could also use a big bag or another storage device that is more adequate for your materials.
2- The topics could be changed with the authorization of the course instructor.
IV- WL ED 295A Performance Based Framework E-Portfolio (20%)

The first step to develop your E-Portfolio is to familiarize yourself with the following Performance Framework:

Performance Framework and Exit Competencies
World Languages Teacher Education Program
The Pennsylvania State University – University Park

Candidates for certification must demonstrate their competency for teaching world languages in grades K through 12 as defined by these performance statements:

**DOMAIN A: PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

A1. Teacher candidates will demonstrate an understanding of interpersonal communication in the target language at an advanced level; interpretative communication at the advanced level; presentational communication at the advanced level; structure of the target language; perspectives, products, and practices of the target culture, history, geography, economics, politics, religion, literature, and arts of countries where target language is spoken as specified in PA Academic Standards and Chapter 354.

A2. Teacher candidates will demonstrate an understanding of theories, research, and best practice of K-12 student learning and development, and learner diversity by designing, adapting and modifying instructional and assessment materials and strategies.

A3. Teacher candidates will demonstrate an understanding of subject-specific pedagogy, including instructional strategies for language acquisition and applications of technology.

A4. Teacher candidates will develop and select appropriate instructional goals that reflect Pennsylvania Academic Standards and standards for best practice in grades K-12.

A5. Teacher candidates will design coherent short range and long range instructional and assessment opportunities utilizing professional guidelines such as the Standards for Foreign Language Learning, the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, and the ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12.

A6. Teacher candidates will plan for a nurturing learning environment.

**DOMAIN B: THE ACT OF TEACHING**

B1. Teacher candidates will demonstrate competency in engaging all learners in target language communication and cultural understanding using language acquisition teaching strategies, including applications of multi-media technologies.

B2. Teacher candidates will demonstrate competence in the assessment of student learning.

B3. Teacher candidates will manage typical classroom procedures.

B4. Teacher candidates will manage student learning and behavior.

B5. Teacher candidates will communicate effectively using verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques.

**DOMAIN C: REFLECTION ON AND ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING**

C1. Teacher candidates will monitor and adjust instructional strategies during teaching based on assessment evidence of student learning and development.

C2. Teacher candidates will critically analyze own effectiveness in promoting learning and development.

C3. Teacher candidates will inquire systematically into their practice in order to improve curriculum and instruction for all learners.

**DOMAIN D: FULFILLMENT OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

D1. Teacher candidates will demonstrate evidence of professionalism as defined by the program and partnering school personnel.

D2. Teacher candidates will build and maintain professional relationships with colleagues, families, policymakers, and community members.

D3. Teacher candidates will seek and demonstrate value of professional growth through involvement in professional organizations, maintenance and enrichment of proficiency in the target language, and awareness of research on language acquisition and pedagogy.

D4. Teacher candidates will demonstrate integrity, ethical behaviors, and professional conduct as defined by the Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators.
Description of WL ED 295A Performance Based Framework E-Portfolio

Your E-Portfolio should be able to demonstrate how you have accomplished each of the domains of the World Languages Performance Framework. Because this is the first portfolio in which you work with this specific framework, in addition to been at an early stage in your WL teacher education program, you will need to include evidence that address some, not all of the standards. The expectation is that when you reach the end of your student teaching you will be able to address each of the domains’ standards. However, for this specific field experience, the standards you will be addressing in your E-Portfolio are: A1, A2, A5, A6, B3, B4, B5, C1, C2, C3, D1, D2, D3, and D4. Identify which standards you address with each evidence you present in your E-Portfolio. Include at least one sample of evidence per each standard required under the domains. You can include evidence from other classes, field experiences, volunteer work, etc., but 60% of the E-Portfolio should be content from this class.

Evaluation of E-Portfolio (20 points)
1-5 points- Completeness and quality of evidence presented in each WL performance framework domain standard require for this field experience. Include standards as they apply to each sample of evidence.
1-5 points- Justification and reflection for each piece of evidence presented
1-5 points- Professional Appearance and Language Use
1-5 points- Organization- easy access to each part of the E-Portfolio

***Important: Remember that your E-Portfolio is a public website that any person could enter. For that reason, please make sure that you don’t use any real names in your journals’ excerpts. Real names include: names of child care centers/schools, names of classrooms, names of teachers, names of children, etc. In addition, do not include pictures in which others could recognize these places and people. This is the reason why instead of including all the content of your journals in your E-Portfolio, I am asking you for EDITED excerpts. Moreover, a minimum of 5-points will be deducted from your E-Portfolio grade if you use real names and pictures that could be recognized by others.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Suggested Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 1 | * Request your web space at [https://www.work.psu.edu/webspace/](https://www.work.psu.edu/webspace/)  
  * Read: Performance Framework and Exit Competencies World Languages Teacher Education Program |
| Week 2 | * Read WL ED 295A Performance Based E-Portfolio Guidelines |
| Week 3 | * Start filling out E-Portfolio Evidence Worksheet |
| Week 4 | E-Portfolio Workshop- Date:  
  Location:  
  * Work on your E-Portfolio first pages |
| Week 5 | * Work on Domain A evidence web page(s) |
| Week 6 | * Write Domain A evidence reflections/justifications and include on web page(s) |
| Week 7 | * Work on Domain D evidence web page(s) |
| Week 8 | E-Portfolio Workshop- Date:  
  Location:  
  * Write Domain D evidence reflections/justifications and include on web page(s) |
| Week 9 | Spring Break  
  Select journals’ excerpts for Domain C |
| Week 10 | E-Portfolio Workshop- Date:  
  Location:  
  L2 exposure through technology  
  * Search for technology resources. Type name, description of the resource and where to find it and post on ANGEL message board. This homework is evidence of standards A5 and B5. |
| Week 11 | * Write Domain C evidence reflections/justifications and include on web page(s) |
| Week 12 | * Work on Domain B evidence web page(s) |
| Week 13 | * Write Domain B evidence reflections/justifications and include on web page(s) |
| Week 14 | E-Portfolio Workshop- Date:  
  Location:  
  * Putting everything together  
  * Check all the evidence and reflections/justifications you included in your E-Portfolio.  
  * Write E-Portfolio and Domains’ introductions and include on web page(s) |
| Week 15 | * Finish gathering evidence for your E-Portfolio  
  * Write your final reflection and include on web page(s)  
  * Make sure your E-Portfolio is complete  
  * Save all pages of E-Portfolio in CD-ROM |
| Week 16 | E-Portfolio Presentations  
  * Show your work to your classmates. Summarized contents of E-Portfolio.  
  * Turn in contents of E-Portfolio in CD-ROM |

****Note: ITS HELP: The E-Portfolio website has some information that could help you publish your website: [http://eportfolio.psu.edu/collect/50min01.shtml](http://eportfolio.psu.edu/collect/50min01.shtml). There are also one-on-one technology tutors available in 7 Sparks (University Learning Center) that can help you out too. Take advantage of this free service.****
You should be able to demonstrate evidence on the following domain standards by the end of the semester. As you read the standards think about what evidence you could use for your E-Portfolio to show you have fulfill the standards and write it beneath each standard. Remember you need to have at least one piece of evidence addressing each of the following standards. Some pieces of evidence could be use for more than one standard, but try not to repeat them too often.

**DOMAIN A: PLANNING AND PREPARATION**
Ex. Papers wrote on language, general education, and/or teacher education classes (Ex. WL ED 300), journals' excerpts, lesson plans, special class homework, and information from countries where target language is spoken, study abroad experiences or travel, photos, etc.

A1. Teacher candidates will demonstrate an understanding of interpersonal communication in the target language at an advanced level; interpretative communication at the advanced level; presentational communication at the advanced level; structure of the target language; perspectives, products, and practices of the target culture, history, geography, economics, politics, religion, literature, and arts of countries where target language is spoken as specified in PA Academic Standards and Chapter 354.

A2. Teacher candidates will demonstrate an understanding of theories, research, and best practice of K-12 student learning and development, and learner diversity by designing, adapting and modifying instructional and assessment materials and strategies.

A5. Teacher candidates will demonstrate an understanding of subject-specific pedagogy, including instructional strategies for language acquisition and applications of technology.

A6. Teacher candidates will plan for a nurturing learning environment.

**DOMAIN B: THE ACT OF TEACHING**
Ex. didactic materials, journals' excerpts, lesson plans, etc.

B3. Teacher candidates will manage typical classroom procedures.

B4. Teacher candidates will manage student learning and behavior.

B5. Teacher candidates will communicate effectively using verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques.
**DOMAIN C: REFLECTION ON AND ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING**
Ex. papers, informal assessment- observations written on journals that made you changed way of teaching; assessment tools used in previous experiences, etc.

C1. Teacher candidates will monitor and adjust instructional strategies during teaching based on assessment evidence of student learning and development.

C2. Teacher candidates will critically analyze own effectiveness in promoting learning and development.

C3. Teacher candidates will inquire systematically into their practice in order to improve curriculum and instruction for all learners.

**DOMAIN D: FULFILLMENT OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**
Ex. Clearances (ERASE NAMES AND SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER), awards, Recommendation letters, professional organizations membership, extracurricular activities, e-mail communications (with classmates, instructors, and mentor teachers), awards, Journals’ excerpts demonstrating professionalism, Resume, conference/workshops attended, etc.

D1. Teacher candidates will demonstrate evidence of professionalism as defined by the program and partnering school personnel.

D2. Teacher candidates will build and maintain professional relationships with colleagues, families, policymakers, and community members.

D3. Teacher candidates will seek and demonstrate value of professional growth through involvement in professional organizations, maintenance and enrichment of proficiency in the target language, and awareness of research on language acquisition and pedagogy.

D4. Teacher candidates will demonstrate integrity, ethical behaviors, and professional conduct as defined by the Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators.

*Note:* An example on how to organize your E-Portfolio is provided in the next page. This organization is ONLY an example of how you could organize your E-Portfolio, you could decide on a different organization, as long as it is easy to follow along.
World Languages Performance Based E-Portfolio

Domain A - Planning and Preparation
Evidence, reflection, standard(s) met
Justification/reflection for each evidence presented, include standards addressed.
This evidence should be able to show you met Standards: A1, A2, A3, and A6.
Ex. Papers, Journals' excerpts, Lesson Plans, Information from countries where target language is spoken, etc. (make links to the documents)
Domain B (make link)
Domain C (make link)
Domain D (make link)
Also include links to return to:
World Languages Performance Based E-Portfolio/ WL ED 295A-Early Field Experience for World Languages Teacher Preparation/Home Page/Personal Information/Classes

Domain B - The Act of Teaching
Evidence, reflection, standard(s) met
Justification/reflection for each evidence presented, include standards addressed.
This evidence should be able to show you met Standards: B3, B4, and B5.
Ex. Didactic Materials, Journals' excerpts, Lesson Plans, etc. (make links to the documents)
Domain A (make link)
Domain C (make link)
Domain D (make link)
Also include links to return to:
World Languages Performance Based E-Portfolio/ WL ED 295A-Early Field Experience for World Languages Teacher Preparation/Home Page/Personal Information/Classes

Domain C - Reflection and Assessment of Teaching
Evidence, reflection, standard(s) met
Justification/reflection for each evidence presented, include standards addressed.
This evidence should be able to show you met Standards: C1, C2, and C3.
Ex. Papers, Informal Assessment- observations written on journals that made you changed way of teaching; Assessment tools used in previous experiences, etc. (make links to the documents)
Domain A (make link)
Domain B (make link)
Domain D (make link)
Also include links to return to:
World Languages Performance Based E-Portfolio/ WL ED 295A-Early Field Experience for World Languages Teacher Preparation/Home Page/Personal Information/Classes

Domain D - Fulfillment of Professional Responsibilities
Evidence, reflection, standard(s) met
Justification/reflection for each evidence presented, include standards addressed.
This evidence should be able to show you met Standards: D1, D2, D3, and D4.
Ex. Clearances, awards, Recommendation letters, professional organizations membership, awards, Journals' excerpts demonstrating professionalism, Resume, conference/workshops attended, etc.
Domain A (make link)
Domain B (make link)
Domain C (make link)
Also include links to return to:
World Languages Performance Based E-Portfolio/ WL ED 295A-Early Field Experience for World Languages Teacher Preparation/Home Page/Personal Information/Classes

World Languages Performance Based E-Portfolio

Description of E-Portfolio- Paragraph that summarizes content of E-portfoilo and give directions on what to check next.
Domain A - Planning and Preparation (make link)
Domain B - The Act of Teaching (make link)
Domain C - Reflection and Assessment of Teaching (make link)
Domain D - Fulfillment of Professional Responsibilities (make link)
Also include links to return to:
World Languages Performance Based E-Portfolio/WL ED 295A-Early Field Experience for World Languages Teacher Preparation/Home Page/Personal Information/Classes

Final reflection: What did you learn from preparing this portfolio, this class, field experience, etc.
Also include links to return to: World Languages Performance Based E-Portfolio, Home Page/Personal Information/Classes

***Important: The arrows in both directions show how each page should connect to the rest.
APPENDIX B: PEFE EVALUATION FORMS

WL ED 295 A- Course Instructor Assessment Form- WL ED
Performance Framework and Exit Competencies
World Languages Teacher Education Program
The Pennsylvania State University – University Park

Pre-service teacher: ____________________________ Evaluator’s Name: ____________________________

PLACEMENT: ____________________________ Evaluation Date: ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Criteria for Rating</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY=5 (Midterm)</th>
<th>GOOD=4 (Midterm)</th>
<th>SATISFACTORY=3 (Midterm)</th>
<th>UNSATISFACTORY=2 (Midterm)</th>
<th>NOT OBSERVED=NA (Midterm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>Midterm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DOMAIN A: Planning and Preparation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Selects/creates instructional resources and materials in the world language</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incorporates developmentally appropriate materials for students</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sequences activities to maximize learning world language</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participates in classroom’s routines/procedures</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsibility on providing activity plans with enough time to review and discuss them</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DOMAIN B: Teaching</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Communicates clear and consistent expectations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses “play” time productively and effectively, incorporating the world language as much as possible</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses instructional time productively and effectively</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizes physical environment to support instructional activities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manages behavior with strategies (ex. Proximity, eye contact, non-verbal cues)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DOMAIN C: Reflection and assessment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Ability to reflect on his/her activity plans and delivery</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to assess instruction and student understanding</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Makes modifications in instruction and assessment in response to student understanding and observations of student engagement. Can recommend “next steps” based on reflection and assessment.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assesses students understanding of concepts taught in world languages whenever possible</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receptive to feedback and suggestions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DOMAIN D: Professionalism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Completes assignments and tasks accurately and with high quality</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meets deadlines responsibly</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fulfills commitments dependably and willingly</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exhibits initiative, enthusiasm and self-confidence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality interactions with school personnel, children, and families</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final Total: ___________/100

Notes: ____________________________

Assessor’s signature: ____________________________
**WL ED 295 A- Mentor Teacher Assessment Form- WL ED**
Performance Framework and Exit Competencies
World Languages Teacher Education Program
The Pennsylvania State University – University Park

Pre-service teacher: _______________________________  Evaluator’s Name: _______________________________

**PLACEMENT:** _______________________________  Evaluation Date: _______________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Category</strong></th>
<th><strong>Domain</strong></th>
<th><strong>Point Scale</strong></th>
<th><strong>Observations</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criteria for Rating</strong></td>
<td><strong>Domain A: Planning and Preparation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Point Scale</strong></td>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXEMPLARY=5</td>
<td>Selects/creates instructional resources and materials in the world language</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Midterm</em></td>
<td>Incorporates developmentally appropriate materials for students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Final</em></td>
<td>Sequences activities to maximize learning world language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD=4</td>
<td>Participates in classroom’s routines/procedures</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Midterm</em></td>
<td>Responsibility on providing you the plans with enough time to review and discuss them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Final</em></td>
<td><strong>Domain B: Teaching</strong></td>
<td><strong>Point Scale</strong></td>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXEMPLARY=5</td>
<td>Communicates clear and consistent expectations</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Midterm</em></td>
<td>Uses “play” time productively and effectively, incorporating the world language as much as possible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Final</em></td>
<td>Uses instructional time productively and effectively</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD=4</td>
<td>Organizes physical environment to support instructional activities</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Midterm</em></td>
<td>Manages behavior with strategies (ex. Proximity, eye contact, non-verbal cues)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Final</em></td>
<td><strong>Domain C: Reflection and assessment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Point Scale</strong></td>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXEMPLARY=5</td>
<td>Takes time to discuss and reflect on activities after delivery</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Midterm</em></td>
<td>Makes sure that the students understand his/her instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Final</em></td>
<td>Makes modifications in instruction and assessment in response to student understanding and observations of student engagement. Can recommend “next steps” based on reflection and assessment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD=4</td>
<td>Check students’ understanding of concepts taught in world languages during play instructional and “play” time</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Midterm</em></td>
<td>Receptive to feedback and suggestions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Final</em></td>
<td><strong>Domain D: Professionalism</strong></td>
<td><strong>Point Scale</strong></td>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXEMPLARY=5</td>
<td>Completes assignments and tasks accurately and with high quality</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Midterm</em></td>
<td>Meets deadlines responsibly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Final</em></td>
<td>Fulfills commitments dependably and willingly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD=4</td>
<td>Exhibits initiative, enthusiasm and self-confidence</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Midterm</em></td>
<td>Quality interactions with school personnel, children, and families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Final</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Final Total:     /100

Notes:

Assessor’s signature: ____________________________________________________________
WL ED 295 A - WL ED Student Self-Assessment Form
Performance Framework and Exit Competencies
World Languages Teacher Education Program
The Pennsylvania State University – University Park

Pre-service teacher: _______________________________  PLACEMENT: ______________________________
Mentor teacher: ___________________________________  Evaluation Date: ______________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMAIN A: Planning and Preparation</th>
<th>Point Scale</th>
<th>Observations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selects/creates instructional resources and materials in the world language</td>
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<td>Incorporates developmentally appropriate materials for students</td>
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<td>Sequences activities to maximize learning world language</td>
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<td>Participates in classroom’s routines/procedures</td>
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<td>Responsibility on providing activity plans with enough time to review and discuss them</td>
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<tr>
<th>DOMAIN B: Teaching</th>
<th>Point Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicates clear and consistent expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses “play” time productively and effectively, incorporating the world language as much as possible</td>
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<td>Uses instructional time productively and effectively</td>
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<td>Organizes physical environment to support instructional activities</td>
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<td>Manages behavior with strategies (ex. Proximity, eye contact, non-verbal cues)</td>
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<th>DOMAIN C: Reflection and assessment</th>
<th>Point Scale</th>
<th>Observations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to reflect on activity plans and delivery</td>
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<td>Ability to assess instruction and student understanding</td>
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<td>Makes modifications in instruction and assessment in response to student understanding and observations of student engagement. Can recommend “next steps” based on reflection and assessment</td>
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<td>Assesses students understanding of concepts taught in world languages whenever possible</td>
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<td>Receptive to feedback and suggestions</td>
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<th>DOMAIN D: Professionalism</th>
<th>Point Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completes assignments and tasks accurately and with high quality</td>
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<td>Meets deadlines responsibly</td>
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<td>Fulfills commitments dependably and willingly</td>
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<td>Exhibits initiative, enthusiasm and self-confidence</td>
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<td>Quality interactions with school personnel, children, and families</td>
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Final Total: /100

Notes:

Assessor’s signature: ___________________________
Jason Bezilla

Theme: Numbers
Lesson Title: French Dominoes

Standards Addressed:
- **Standard 1.1**, this highly interactive activity requires students to meaningfully communicate French numbers to one another. They must engage in conversation by providing prompts for their peer(s), who will be challenged to respond correctly.
- **Standard 1.2**, children will be interpreting language, the topic being French numbers.
- **Standard 3.1**, this activity makes use of basic number concepts and will provide the learner with practice in identifying and using numbers. This activity meets the criterion of this standard specifically as it reinforces the learner’s ability to count. Children will also engage in using fine-motor skills that will aid in their developing sense of self-control
- **Standard 4.1**, learners will compare numbers between the French and English languages, seeing that English numbers have different sounding counterparts. Through this comparison, the student will demonstrate and understanding of the general nature of language.
- **Standard 5.2**, as this activity is leisurely paced and structured to be enjoyable and fun; the learner will gain individual enrichment and demonstrate their potential as a life-long learner.

Objectives:
- Respond with the correct number in the target language when prompted.
- Find the two corresponding dominoes after being directed verbally.

Materials:
- 28 dominoes (paper or plastic)
- Flat and spacious play area.

Lesson Outline:
- Set aside one domino that will be used as the “start” domino.
- Mix up the dominoes and distribute five (or seven for two people) amongst the total number of players. Place the remaining dominoes face down in a pile. (Group sizes should range between two and three)
- Whoever is given the highest double will start.
- Take turns to place a domino on one end, matching the number of dots.
- Tell the other player what numbers they can put down, in French.
- If a player doesn’t have the number called - pick up a spare domino from the pile until they can match the called number.
- The winner is the first to use up all their dominoes!
Jason Bezilla

**Theme:** Body Parts

**Lesson Title:** Monster Factory

**Standards Addressed:**

*Standard 1.1 - 1.3,* in this activity, children will be able to express their understanding of the body, sharing ideas and concepts in cooperative context.

*Standard 2.1 - 2.2,* this activity will give exposure to art and drawing, which is equally important to the French culture as it is to the United States. This will demonstrate one of the many cultural perspectives that are common between the French and American nations.

*Standard 4.1,* the children should draw comparisons between the French and the English languages. This will be achieved by learning new labels for objects they are already familiar with.

*Standard 5.1 – 5.2,* the students will both show evidence of social competence and their potential as life-long learners. The activity is aimed to allow children to use what they learn even when not in a school setting.

**Objectives:**

- To observe children recognize and create different parts of the body in French through a drawing activity. (A passive benefit is that the learners may continue developing fine-motor skills with the hand.)
- To see the learner demonstrate cooperation while learning the target language. Sharing and teamwork will be the observable behavior.

**Materials:**

- Standard sized plain white paper. (or color construction if so desired)
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils.
- Table with smooth surface.

**Lesson Outline:**

- Students will start with a warm-up activity to introduce them to the French parts of the body.
- Students will sit together at a table will be given a piece of paper with pre-drawn monster head. The teacher will announce that we are workers or doctors in the Monster Hospital and that we have a bunch of sick monsters that need our help! The monsters, our patients, have all lost their bodies. Oh no! (Zut!) We need to help our monster friends and quick!
- In sequence, the children will draw a body part and then pass their paper to the next person. The teacher will announce what part of the body to draw at each turn. In this way, the children will all work together to create one collective monster while using the names of French body parts.

**Reflection:**

This activity seemed to captivate the children’s interests and they seemed to enjoy adding the different body parts. Some were more attentive to others in their attempts to understand the French that I was teaching. At least three of the children gave me eye contact and mimicked me when I spoke the body parts in French. Others simply drew the bodies and then colored them in...
without saying a word of French. This was somewhat disappointing as it became evident that I had not implemented the activity with enough structure; the most lacking portion of this activity.

The G.I. Homme (silent h)
crée par Jason Bezilla

Theme
G.I. Joes stay low, cover the body, and avoid the bullets! Idea is taken from the action figures made for the young child.

Objectives
Children will successfully identify the various parts of the body in French by labeling and tracing.

Standards
The following activity description incorporates the following standards:
Std. 1.1, Std. 1.2, Std. 3.1, Std. 4.1., Std. 4.2
*The only standards that I could not find a great correlation to this activity were those related to cultural perspective. I’m not sure exactly how to make the connection.

Description
In this activity the children will identify the various parts of the body in French through tracing one another on a large-sized piece of paper. The children will label, draw, and say the following body parts.

- la tête – the head
- le corps – the body
- le bras – the arm
- le le jambe – the leg
- le main – the hand
- le pied – the foot

Reflection
Originally this activity was targeted for a younger audience, between the ages of three and four. But after doing this activity with said target group I believe that this activity would be more appropriate for an audience slightly older. (six – seven) The reason I say this is due to the patience and attention span of the children of the younger age. They really had fun with it at first, actively participated, and learned many parts of the body. But soon interests died down and our “tracee” would become bored and wriggle around. In one instance, the little boy who was being traced jumped up and left.

By in large this activity produced varied results of which future teachers should be cautious. It may be a good activity for 2nd graders perhaps. I regret not using some music with the children and think it would be a good opportunity to help kids learn. I learned the body parts in English through the song “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes…” I believe something similar in French would work equally well!
Description
This activity draws upon an idea from an important piece of French literature that is world renowned, “Le Petit Prince” by Antoine St. Exupery. By incorporating this activity, children will take a cultural vantage and see that animals exist all around the world and are called by different names. The game is by no means structured and is best oriented for a group no larger than four. The game requires the children and the teacher to tell one another what animal they should draw. As a prerequisite for the other to draw the desired animal, the requester must identify the animal in the French language. The teacher helps the first few rounds and should try to limit the “playing field” to somewhere around five or six animals. As the activity progresses, the teacher should see the children begin to utilize the French counterparts without prompting.

This activity plan came to me one day while playing with the children. Therefore, it was an impromptu activity and this accompanying activity plan hopes to describe its nature.

Reflection
Other variations to this drawing/animal learning genre that has worked for me is mask making. The second day of class the children and I made tiger, crocodile, lion, dog, cat, and mouse masks. The children were clearly engaged in this learning activity and successfully repeated the French animal names. Yet my favorite variation of this animal learning game was the “I Spy” version. I remember sitting down with three or four children playing this game. They were so excited that I became enthralled in the activity. I would say to them something like, “I spy un lyon.” They would find the lion for me with a big smile and ask me to do another one. By the end of my visit the children were asking me for the names of all kinds of things in French. For example, when I said to one child “I spy un serpent,” and after they found the snake, I told them about the biological habits of this particular species of snakes. (It was a water snake and I explained to the interested child that there are many sorts of snakes) Upon hearing it was a water snake, the child asked me how to say water in French. Quel surprise!!! So, the child then learned not only snake in French, but water snake: un serpent de l’eau.
IV. Objective:
   A. Identify and use the numbers 1-10 in French

V. Standards for Foreign Language Learning
   A. Standard 1.1: Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information
   B. Standard 1.2: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language
   C. Standard 1.3: Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners

VI. Description of activity:
   A. Matching Game
   B. Parts: 20 colorful cards
      1. 10 cards with numbers 1-10 (in 10 colors)
      2. 10 cards with different numbers of shapes (in 10 colors)

VII. Procedure:
   A. The children can start by playing with the cards face up to practice using the numbers.
   B. Then we’ll eventually play with them face down.
   C. Each number card corresponds to another card with numbers of shapes.
   D. Match sets of cards with numbers and shapes
      1. If children do not remember numbers, they can count on the shape cards.

VIII. Assessment:
   A. Verify that children properly match number cards and shape cards
   B. Count up matching sets at the end to find a winner

IX. Strong points of the activity:
   A. It’s simple to comprehend and to play.
   B. It doesn’t take up a lot of space, it is portable, it doesn’t break easily, it is easy to set up and to clean up, and it is laminated.
   C. It has a prize--most importantly one that is not candy.
      1. As the children make matches, they get to hold onto them.
      2. At the end we can count up how many matches we all have.
   D. The children can play on their own when I’m not there.
   E. Other children can watch which demonstrates how to play, and they can overhear the numbers being repeated.

Elizabeth Bour
Activity Plan

♦ I. Activity: Musical game with colors (like “cakewalk”)
♦ II. Topic: Colors
♦ III. Theme: Recalling colors while “traveling around France,” accompanied by French music
♦ IV. Objective: Name colors in French while employing French music and monuments
V. Standards for Foreign Language Learning
   A. Standard 1.1 (colors)
   B. Standard 1.2 (colors)
   C. Standard 1.3 (me, the coordinators, and the other children)
   D. Standard 2.2 (music)
   E. Standard 3.1 (geography)
   F. Standard 4.1 (French)
   G. Standard 4.2 (France)

VI. Description of the Activity:
   A. Physical game with French music
   B. Parts:
      1. 10 circles in 10 different colors (red, blue, yellow, orange, green, purple, brown, black, white, pink) laid out in a circle on the floor
      2. music (cassette/CD with stereo)
      3. arrow spinner with 10 different colored pie wedges

VII. Procedure:
   A. The children stand anywhere on the circle. The music starts and the children move around the circle.
   B. When the music stops, the children stop.
   C. I spin and the arrow lands on a color wedge. I ask who is standing on that color.
   D. The children recognize who is standing on the color.
   E. The child standing on the color gets to spin next.
   F. Repeat.

VIII. Assessment: Verify that the children recognize a color by correctly choosing the child on that color.

IX. Strong points of the activity:
   A. It is portable, it doesn’t break easily, it is easy to set up and to clean up, and it is laminated.
      1. Caveats: it takes space to play and it takes a stereo.
   C. The children can take turns being the spinner.
   D. The other children can watch how to play.
   E. The game might be very attractive to the children given the music and the physical nature of the activity.
   F. The activity incorporates cultural music and visuals of French monuments.

Reflection: The activity went unbelievably well--the children loved it, they were really retaining the colors, and they continued to play throughout the week even when I was not there. In fact, two weeks later, some children and I were playing Candy Land and they still recalled colors in French. Every week when I visit the daycare, the children request playing this game!!!
Elizabeth Bour  
Body Parts  

**Activity Plan**

- **I. Activity:** Body part labeling game
- **II. Topic:** 10 body parts
- **III. Theme:** Integrate colors and body parts in French
- **IV. Objective:** Identify body parts in French while reviewing colors.
- **V. Standards for Foreign Language Learning**
  - A. Standard 1.1
  - B. Standard 1.2
  - C. Standard 1.3
  - D. Standard 3.1
  - E. Standard 4.1
- **VI. Description of the activity:**
  - A. Floor activity with labels
  - B. Parts:
    1. Large paper roll with representation of person (clothing items are different colors as well)
    2. 10 labels with body parts in French
- **VII. Procedure**
  - A. Unroll the large paper person and secure it on the ground to keep it from re-rolling and to keep it accessible for the children.
  - B. Distribute the 10 body part labels to the children.
  - C. Help the children identify the body parts in French and place labels accordingly.
- **VIII. Assessment:**
  - A. Verify that the children properly label body parts.
  - B. The first one to correctly place all of their labels wins.
- **IX. Strong points of the activity:**
  - A. It is simple to demonstrate how the game works.
  - B. It reviews colors: if the children are stuck, I give them a hint. Ex: Here’s a hint, it’s “rouge.”
  - C. Quite a few children can play.
  - D. The game rolls up when finished.
    1. Caveat: it is large and therefore not laminated, so it might not last forever, but it is easy to replace!
  - E. The game is attractive since it is large and colorful.
Summary
Teacher asks children “who here has the best aim!?,” then chooses one male and one female to be
the pitcher for either team. The pitcher must throw the bean bag to the number that he/she thinks
is the most difficult to remember in Spanish so that when the other team hops the scotch and
lands on that number on which the bean bag has landed, they will have trouble saying it out loud
in Spanish, thus not gaining a point for their team. This will be repeated until all numbers 1-10
are able to be known by all kids on both teams.

Objective
Learners will pronounce the numbers 1-10 in Spanish with as little accent as possible.
Learners will also obtain meta-linguistic awareness of what numbers (1-10) are the most
difficult for them, as well as their classmates to pronounce.

Standards
1.1 students obtain and provide information
1.2 students understand the significance of
1.3 students pronounce/ present information to an audience of listeners

Accuracy
100% in two to three weeks

Audience/ Age Group
4-7 year old children

Situation
Social- students are permitted to critique one another’s abilities in a positive manner
Team based- creates a competitive atmosphere

Materials
Shower curtain
Laminated construction paper of different colors
2 bean bags
2 card board boxes
Erasable marker for keeping score
Lots of happy kids!

Instructor’s feedback:
Phillis, the other thing that I also would like you to do is to have your materials ready by the time
you start your activity or ask all the kids to help you out. Many kids left the area while you were
setting up the game, because it was taking you a long time to get ready for them (You went back
and forth from the space searching for materials several times). As you continue your teaching
experiences you will take less and less time to start your teaching activities. Also, try to look for a
permanent way of having the number written on the construction paper. For example, you may
write them down before laminating them.
Phillis Brezina                Activity Plan #2
“Piñata”

Summary
Teacher makes a perimeter around the area where the children will be trying to hit the piñata. The children are asked to stay behind the line so that they do not get injured or hurt. The rules to the game and its origins as a South American tradition are explained. The first kid steps up to bat, spins around the bat while his classmates count to ten in Spanish, then attempts to shatter the piñata with a swing of the bat. This is repeated until the piñata is broken and all the contents has fallen out onto the floor.

Objective
Learners will pronounce the numbers 1-10 in Spanish.

Standards
1.1 students obtain and provide information.
1.2 students understand the significance of the Spanish number system.
1.3 students pronounce/present information to an audience of listeners.
2.1 students demonstrate an understanding of the practices or Latin culture.

Accuracy
This will be hard to judge because students are not required to demonstrate competency in the Spanish numbering system on an individual basis. Teacher will have to keep an eye on who is counting and who is not so that those who are having trouble can be helped.

Audience/ Age Group
4-7 year old children

Situation
This game will create a fun and exciting atmosphere in which the students are learning.

Materials
Piñata, candy, bat, tape, rope, excited kids with energy to spare

Jocelyn Harris
Numbers Activity Plan
Title:  Shake, Rattle, and Count!
Grade Level:  Pre-K
Time to Complete:  Part One: 15 minutes, Part Two: 12-15 minutes

Part one:
Lesson Objective:  By the end of the activity, SWBAT comprehend the history of musical maracas and create unique maracas of their own.  (Standard 2.1, Standard 2.2)

Materials:  *rice
*small canisters (Pringles single-sized can is ideal)
*sticks (paint brush handles are ideal)
*colored construction paper
*markers or crayons
*glue or tape
*scissors

Procedure:
- Explain the history of maracas to the children
- Give them directions on how to create maracas
- Allow them to color on the colored construction paper that the instructor cut to fit around the canisters.
- As they color, cut holes in the lids of the canisters, enough to fit one end of the stick into it
- When finished coloring, have each child bring you his or her colored paper and let them help you to either glue or tape it onto the canister
- Once all children have glued on their paper, have each child put a handful of uncooked rice into their containers while the instructor tapes the sticks to the holes in the lids, making sure there is no room for the rice to fall out
- Now, the instructor will place the lids with their connected sticks onto the containers and tape them shut
- Shake, shake, shake; all done!

Part Two:
Lesson Objective: By the end of the lesson, SWBAT recognize and pronounce at least 4 of the 5 Spanish numbers between 1 and 5 (Standard 1.2, 3.1. 4.1).

Materials: *maracas made from Part One

Procedure:
- Have the children sit on the floor in a circle in front of the instructor.
- Practice counting aloud the numbers 1 to 5 in both English and Spanish.
- Explain the directions of the activity to the students.
- Shake the maraca the desired number of times (has to be between 1 and 5) and count in Spanish as you shake.
- Have the students guess the number of shakes by telling you in English and then again in Spanish.
- Repeat the activity until each student has had a turn to guess and each number has been used.

Kate Mathews
Numbers Activity

Theme: “The Very Hungry Caterpillar”
“La Oruga Muy Hambrienta”

Target Audience: Children ages 3+

Duration: Approximately 10 minutes depending on number of players

Materials: Caterpillar game boards, number spinner/die, food cards
Objective: To get the children to repeat the names of foods and numbers in Spanish so that they eventually learn to recognize and say the words on their own.

Procedure: Children take turns rolling the die. After rolling, the child must say the name of the number in Spanish, with/without help. The child then chooses a food card, which they also must say in Spanish, to cover their game board (caterpillar) on the number corresponding to the one they rolled. The first child to cover their caterpillar is the winner.

Reflection: The kids really loved the game boards and enjoyed picking the food cards. It was important to emphasize turn taking and rolling the die rather than throwing it! This activity worked well with 2-4 students and it definitely helped them to learn their numbers!

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Kate Mathews
Colors Activity Plan

Target Audience: Children ages 3+

Duration: Approximately 10 minutes

Objective: The children will recognize and say the names of the colors and shapes in Spanish. After each game, the child will be able to repeat at least one new learned color or shape.

Materials: Game boards and playing cards

Standards for Language Learning: 1.2, 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1

Procedure: 1.) Children take turns drawing cards from the pile and cover their game board if the color and shape appear on his/her card. The child must repeat the name of the color and shape of the card he draws in Spanish. Children continue drawing cards until one of them has either covered their board or gotten three in a row.
2.) Another option is to use this as a listening activity. The teacher draws the cards and reads the colors and shapes aloud while the children cover their boards.

Reflection: Overall, the children really seemed to like this game. It worked well as a small group activity. We used little plastic colored shapes that I found in the room to mark our boards. To speed up the game at one point I told the kids that everyone should cover their board when a card was drawn, no matter who drew the card. I found it best to concentrate on having the children just say the colors in Spanish rather than the shapes and colors all at once.

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Kate Mathews
Body Parts Activity Plan

Target Audience: Children ages 3+

Duration: Approximately 5 minutes
Objective: Students will identify body parts after hearing them in Spanish. After several repetitions of the game/song students will be able to say the body parts on their own.

Materials: None

Standards for Language Learning: 1.2, 3.1, 5.1, 5.2

Procedure: Students will follow the leader in the song “Cabeza, Hombros, Rodillas y Pies” and the game “Simon Dice…” while pointing to the body parts when directed to do so. After several rounds of each, a student can take over as the leader.

Reflection: Though this is a simple activity, it worked really well with the students. They loved it because they were familiar with the song in English. The great thing about this activity is that it can be done during any down time. The kids really enjoyed trying to go as fast as they could. I was really pleased with the students’ attempts to say the words in Spanish; it is important to start out singing the song slowly so that children can pick up on the words.

- I think some of my most successful activities were ones that got the children up on their feet, “Cabeza, Hombros, Rodillas, Pies,” for example. I think this song was successful because the children were already familiar with the tune and were also able to move around and point to their body parts. I was happy when one girl asked if we could sing it ‘my way,’ indicating that she wanted to sing it in Spanish. (Journal #9)

Kate Mathews
Body Parts Lesson Plan 2

Target Audience: Children ages 3+

Duration: Approximately 5 minutes

Objective: The children will recognize and say the words of several body parts in Spanish.

Materials: Flash cards and tape.

Standards for Language Learning: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 5.2

Procedure: Each student receives a flash card while one student serves as the model. Help the model say the names of body parts in Spanish and point to them if needed. The child with the corresponding card then tapes their card onto the model in the correct location. Review the parts of the body again when removing the cards from the model.

Reflection: I did this activity a few times with the kids and they thought it was a lot of fun. Everyone wanted to be the model! The kids seemed to learn some of the body parts, and were excited when the part on their card was named and they got to tape it to the model. This activity worked better in smaller groups, 8-10 students, so that only the main body parts are used.
Target Audience: Children ages 3+

Duration: Approximately 5 minutes

Objective: Children will recognize and say the names of several animals in Spanish.

Materials: Animal flash cards.

Standards for Language Learning: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 5.2

Procedure: Children each pick a card with an animal picture on it. As they sing “MacDonald Viejo Tiene Una Granja” call on each child to begin a new verse, and have them share their animal and corresponding sound. Say each animal name in Spanish and have children repeat the name as they sing each verse of the song.

Variation 1: Use the animal cards to dismiss children to the next activity. Call out the names of the animals in Spanish and have children bring up their cards when you call them.

Variation 2: After passing out the cards, have children pretend they are that animal while others ask questions to figure out which animal they are. Examples of questions may include: Do you have feathers? Do you have spots? Do you say “oink”? Do you have four legs? This activity can also be helpful to go over adjectives such as colors. Simply repeat the questions or single words asked by the children in Spanish.

Reflection: I think this activity could’ve gone a lot better had I been more organized and had I explained the activity better to the children. I did this activity in a small circle and had one student hand out the animal cards. A few things that I would’ve done differently are: use music to help with the flow of the song and say the animal names to the students as I handed out the cards. During activities like this it is important to establish rules prior to starting; I had several students who thought that it was ok to get up and wander around or not participate when called on.

“MacDonald Viejo Tiene Una Granja”
Old MacDonald had a farm
E i e i o
And on his farm he had some (replace with animal name)
E i e i o
With a (replace with animal sound) here
And a (replace with animal sound) there
Here a (replace with animal sound), there a (replace with animal sound)
Everywhere a (replace with animal sound)
Old MacDonald had a farm
E i e i o
Los Animales

El caballo “Naaayy”
El cerdo “Oink”
El pato “Quack”
El mono “He he he”
La serpiente “Ssssss”
El gato “Meow”
El perro “Woof”
El elefante (elephant)
La oveja “Baaa”
El gallo “Cock-a-doodle-doo”
El oso “Raarr”
La vaca “Moo”
La rana “Ribbit”
El pájaro “Chirp”
El pez (fish)

Activity Outline

Make Your Own “Cuerpo”!

Objective: Given pre-traced construction paper, glue, scissors, worksheet and the names of the parts of the body in Spanish, students will construct a body with the right parts in the right places.

Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Standard 1.1 and 1.3, 3.1, 4.1

Materials: Various colored construction paper
Scissors
Worksheet (pre-made)
Glue

Procedure:
1. Listen to the story of “el cuerpo.” (El cuerpo is a mythical creature that lives in the mountains of Spain, and no one knows exactly how they look. We are sure they have la cabeza, el torso, los brazos, las manos, las piernas, and los pies. They vary in color, and it is hard to tell if they are girls or boys.)
2. Pick a color for la cabeza.
3. Cut out la cabeza.
4. Glue la cabeza on the worksheet.
5. Repeat steps 2 to 4 with other body parts.
6. When completed, tell the teacher what the body parts are.

Reflection: This activity was a great success. Main teachers also commented positively afterwards. Seven students started activity and six of them completed the body. The one who did not was a three year-old who only started the activity to mimic her older sister. Students seemed...
eager to make the mythical creature after hearing the story. All who finished with one exception recited or repeated the body parts after completion. One walked away after completing to eat breakfast and only came back to put the worksheet in her cubby. It was a great idea to have the kids cut out the parts instead of having them already pre-cut. The students seemed to enjoy cutting as the main teacher had told me, and they enjoyed gluing it even more. Also it was interesting to see how the kids got excited about choosing their own colors.

Helen Nomi
Activity Outline

**Match The Numbers!**

**Objective:** Given cards, students will match the cards and recite what number they matched to the rest of the group.

**Standards for Foreign Language Learning:**
- Standard 1.1 and 1.3, 3.1, 4.1

**Materials:** Matching cards with numbers and words on the other

**Procedure:**
1. Sit around a table.
2. Go over the numbers in Spanish.
3. Shuffle the cards facing down on the table.
4. Take turns flipping two at a time.
5. When you find a match, repeat the number you have found, and keep cards by you.
6. After all the cards are matched; recite how many cards you have.

Adriana Reyes

**Activity:** Los Elefantes Song

**Materials:** Construction paper
- Pictures of elephants

**Procedure:** The kids would be sitting in a circle around me, I would first start singing the song, while showing them the elephant pictures and the number of elephants, and then I would encourage them to sing along with me.

**Reflection:** This activity was very successful; I think the kids loved it. They were really into it. I had to repeat it a couple of times so all the kids have a chance to participate in the activity. I was expecting around half of the kids to participate in the activity, but it turn our all of them participated. I think one of the reasons for the success of my activity is that they were familiar with the song, so that made easier for me to do the song and engage the children in it.
I had to make some changes the procedure, instead of sitting around a circle each kid pretended to be an elephant. The following link there is an activity similar to what I did, it also includes the lyrics of the song of the elephants and some animations.

http://www.hevanet.com/dshivers/juegos/elefantes/index.html

Kaylynn Rossi

Lesson Plan # 1 – Numbers

Theme: Dinosaur Flashcards

Objective: To identify the numbers 1-5 in Spanish and be able to recognize them written as well.

Foreign Language Standards: 1.2, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 5.2

Directions: The children will be handed pre-cutouts of the numbers 1-6 and they have to decorate the numbers to look like a Dinosaurs since it is Dinosaur Day sometime this month. After decorating the numbers to look like dinosaurs they will use them as flashcards and on the back will be of the cutouts will be written the number in Spanish.

Materials Needed:

- Construction Paper (assorted colors)
- Pre-cutouts of the numbers 1-5
- Scissors
- Markers
- Glue
- Stickers

I chose this activity because the children really enjoy coloring and making things so I thought this would be a good idea and I could collaborate it with Dinosaur Day in the classroom.

Amy Taylor

Lesson Plan 1, Numbers in Spanish Activity

The Memory Game

Objective: The students will look at the cards and remember them in order to match them up and will begin to remember the Spanish words for numbers after seeing them and repeating them after me multiple times.

Procedure: During this activity, the students will be playing a memory game. I have cards with different numbers of things, for example; 1 car, 8 bikes etc. All of the cards will be turned face down and they all have a match. The students will each take a turn in picking up a card leaving it face up and then picking up another to try and find the match. If unsuccessful, both cards will be flipped back over and the next student goes. When the kids flip the cards over I will count with them how many of the object are on the card and then we will say it in Spanish to give them
practice. On the cards I have the Spanish word and number for the object along the actually number so they can see that.

**Evaluation:**
I will be able to tell if the students are learning if they eventually start counting the objects and knowing the numbers themselves.

Amy Taylor
Lesson plan 3

**The Colors Fashion Show**

**Materials:**
I will use the different clothes that they have in the classroom for dress-up.

**Objective:**
After the students complete this activity they will be able to recognize the different colors in Spanish.

**Procedure:**
For this activity I am planning on putting on a small scale fashion show with a few of the students as models. There are different clothes in the room that they can wear, or I am just going to describe what they are wearing at the time. I am planning on doing this during circle time, so I am going to talk to the students who I am going to have in it before hand and let them know what to do. I will have them come in the middle of the circle and stand and I will describe what they are wearing in regards to the colors. I will ask them to spin around once and then they will sit down. I am also going to have some Spanish music playing in the background to set the mood!

**Evaluation:**
After each student stands in front and I say what colors they are wearing in Spanish the students should be able to recall what I said and repeat it when I ask them.

**Standards addressed:**
2.2
3.1
3.2
1.2

**Reflection**
This activity went really well with the kids and they responded well. It went a little differently than I had first planned because I had the teachers modeled first and then asked some students to volunteer. I think that it worked out better that way because the teachers put on the dress-up clothes that they had in the room and it was really funny to see how they looked in it and the kids seemed to really get a kick out of it. I was glad that I got the whole class involved in it because it seemed like they had a good time doing it, and I also think that they liked to model themselves!!!
Amy Taylor  
Lesson Plan Animals  

The Lost Animals  

Materials:  
For this plan I will use a few different pictures of animals that are fairly large. I am going to cut them out and glued them to thick pieces of foam. I will then color them with colored pencils.  

Objective:  
The students will listen to the story and listen while I say the Spanish words for the animals and then repeat it. They will be able to recognize the animals and their Spanish names after they finish the activity.  

Procedure:  
I will write a story that describes a class taking a field trip going to the zoo. When the kids are at the zoo the animals all escape and are running loose around the town. I will then tell the kids that last night the animals snuck into their classroom and are hiding there now! Before I read the story I will place the cutouts of the animals that I have and place them around the room in hidden places. I will have another copy of the same pictures and I will show the kids the pictures of the animals and ask them what they are in English. Then, I will tell them the word for the animals in Spanish, and have them repeat after me. Then I will tell the kids to look around the room and see if they can find the animals and bring them to me so I can take them back to the zoo. When they bring the animals back to me I will have them all sit in the circle again and then go over the words in Spanish with them another time.  

Evaluation:  
After the activity I will be able to determine if the students learned the names of the animals if they are able to repeat them back to me after they have found them.  

Reflection  
When I did this activity the kids seemed to really like it. It was comical though that when I read the story to them and told them the animals were lost in the room and they went to find them, they were bringing me different stuffed animals that they have in the room when I wanted them to find the cut outs that I hid. After a little while they understood what I meant and they found all of the pieces. I was very pleased with the turnout.
APPENDIX D: SELECTED PARTICIPANT QUOTES

PEFE Challenges

*Difficulties remembering “basic vocabulary”*- When in doubt some of them made up words or tell the teachers that they would look up the word.

I: Do you feel that you have enough language skills for this field experience in this moment?
Amy: Umm, yes (hesitates) except there is just random words sometimes that I just don’t remember from like seven years ago when I probably learned some! I remember one day the teacher asked me the word for “duck” or something and I was just like “duck”? and I was like “I can’t remember.” Things like that. That was the only time that I was MAN! I mean, after that I realized it, and I remembered the Spanish word when I was looking through a book, looking for vocabulary and things like that. That was the only thing that caught me off guard I guess. It was those words that I haven’t used like forever. I just have literature classes now, and I don’t really use words like duck ever. (Interview #1)

Phillis: You know, I definitely refresh like my basic Spanish with the body parts, nariz, labios, barbilla. In Chile they have all slang words for everything, so I didn’t even learn the real stuff. I am going to learn them. That’s why I am planning body parts for my lesson plan. I haven’t yet really looked for, but I am going to figure it out. (Interview #1)

Kate: I guess I do, just because a lot of it right know is plenty of nouns and not necessarily speaking in full sentences to the kids. So, I think that my language skills are adequate. Especially, because there is no one, maybe is there is another Spanish speaker in the room, it may not be as easy to interact and the children would see that. (Interview #1)

So, right now I am behind in my Spanish, so it is kind of hard going into the field experience with kids saying “what’s this?” or “how do you say this?” and I am like “oh, I am not sure.” Well, one instance in particular, the little girl had for lunch and all of the sudden she had the waste basket things and all the sudden she said “how do you say that in Spanish?,,” and I just said “el basurero,” trash can, I don’t know, I kind of just made do a little bit. Or like someone pointing to a dog house, and he said “how do you say that?” I just said “la casa del perro.” I don’t know if that was correct, but… I just kind of make things up. (Interview #1)

Kaylynn: Oh, by far! Yeah! Because is just beginner. I feel like if I was put in a high school class, I may feel a little different. Because the whole speaking issue and stuff. But, if it is at this level, everything is ok. (Interview #1)

*Note: But in the focus group she said:
Kaylynn: I had to go over the animals again, I couldn’t remember. I remembered certain ones, but I had to really think about some others. The teachers would ask words all the time, If I didn’t know a word, I would tell then “I’ll get the answer tomorrow, I will find it. I said or “actually let me go to the computer and find out how you say it. (Focus group)

Jason: I think it was pretty good preparation, but I think I just needed more time in the field experience. (Interview #1)

Helen: Yes, I know it is not perfect. But, it is basic Spanish. (Interview #1)

Jocelyn: One little girl asked me how to say mermaid, and I was thinking about it. (Focus Group)

Helen: I still only see myself teaching older kids, but I feel that this class was appropriate for me, because I was confident that I knew enough Spanish (for more information go to my Courses) to teach at this level. If this course had been targeted towards late elementary to early middle school, I would have felt like I was not knowledgeable enough. (E-Portfolio, final reflection)

Note: One thing that I noticed now is that I didn’t ask this question to the two “native speaker” future Spanish teachers.

* High language expectations

Jason: My very own advanced comprehension of French limits my ability to relate to the children as ‘‘learners.’’ This is by far the greatest obstacle I have had to overcome. How does one teach to an audience that one cannot relate too? The point. Although I may not be able to express the functioning of a certain part of speech correctly to a child, if they can master repeating the word doggie then ultimately I’ve succeeded. (the word doggie is chiot in French) I think this matter of perspective will make a big difference in my future teaching experiences. Metaphorically, I realize that all along I’ve been trying to explain color to blind men. (Journal #5)

Jason: Of course I cannot truly place all of my activities into these constructs alone. There were some activities that I tried that just seemed to be plain to hard for them. They lacked what we term “prerequisite skills” and we’re therefore unable to learn anything from the intended activity. I draw a parallel to an example of a child learning multiplication. If this said child is unable to subtract or add, it is unlikely that he will learn multiplication. This is an important fact for teachers to keep in mind and suggests that we may need to revise our lessons based upon individual learners. (Journal #9)

Jocelyn: I’ve found, though, that when trying to teach a lesson and emphasizing learning the Spanish language, they often try to make the new words more like the ones they are familiar with. I fear that this will hold them back in learning the
correct Spanish vocabulary. With the language being so new to them, they are somewhat silly about learning it. Ways I’ve tried to combat this is to make relations to words they already know in English, but emphasizing that they sound different and are produced in different ways, making the Spanish language very much different. (Journal #6)

_Jocelyn:_ An example of being able to alter activities that I’ve prepared for the next time we did the activity is the activity we did at the opening of the school day. The children and I would say “Hoy es el ____ de _______” for the day and month. I found at the beginning that the children were having a lot of trouble repeating the larger numbers with more syllables so I decided to alter the activity. Instead of saying numbers past 10 in Spanish, they would substitute the English. This way, they were still forming the “Hoy es el,” but simply were not using the number in Spanish. I found that they still showed great progress in their pronunciations of the other parts of the sentence. (Journal #9)

_Phillis:_ I think what works is reading out loud, trying to speak. Whenever, I had them saying like piñata I made sure they were saying piñata. I made sure they were saying it like that instead of just saying piñata. Language is spoken, I think often too you read it too much, and you write it too much and it is like grammar too much. I think it is important just to learn to like get the feel of it. (Interview #2)

*Not teaching lessons*

_Elizabeth:_ I wish I could do more with them, like teach lessons, but for now, I think this is sufficient. I think the best way for me to teach such young children is to keep bringing in games. The children seem disinterested in learning French apart from playing the games, but when we play them, they love it. I really enjoy it, but I miss teaching lessons, like I do in my undergraduate French courses. I still want to teach older children, but this is good experience. (Journal Entry #6)

*Previous language knowledge/ Children already knowing some of the vocabulary they wanted to teach*

_Kaylynn:_ I noticed that with the older girls, who know the Spanish already, like the one through ten, or the different colors. There is not much colors I could tell them, they know them all, and there is not much more of the numbers I could tell them, maybe because they know them all too. (Interview #1)

_Kaylynn:_ I have noticed that a lot of the younger kids aren’t as interested in learning Spanish as much as the older ones. The older kids actually know a lot more than I thought they would know. A lot of the kids have told me that they know some Spanish because people came in before Christmas and taught them. I thought that was interesting because they at least remembered the students who went to their classroom that were from the WL ED295 class last semester. (Journal #3)
Kaylynn: I admit though that it is very hard to get the entire classroom’s attention especially since the kids aren’t all the same age. I have noticed that with the five year olds, they rather do activities that are oriented with having the ability to socialize with the other children in the classroom. The four year olds like to play games, but rather be read to. As for the three year olds they rather play all day and if you make up an activity that deals with things such as: dinosaurs or Dora you’ll have their attention for the rest of the period. I think it’s harder to implement fun/interesting activities with a group that has kids all different ages. I notice that the older kids who already know how to count and know the colors don’t want anything to do with the activities, or when they do want to have something to do with the activity they try to take control of it and be the know it all. (Journal #7)

Kaylynn: I was really surprised when I was reading a book to a couple of the little girls and it dealt with numbers and I asked if they knew any Spanish and they could recite the number 1-5 in Spanish. I was very surprised that they would remember the numbers. They stumbled a little bit, but I feel with a little more practice they will know them perfectly and that’s really neat. (Journal #5)

Kaylynn: The first time I entered the classroom I was shocked to see that the entire classroom was already labeled all in Spanish. That through me off a bit, I thought right off the bat that this experience was going to be easy since they children already had a good idea of the basic words. Well I was wrong! The children really didn’t know any of the language except for the numbers, colors, and a little bit of the animals. (Journal #5)

Adriana: At first, I didn’t know how to start, what should I do. So, I just kind of say hola, adios, and then I discovered that they knew the numbers. And when they wanted to tell them to me in English, I would say, no you have to tell me in Spanish, and that’s how I started. I play and I read a lot. They have some Spanish books. (Interview #1)

Adriana (translate): Al llegar todavía no había muchos niños, y tal vez por eso tuve la oportunidad de tener un contacto más cercano con algunos de ellos, sobretodo con un niño llamado Jacob, estuvimos jugando con unos carritos, lo cual ya tenía mucho que no lo hacía. Me sorprendió que el supiera como se decía carro en español, cuando estábamos jugando le dije: “Car in Spanish is carro” y él me dijo “I know, it’s carro.” Para mi fue muy agradable y sorprendente a la vez que Jacob supiera esta palabra. Después de eso seguimos jugando.
Algo que también me sorprendió fue el hecho de encontrarme con varios niños que ya saben contar los números en español del uno al diez, me sentí un poco decepcionada por que ya no tiene mucho caso que les enseñe o algo que ya saben, pero también pienso que así va a ser más fácil hacer que los niños canten conmigo la canción de los elefantes. Aun no se si todos los niños se saben los números o solo es un grupo, En mi próxima visita es lo que trataré de averiguar. When I arrived to the center there wasn’t many kids, and maybe because of this I had the opportunity to have a closer contact with some of them especially with this boy
called Jacob, we were playing with this little cars, something that I haven’t done in a while. I was surprised that he knew how to say car in Spanish. When we were playing I told him “car in Spanish is carro” and he told me “I know its carro.” For me it was both very nice and surprising to find that Jacob knew this word. After that we continued playing. Something that also surprised me was the fact that finding out that some children know how to count from one to ten in Spanish, I was a little upset, because there is no reason now to teach something that they already know, but at the same time it is going to be easier that the children sing the elephant song with me. I still don’t know if all the children know the numbers or if it is only a group. I’ll try to find out on my next visit. (Journal #3)

Kate: She was already able to count in Spanish, which was a surprise to me, but gave me hope that she would be eager to learn more. (Journal #1)

Kate: One thing that I found interesting was that many of the children are able to count in Spanish, but during my caterpillar game I noticed that they were not able to pick out particular numbers and match the words with them. It’s as if they learned the Spanish numbers as a phrase, but cannot separate or make meaning out of them. I hope to help the kids learn that each part of the Spanish phrase is a number, so that they will eventually learn to say the words in Spanish when presented with a particular number. (Journal #5)

Helen: One of my first joys in class was to find out that some of them still remembered the Spanish they had heard or learned before. And, when I mentioned Spanish words, I could tell by their each little reaction which ones will be willing to participate in my activities. That was a relief to know there are some kids there that I can engage. This was comforting after having been told this certain one didn’t want to learn Spanish from me.

At the same time I was happy to know some kids are interested, it was a little disappointing to find out they can count to ten in Spanish already. This is because I was going to plan to bring in my number activity to show the kids. The other student I work with talked about it and agreed that maybe we can quickly review that but we can do other ones like colors (which surprisingly they don’t know much in) and shapes. I’m also thinking that maybe I can combine colors and shapes, so that the kids might have to say “the red circle” in stead of doing them separately. My only concern about that is that the kids might associate red with circle all the time; that is, that they might over generalize. Also, I was thinking maybe I can incorporate numbers into animals: have them count numbers. (Journal #3)

Helen: On a brighter note, I have started to incorporate Spanish into my play with the kids. And I thought since they know how to say one to ten in Spanish already that I would start with colors. I think I will go back to numbers so that they know that one is uno, instead of just knowing how to recite the strings of numbers with no real significance. (Journal #4)
Helen: I am not worried too much because I see that the kids know how to say the numbers one to ten in Spanish from the last student. Although they do not know the semantic meaning of each of the sounds they say, the fact that they actually remember the string of words is encouraging to me. (Journal #5)

Phillis: The kids also seem to already know a great deal of Spanish, so teaching them from scratch is not possible. It makes my job easier, but does not allow me to see what words or numbers are the most difficult to learn for a beginner. (Journal #3)

Amy: One of the joys that I have come across after spending some time with the students in particular was their excitement about the calendar activity. One of the helpers in room, who is from Puerto Rico, does it with them every day even when I’m not there and it amazes me that they do know it. On Thursday they got to sing a song and it was itsy bitsy spider, and she knew how to sing it in Spanish which was nice for the kids but some of them really didn’t want to sing it in Spanish. When she asked what language they wanted to use it was kind of a split down the middle, some wanted English, some Spanish. (Journal #3)

*Children with another language*

Jason: Many of them know second languages are ready. Some are more reluctant than others to use both languages however. (Journal #2)

Kaylynn: The only disappointment I think I have encountered so far is the fact that there is a little girl in the classroom who speaks Spanish and she won’t speak a word to me. I think she still may be getting used to me, but every time I ask her if she knows how to say that word in Spanish she turns her head and won’t speak to me. (Journal #3)

Adriana: Almost every time I speak Spanish, two of the Chinese girls always speak to me in Chinese when they hear me speaking Spanish. (Journal #5)

* Boys vs. Girls

Kaylynn: Another disappointment I’ve had is that the little boys in the classroom are not interested in the language at all. I don’t know if it’s because I am a female or they are just not interested. Most of the little boys in the class though, are younger so that may be a possibility as to why they are not interested also. (Journal #3)

* How to approach the children

Adriana: At first, I didn’t know how to approach the kids. Since, they are so little, “Are they going to be able to understand me?” (Interview #1)
* Structure vs. unstructured environment

Kaylynn: The whole fact that it was trying to have a structure activity and there was no structure in the classroom, of course they are not going to follow that. (Focus group)

* Getting and keeping children’s attention and interest (Attention span)

Jason: I see one kid he is obsessed with building blocks, the kid is amazing at it. And I see another girl, she is a little drama queen. She always got like a dress on, and she is always pretending to be some famous actress. I think it is just a matter of interest. No matter how hard somebody tried to get me to learn Calculus, it is not happening. That’s hard, sparkling interest in the student who rather does something else. I think that goes just about everywhere. Because be all have different perspectives and background and learning experiences. That’s the hard part for a teacher, you know because they have to teach the same thing to 30 different kids. That’s hard! (Interview #1)

Samantha: I don’t know. It was challenging. Trying to get their attention to learn another language. (Focus group)

Kate: Trying to get them to focus on the activities that we were doing and also, just trying to make them use the language when we were there. (Focus group)

Kaylynn: I would consider elementary ed in a different thing, I wouldn’t do it to teach Spanish, I learned that with the kids. I feel like some of those kids were too worried about the fact that they couldn’t pronounce yellow in English let alone in Spanish. I think that I would teach elementary kids, but it had to be at a higher level.

Kaylynn: Working with children as young as 3 years old you tend to notice that their attention span is not that big. So I have learned that through playing active games, it keeps their attention span in it for a little longer. I have been able to pinpoint which children would like what game and I try to work off that. (Journal #6)

Jocelyn: Trying to get the children’s attention and maintaining their attention has proved to be the most difficult task in the classroom. The children are constantly wondering what is going on outside of the activity and, in order to sufficiently teach them the lesson, I have to be excited and enthusiastic. (Journal #3)

Phillis: I also am having trouble sitting with the kids in their circle because they always want to sit on my lap and talk while Sarah or Mary are trying to keep their attention. (Journal #3)

Helen: I have found that it is rather difficult to get the kids motivated, but at the same time it seems really easy at times to grab their attention. I do understand that their attention spans aren’t as good as people my age, but that has been working fine with me, since I do not have a long attention span myself. (Journal #5)
Helen: I seem to have some trouble engaging the children in an activity, however it could also have been because I only saw them for two hours per week, and that I did not know what they truly loved to do. (Journal #10)

Adriana: It is very difficult to incorporate Spanish into the classroom, especially with little kids because they attention spans are very short, they just want to play and have fun, and some of the kids are just not interested in it. (Journal #5)

Focus group exchange:
Samantha: I don’t think they understood it yet.
Kaylynn: Yes, I don’t think that they understood it yet. Maybe, because it is a pre-k.
Samantha: They have questions why are we learning Spanish? Why do I have to know it? (Focus group)

*Other college students and adults in the classroom
Kate: Though at times I felt like there were just too many other college students helping out, and that maybe the kids didn’t take me too seriously. (Journal #10)

Kate: I am there with three other girls. (Focus group)

Helen: Me and this other girl from our class, went every week, and they make sure, like “oh, can you stay a few seconds more until the other student teacher comes, and I am like “oh, yeah, I don’t mind at all.” They had a schedule too, so there wouldn’t be too many teachers and too little children” (Focus group)

Kaylynn: My room had too many. Like, there were times when I walked in I’ll be lucky if I knew where the teachers or because there were too many people like that. (Focus group)

Amy: Two teachers, and then me, and then this other teacher, and then the intern. (Focus group)

Samantha: Sometimes, I started doing whatever they are doing, and so on. But, I noticed that whenever the other America Reads student comes in, “oh, I want to do this with her,” and they just leave me, because they are there all the time. (Focus group)

Samantha: Unfortunately, during the time that I’m in there I do not spend much time in the classroom with the kids. During the time that I’m in there, there is another student teacher finishing up his student teaching hours. With all this I mean that I have not really spent enough time in the classroom with the kids and teachers, so there is not much that I can say about them. (Journal #2)
Samantha: The only disappointment that I can complain about is the fact that I have not spent any valuable time with the kids. In a way it has been helpful
because I have learned from observing the student teacher and his lessons. Spending time observing him and the students has helped me understand what to and not to do. I now have some sort of view of things that I should expect and how to approach them. One of those things is behavior problems and what to do when you don’t have the kids’ attention. (Journal #3)

*Samantha:* Implementing the Spanish language in this classroom has not been easy. There were many factors for this. It was not easy for me to implement an activity, since they were at their gym class while I was there. Unfortunately, by the time that their gym class was over and I had them to myself I felt like it was too late to take the role as a teacher. They had already portrayed me as another college student in the classroom that was there to play with them and play “tag” during their free time in the playground. (Journal #9)

*Planning activities*

*Jason:* The standards. I had a really hard time keeping my activities. Like I felt really restricted by the standards. Because I was not sure if this met the cultural standard or not. And I realize later as I was learning in the class that it did meet the standards, but I was so afraid that I made some really trashy activities, I think. That could have been much better. That’s what I mean, when I felt that was really restricting. I had a hard time even conceiving some activities. Like I wanted to be original, but I wanted to make activities that the children could relate to. I found that really frustrating. How do I relate to a three year old, when I am not a three year old child? So, I think I needed more time just observing the children, to see how they think and how they learn. Yeah, I think that making activities for the appropriate level of difficulty was really challenging. (Interview #1)

*Jason:* (age appropriate activities) Perhaps the hardest thing about using the world language in my classroom is the very first step: designing the activity. I’m always confronted by many questions. Is this activity age-appropriate? How will I assess the child’s learning? What is this activity missing that would make it an excellent learning experience for the children? I’ve spent many hours slaving over activity plans that only ended up in the trash. So how does one overcome such adversity? I’ll tell you...

At the age level I am teaching too, my pedagogical knowledge is far reaching and dare I say God-like. The children are so young that my understanding of the French language is leagues ahead of their own. Yet this is a dual-edged sword. For as I am both knowledgeable about French, I tend to complicate what should be an easy process. My very own advanced comprehension of French limits my ability to relate to the children as “learners.” This is by far the greatest obstacle I have had to overcome. How does one teach to an audience that one cannot relate too?

The point. Although I may not be able to express the functioning of a certain part of speech correctly to a child, if they can master repeating the word doggie then ultimately I’ve succeeded. (the word doggie is chiot in French) I think this matter
of perspective will make a big difference in my future teaching experiences. Metaphorically, I realize that all along I’ve been trying to explain color to blind men. (Journal #5)

Amy: Next week for the colors I am going to have a little fashion show. I will have them sit in a circle. I will tell them before hand that they have to come to the middle and say the colors that they have on their clothes. And have them say it out loud. This idea kind of hit me and I was Thank God! It took me a while. (Interview #1)

Kate: It is just that with the activities you can’t use words, you can’t use words that they are not going to be able to read them, most likely, I know they can write some, but you can’t play matching with colors in Spanish and English. Adapting to that was a little bit difficult. (Interview #2)

Kate: I am having fun coming up with the activity plans, but it can definitely be difficult at times. I think the most difficult thing is that the kids cannot read, which means that all of the activities have to be oral in nature. I have been including the written Spanish names on all of my activities so that the children will hopefully begin to recognize what they look like, and hopefully it will also be useful for the teachers if they try to use my activities when I am not there. (Journal #7)

*Helen: I can definitely tell is different from what I like. Because I like to just sit down and conjugate verbs all the time. I mean, I knew that wasn’t it, because that wasn’t language learning. I learned how little kids are, because in my mind I always thought about high school, I mean. You did some things, but it is mainly conjugating or taking tests. And little kids, is just, it is different, evaluation is different. We don’t evaluate on them saying sentences. If they are saying it once in a while, you know that “oh, wow! They said it, so I guess they remember.” So, that’s the evaluation. I sometimes just go ahead and do it, “Do you remember the word for flower or something?” But, you can’t really do that with kids. I would like to do that. (Interview #2)
*Note: I am not sure if this quote belongs here or on views on teaching section

Jocelyn: A lot of my lesson plans, I noticed that I wrote my goals and objectives a little bit too high for what they would be able to recognize and state this words. (Interview #2)

* Time at centers

Kaylynn: I think the time when I was there was the biggest factor that worked against me because the children had set times of what was going on during that time period. (Interview #2)

Helen: But, the fact that it was in the morning, I mean, I am a morning person, but it is different. In the afternoon you are a little bit more hopeful. But, ideally, I think something like that would be great. But, it was good! (Interview #2)
Phillis:  *(keeping up w/children)* The time that I have spent in the field experience so far has taught me that I will never be able to keep up with the kids energy level so early in the morning, and that no matter how hard I prepare, I will always have to go back and revise my lessons and ideas. After trying to play as hard and talk as fast as the five year olds I work with, I realized that I was expanding far too much energy in doing so. I decided that the best thing to do would be to relax and take things one at a time. This is especially important and applicable around the breakfast and lunch table. I would always have more than one conversation going at a time until I started to tell the students to talk one at a time and explain to them that I am only human. *(Journal #6)*

Phillis: Something that I did not enjoy was not having the energy to keep up with the kids throughout the day. After only a few hours of playing and learning with them, I would feel so exhausted that a nap was the only way I could recuperate myself before I could go on with the rest of my day. I worked with them from 9:00 to 11:00 Mondays and Wednesdays and any other days I had time to drop in. The early morning hours were tough because at this time, the kids are extremely high energy while I was hurting for a cup of coffee to give me the jump start I needed. *(Journal #10)*

Kate: I am not a morning person and often dread walking to the Center at 8am, but when I get there the kids’ energy just seems to rub off on me! I always leave the Center in a good mood and with new energy. *(Journal #6)*

Samantha: Like I said in my previous journal I have not spent enough time with the kids to experience a particular moment. However, overall I’m happy just to know that they are happy and enjoying their time. *(Journal #3)*

Samantha: I feel as though I have not been able to build a relationship and environment for the students to feel comfortable and be willing to learn a new language. This is in part because I have not spent enough one-to-one time with the students. *(Journal #5)*

Samantha: Not being able to set up a good relationship with the kids influenced their decision in not wanting to learn a new language from me. The fact that they did not see me as a teacher did not help whenever I tried to act as one. *(Journal #9)*

Samantha: One of the negative aspects of this experience was the time that I was supposed to be in the classroom with them. Not being able to set a relationship with the kids where they would expect me at a certain time and know that I was there to teach them another language disappoints me. I wanted to leave knowing that I made a difference, I might have but not as I wanted. At the end I just wanted it to be over to a certain extend because I knew that what I wanted to leave behind was not going to happen. *(Journal #10)*
Focus group exchange

Kaylynn: I think that’s our problem. I think like that they didn’t know. First of all they didn’t know the days of the week, probably. They didn’t know what day I came, what day I didn’t come. My days were separated. Mine were Mondays and Wednesdays, so they didn’t see me two days on a row.

Helen: I only went in one time, on Thursdays. Like I went on Tuesday one time, because I had to make up. I remember when I came in and they were like “where were you last week, why are you here now, is Tuesday” and I am like “and how old are you?”

Kaylynn: They didn’t notice that. I came in one day Thursday too. They didn’t notice. There are different kids in there that are on Mondays and Wednesday, than there are on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I had all the kids that I usually don’t see, walk to me, they were like my best friends. That’s also, because the one girl, she was just, she is a baby. I mean she just turned three. I wanted to take her home.

Samantha: And they would get used to you coming in.

Kaylynn: Yeah, you coming in every time.

*Children’s behavior*

Jason: However, all of my excitement is not to suggest that things are completely and wonderful and perfect. One or two of the children are particularly challenging, and it is hard not to become frustrated. There is a little girl, for example, who seems to enjoy licking me. She is often cranky and doesn’t seem to get well along with the other children. Already I’m beginning to see the challenges of teaching in this little girl. Despite my natural instinct to respond negatively to this type of behavior, I have to remain cognizant of how my actions will affect that child. If I laugh and not do anything about her behavior, I may unknowingly reinforce the behavior which is considered unacceptable. On the other hand, using a time-out might be equally ineffective since I would be denying her vital social interactions and play. (Journal #2)

Jason: Another girl continues to lick me and tries to touch me inappropriately. I don’t understand this behavior and it makes me feel uncomfortable. It raises some questions in my mind that I hope to find some answers to. Is this behavior normal or common place? Are these actions intentional or unknown to the child? Most importantly, what’s the best way to handle this sort of behavior when it occurs? (Journal #3)
On teaching children

Elizabeth: But I could never work as a fulltime language instructor for other people’s children. It just feels too strange. I LOVE teaching my college students—I love conversing with them about adult topics, current events, culture, etc. I definitely am certain that I want to teach at a community college or at a high school. I know that high school students can be so disrespectful and frustrating at times, but I really enjoy building adult relationships with them. Anyway, even though I plan on teaching older students, I am so thankful that teaching young ones was part of the curriculum. I would not have had this experience otherwise, and looking back, I think that that would have been unfortunate! (Journal #10)

Samantha: At this point, I am undecided, I love little kids, I love them a lot. But, from the field experience, when it comes to teaching, I could love little kids any time, but I think that I am going to end up teaching a higher lever, because I could get that one on one interaction and have a better, and be more helpful, I guess. (Interview #1)

Amy: High School, I would like to teach just kids that already have some sort of background in Spanish. I don’t think I necessarily enjoy doing Spanish I, the idea of me introducing it. Obviously, I would. I think I would do more the advance levels. That’s what I would like to do. (Interview #1)

Helen: I have also thought about the future, and in what context I might be teaching. I always saw myself as a high school teacher, because I like structure and some kind of intelligent conversation. It’s not to say that I don’t enjoy teaching smaller kids Spanish, but I do not have the greatest attention span. So I know I need a structured schedule and an organized room. Through this field experience, I have felt this more strongly, because sometimes it is harder for me to try to stick to an agenda with the little people, and it’s not even that their attention is gone; mine usually goes before theirs (Journal #8). I looked at how I was doing from a third person’s point of view, and I may not be the best. I do get distracted as much as the children do, and I think teachers should be more focused. I may make a good nanny or babysitter, but not a professional teacher. (Journal #10)

Phillis: I think I’ll do middle school. Middle school with like 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. Kids that are really feeling like they are real cool, like they are really bad asses (Laugh). I can relate to that age group. I would really to be like the psychology, kind of guidance counselor. Hopefully, get public to pay for my education. (Interview #1)

Jocelyn: I think this early field experience kind of supported the fact that I don’t want to teach younger children. Not because, mainly because I just have the desire to teach at the high school level. Probably because of the maturity of the students, the development of the students, more so being able to focus more on
Spanish, rather than a lot of other issues that with younger students, especially in elementary where you have to teach all the other subjects, unless you go around to the different classrooms. I think that the experience has helped me to know that. I think that if I ever do teach, it will be at the secondary level. High school, any grade within. I know, with me personally we had Spanish 4 in ninth grade, but our ninth grade wasn’t connected to our high school, because ninth grade teaching was not considered high school. But I would probably want to teach ten to twelfth, because ninth grade the kids are just getting into high school and they are all wacky and getting used to it (laughs). So preferably 10th grade and up. That’s what I would like to do. (Interview #2)

Kaylynn: I decided from the beginning that I wanted to teach Secondary Education and I wanted to that because I felt it was more of a challenge. My thoughts on that have all changed. I think elementary education is just as much of a challenge. I think teaching in general is a challenge. Everyone says that education is the easiest major and I beg to differ. Working with these little kids proved to me that the teacher’s have to be just as well prepared for the day as do Secondary Education teachers. This experience did not change my mind though about what grade level I would like to teach. I always wanted to teach either middle school or high school. I think through this experience it proved to me that I enjoy playing with little kids, but teaching them is a harder task. I felt that when I worked with the children I got frustrated a lot when they didn’t show interest or when they didn’t remember what I taught them the day before, but I understood that they were simply kids. (Journal #10)

Adriana: My plans are to work with high school students as a Spanish teacher, but working with preschoolers was both a learning and fun experience, and you never know, I might change my mind and work with small children (E-Portfolio, final reflection)

Kate: With the original program I was just secondary ed, so I just came in with the mindset that I am going to be teaching high school, which is fine with me. But now, that I am seeing that is becoming more popular in elementary schools and middle schools to teach second languages, and also just with the experiences that I have had, I really like working with kids. So, I have no idea what I am going to end up teaching. I can see myself maybe starting out in an elementary school and then moving to high school, or the other way around, I don’t know. That’s a great thing about the program; I think (Interview #1).

Jason: Well, I was thinking you know I am going TO HAVE to teach High School students, because of the whole French thing. You know we don’t even start till ninth grade usually. But, what I would have liked to do was work with younger kids, maybe elementary, 3rd, 4th, 6th grade. That’s what I wanted to do. I just love little kids, and I think they are much easier to get excited about learning. They can learn something and not even really know that they are learning. You tricked them into learning with a game or something. (Interview #1)
**Dora influence**

*Kaylynn:* Back when I was younger it was Strawberry Shortcake or whatever now is like Dora, so I can always incorporate that type of stuff. Dora is very famous, but I noticed a lot of the kids in the classroom cannot watch it either, because she yells. That’s what a little girl told me. The one little girl said, “I can’t watch it, because she has an attitude and yells, that’s what mommy and daddy say.” I am like ok. I have actually watched Dora, I don’t think she yells, but I actually think she may be loud. She may yell to her friend. I don’t know her parents. She is not allowed to watch it. I watch it, my roommate wakes up to it every morning. I think is just neat. I’ve noticed with her that she, the little girl, she misses out on so much more than the rest of the class. The rest of the class know some Spanish words, because of Dora, they really do. And she, she knows some, but she doesn’t. (Interview #1)

*Helen:* I know that most of the kids know “hola, amigo, gracias” through Dora the Explorer, but I say them to reinforce it anyway. (Journal #5)

*Helen:* I think that I feel that I reinforced the words more than teaching them, because they knew some of the words from Dora. I was like yes, I liked Dora. (Interview #2)

*Jocelyn:* One of the ten students noticed that I was holding a print-out picture of Dora the Explorer. She was so excited and her excitement aroused a continuous conversation between me and all of the students about how much they loved Dora! (Journal #1)

*Kate:* Monday when I was playing with some of the kids in their pretend castle I asked what color something was. One girl replied “rojo,” while another girl for lack of a better word, freaked out, saying that “rojo” was not correct because Dora says “roja.” Earlier in the semester we talked about how to explain this to kids, and though I’m not sure if the girls completely understood, at least they were both happy when I told them that they were both correct and that it all depends on what object you are describing. I was surprised that kids picked up on this little difference, and hopefully I helped them to understand the difference, even if they didn’t grasp the whole concept! (Journal #8)

*Focus group exchange:*

*Helen:* Yes, like when I am doing an activity all of the sudden they would say something, and I am like “how do you know that?” and they would be “Dora taught me!” “Oh, Dora”

*Kaylynn:* My kids even used it out of context. Like she says “vamos” and the other day the one kid is “hey, how are you doing, vamos, vamos” [laughter] I am like “where did you get that?” “Oh, Dora was on TV.” I am like “oh, my gosh.”

*Helen:* How old is he?

*Kaylynn:* He is four.
Jocelyn: For some reason, on the first day, I think I was so nervous to go, and I am like “I have to have something” that these kids are going to connect to me on a way. So, I printed out pictures of Dora, and there were actually how to teach them hello and goodbye, hola y adios, and they were all excited about that.

Kaylynn: My kids wore a lot of the clothes, and as soon as they walked in, I would be like “Oh, Dora!” and they talked to me about the episode they just watched. I think they learned so much from her, because they can watch it everyday and I am not there everyday.

Jocelyn: My kids actually argued with me on how to say something, because they watched it on Dora, and I wasn’t saying it right.

Kate: Did it happen with rojo and roja?

Jocelyn: I think mine was cuatro. ‘Cause they were not hearing the way I was saying it, the way Dora said it, and they argued with me.

Kaylynn: I think if their parents are like “it would be neat to learn it” they would be more into it, that somebody whose parents like one of the little girls can’t watch Dora, she says that her parents said that Dora yells. That Dora raises her voice, which is just a little high pitch voice she is a little girl. And this little girl is the one with the attitude. She is so mean to me, I almost cried the one day, she is like, “listen, I really don’t want to talk with you.” “All I said is hi” and then she is like “I told you, I don’t want to talk to you.”

Suggestions to improve the PEFE

* Meetings/Communication

Samantha: I will suggest for the instructor, student and the mentor to meet and discuss the expectations from each one. Letting the kids know from the beginning why the WL ED students are in that room and having the mentor encourage the kids to learn a second language. I think this could be done by having the WL ED students and mentors keep an ongoing communication throughout the semester, and having the mentor incorporate what the WL ED student taught the kids into other lessons whether is one word or two. (Journal #10)

Kate: Another suggestion that I have is that there be more communication between the teachers, just so everyone is clear on our (students’) expectations. A few times I felt like the teachers in the Center had different expectations than I was aware of. (Journal #10)

Kate: Sometimes my teacher will ask, “hey do you have something plan for today. I think that the teachers may be need to be a little bit more clear on the expectations that we have that are for us in the classroom. I don’t know if he wanted me to have something plan for everyday. (Interview #1)
Focus group exchange

Kaylynn: I just think that there needs to be more communication between the teachers from the field experience and the students who have WL ED295A. (Interview #2)

Jocelyn: I think that the mentor teachers should have a seminar. Actually maybe something written down to use as the teachers of the centers to say “these are the things that student should complete by the end of the semester, if you could please make them feel welcome.” Just kind of a letter to them.

Kate: Like every time I came into the classroom they were like “ok, do you have an activity” and I was like “I only have like five activities that I have to do.” I don’t know, I just felt that they expected more of me.

Kaylynn: They asked questions “when is this due?” I didn’t even know that was due. I didn’t even know that was one of the things.

Jocelyn: I think that the classroom teachers feel that since we are getting a grade for this, the have to make sure they write something.

Amy: One thing that I think would be kind of nice, midway through or something, have after that mid evaluation have a meeting with like us, you, and them. That way they can tell you exactly what they expect from you in that room, change anything they may want you to change. I think that would be something that would be helpful. Just to have a meeting like the head teacher and you. My mom had said to me ‘cause she has had student teachers, she has asked, “did you have a meeting with your teacher” and I said no. and she is like “’Cause we actually have, we all sit down in a meeting.

I: That’s done in the middle field experience and student teaching, So, you recommend that to be incorporated into the early?

Amy: Yeah.

Kate: I think that would be good for the experience, because like a few weeks into my experience he was like “oh, have you worked with kids before?” He didn’t know, he is like “what’s your major?” He didn’t, he had no idea. “Oh, so did is your first field experience?” I don’t know, it is just weird; she was like I didn’t need to label everything in the classroom. So, I made labels, I printed them and I didn’t know if I was just supposed to go around and start taping them after I did them. It was just like little things.

* Join WL ED 300W and PEFE

Phillis: I think we can definitely spend more time picking apart the readings maybe. Though that’s kind of lame. Talking about the field experiences and applying those to the readings. I think we should do that more in the 300 level class too. Just really focus on that and not so much the terms. Kind of like joining the two classes more. I mean we are supposed to, I mean we are taking them together. I think we should have class more than once a week, but… Cause is just kind of, it is just like, it would just be better. Just split it up. For each class, you pay more attention when you spread it out. It just feels more like a class. It is nice to like of do a reading that you just go and do whenever you have the time and have notes that you go and study. In 300 we have just one test, next week. We have journals that are responses to the readings that we write and read in class.
Which is kind of weak; we can definitely do something different with that.

(Interview #1)

* Change location

Kaylynn: Some suggestions I have though about this field experience is that maybe there are pre-schools or elementary schools close enough, in which students can take a bus, where they can observe there. I feel that at the Center this children have a new group of World Language Education majors come to their classroom each semester and what they teach is just a repeat of what they already know. I feel that a lot of them would be interested in the language if they weren’t exposed to it as much. I just feel that the children know it’s a routine that someone in their classroom will be there who will try to teach them Spanish. I think if it were possible to go to maybe a nearby school that maybe those children will show more interest. I just feel that the children at the Center are getting sick of it. (Journal #10)

* Block time on schedule

Helen: It would have helped if we could get to know the kids better before we started to bring in the activities, but since the class does not block off any time other than the hour and fifteen minutes on Tuesday nights, it was hard for us to go in. Perhaps if the class blocked off about three hours including the class time period, the way C I 295 works, it might have been easier for us to go in to our field experience. (Journal #10)

Amy: I think that this block that we have right now, should be like the next block, like keep your mornings free or something like that. (Focus group)

* Evaluation

Focus Group Exchange

Kaylynn: I think also what would make it better is if we knew what we were graded on.

Amy: Like getting a sheet of it.

Kaylynn: Because I really, she could give the worst grade and honestly, I really don’t know. I know I was expected to teach two lessons, I did that. But, I don’t know what she was expecting from me. I don’t know if she knew that was all I was supposed to do. I think all the teachers in the classroom should know like the requirements, what we are supposed to do. Because the one teacher would expect me to be like the person next to her. Like she would want me to color everything for her, do all the laminating and stuff like that, when in reality I am not really supposed to do that and the other teacher knows that, but she does not come in until later. And that’s the other thing with my case, like the teacher that was grading me, she didn’t come in half of the mornings till nine, and I left at 9:30. What was she supposed to grade me on, “I was there for half an hour, ate breakfast during that half an hour.” I wish the head teacher, would had being the one evaluating me, because she saw me more than the teacher assigned to do this.
Kate: I didn’t know whom I was supposed to report to. Who was I supposed to let know that I wanted to do an activity. Like I had the main woman’s e-mail, but like she was the head teacher, but the other guy was grading me, and he was the one that communicated with me.

I: Like in the third week I got an e-mail message that he was going to evaluate you.

Kate: Yeah and I wasn’t really informed about that.

* Performance Framework

Phillis: I would suggest to the World Language Education Department to revise the wording they use for the Performance Framework and Exit Competencies so that they do not sound as though they came directly from a text book. I think that this would be a good change to make because teachers are people who deal directly with people on a daily basis and have grown accustomed to a direct and often times informal means to communicating. I understand that it is important to see and understand both sides of any spectrum, but in order to maintain a teacherly tone throughout our educational experiences; we should not be spoken to as though we are incompetent. (Journal #10)

* Time

Jason: I didn’t think I was not there really enough for them to. I think that for learning to occur for little kids, I think there needs to be a relationship and kind of trust. Only being there twice a week, I am still that new guy that every time I come in they need to kind of reacquaint themselves again with me. And that made it trying to teach them very awkward I thought. I think I just needed more time in the field experience. Like, I found it just challenging. It is time, more time with the kids. (Class) Like we would meet once a week, and I think could have get more out of the class if we could have met more often. Like, I found it just challenging. Like we would meet once a week, and I think could have get more out of the class if we could have met more often. It is time, more time with the kids. (Interview #1)

Jason: If there were anything I could change about this class it would be the time constraints. There is a lot of important information to be learned in this class and the once-per-week meeting is enough to cover it all. It requires a great deal from the individual, which is to read the weekly assignments, without the everyday or every-other-day in-class support. Even if the class could meet twice a week it would be much more meaningful and would give the teacher a better opportunity to spend more time with the students. (Journal #10)

Kaylynn: I think if I were there a little longer I could get into playing games with the children and stuff, but I am only there for a short period of time and during that time we eat breakfast so time is kind of cut short. (Journal #3)

Kaylynn: Another suggestion I have for the field experience is possibly going in one day in the morning and another day in the afternoon. I think this then will
help the students understand the classroom structure better than if they attend there every morning twice a week. I noticed that I would go every Monday and Wednesday 8:00am-9:30 am. I never knew how the afternoons went with the children, until I went in one day on a Thursday from 12:00pm-1:45pm. I noticed that the classroom was more structured between those hours and I noticed that the children did grace before lunch and brushed their teeth after lunch. In the morning it’s not like that at all. The children don’t say grace and all they have to do after breakfast is use the potty, no brushing their teeth. I just found it very interesting how later in the day can differ so much from the morning. *(Journal #10)*

*Focus group exchange:*

*Kaylynn:* I think that like if I would do this again, I would want to go at least like probably four times a week or something. Even if it is for an hour, I think they would at least realize who you are. *(Focus group)*

*Amy:* I don’t think is enough; I mean granted I would have being annoyed if I would have to be there everyday. But it comes up to you build a better relationship first of all, the kids maybe would had known my name. You know, in the long run, like yes it would had been more work, and more for me to have to do, but it would had paid off.

*Samantha:* It doesn’t have to be everyday three hours. I think like an hour or and hour and a half would be fine.

*Kaylynn:* I think it would paid off a lot more. I think it would have liked it a lot more. Because I would have been able to really get to know the kids.

*Samantha:* And have like a place in the room, not to have liked another student teacher that goes in and spend time with the kids.

*Communication with parents*

*Focus group exchange*

*Kate:* And if there is a way to let the parents know about it. Just like a little note.

*Jocelyn:* I let the parents know about me.

*Kate:* Because they would drop the kids off in the morning and I would be like “hola” to the little kids, and I just saw that the parents were like “what are you doing.” I don’t feel like they knew at all what I was there for.

*Kaylynn:* I liked my parents a lot. Because a lot of my parents would come up to me and be like “my little girl counted one to five for us,” And I’ll be “way to go.” I don’t think they knew my name.

*Skills FLT take away from the experience*

*Samantha:* Not to be scare, that has been the one thing I have learned; not to be scare to try new things, to go and try to teach a lesson, even though you don’t know how it may turn out. If you get a negative response, not to stop there, but try to improve yourself because you know what went wrong, or you could make the
lesson better to get a different response. Try to be like a kid, to go ahead and not to just hold yourself. (Interview #1)

*Samantha:* In reference to learning you have to reinforce what you do, you cannot just teach one thing one day and just expect that the students would just get it just because they were amazed by it and they liked what they heard. You have to reinforce in order to get positive reaction. In teaching a language you have to make it fun for the kids, especially at this age it has to be fun, something that interest them, something that they can relate to, something that if they see again they will remember or “yes, this is how you say it.” I also learned that that I should have from the beginning set my place in the classroom. Not just expect they are going to know who I am, what I am about, and just have them receive them. If not like from the beginning set the standards, say this is why I am here, and just stay on that, stick to that and just sticking to my goals. Sticking to my goals and make my expectations happen not just wait that it would just happen. (Interview #2)

*Amy:* When we first started I really believed that there would be no way that I could come up with these activities to teach the kids Spanish, but I proved myself wrong. (Journal #6)

*Jason:* I felt like I failed a lot and that I wanted to give it another try. Actually, I also wanted to stay in the other class too, but it just become too much, because I have 19 credits. So, I stayed with the little kids, because I did enjoy playing with them, and even if I couldn’t get them to learn, I could still enjoy the time. And I could learn how little kids learn. I want to be a parent sometime and you could learn. (Interview #1)

*Jason:* Well, some of the kids actually made something for me that I took, a little memory of the experience. And I think that really to me, I think what I am going to take away is the emotional side, it was definitely a learning experience. But the relationships I built with those kids it was just really cool! Those little kids they are innocent. I remember all their names. (Interview #2)

*Kate:* Teaching a second language to children this young definitely requires patience! I always knew that I loved children, but I was never sure if I had the patience to work with them. Now, I am pretty confident that I will have the patience to work with students in my future career. (Journal #6)

*Kate:* I think patience, because in my last journal I talked about you can’t go into the experience expecting the kids to learn everything, and you are going to teach them, this and this, and this. It is good to have expectations, to have expectations of teaching them, kids develop differently. So you can’t walk in expecting to change their lives, and expecting them to speak Spanish after 10 weeks of work with them. So, just have expectations, and set them high, but not unreachable.
And then just have patience, when you are working with the kids, because they develop differently. (Interview #2)

**Kate:** Overall I really enjoyed my first experiences as a language teacher, and I think I will take a great deal away from this experience that will help me in the future as a language teacher. (Journal #10)

**Helen:** I don’t know. I think that at first I was trying to be a little bit more hyper. A little bit more like “Let’s play like Dora,” be a little bit cute. Not really like I usually am, but towards the end I was kind of myself. I was like “What color would you like?” I wasn’t really like “Oh, what color would you like!” (High pitch). I was just like “Oh, what color would you like?” and that worked to me fine. So, I just kind of said to me “you can be yourself and still be interesting.” (Interview #2)

**Helen:** A different context that you modified by teaching Spanish to little kids. I didn’t thought it was possible. I really never thought. I guess I wasn’t really exposed it enough. Because these kids really learned something through me and the other girl, and people before us. I felt like realistically it was more than I expected. But, you know, ideally I expected, “Oh, I am going to make friends with everyone, I am going to have so much fun everyday.” (Interview #2)

**Helen:** This experience was great in that I saw that younger students can in fact learn a different language. This should not have been a surprise to me, because I myself am bilingual from birth. However at the age that the students were at the center (three to five), they are on their way to master their first language, and I never thought introducing a totally new language (one that is not spoken at home) would be successful. (E-Portfolio, final reflection)

**Jocelyn:** It can feel like a teacher doesn’t get a lot done, I think that it can feel like that. Kind of in the sense that you don’t see immediate results. Like before this field experience, I expected “Ok, I am going to this lesson, after the lesson they can count to ten, and we would be good.” But, I think is disheartening, kind of, cause you really have to work at it. Work, if you don’t practice it they won’t remember it. I think that in general you need to keep practicing, it takes time. (Interview #2)

**Kaylynn:** I think the experience was a good one because I learned a lot about different backgrounds, I met some fantastic people, and this experience actually brought the kid out in me. (Interview #2)

**Helen:** I found out that my ethnicity gets in the way of them learning. Because, people, there are two girls of the same ethnicity and like today they would point me to where they were playing, and when I am teaching an activity they will come, but they don’t want to learn Spanish, because that will be their THIRD language, which is mine too. But, they don’t understand that, I am not there to
like be their friend, to speak their own language, and they always speak to me in Japanese, and I always respond in English, and I am like, “you know, I am here to speak Spanish, but towards the end I think like you know I think that the kids warmed up to me, instead of all the Asian kids swarming me at first, like “Oh, my gosh, an Asian adult.” I think it was a big shock for them at first. Like towards the end, this girl would repeat everything that I said, and she is Asian, and she is like four or something. Towards the middle I guess, I was like I don’t know if I can do this, like teaching Spanish at all, but I think I just have to stick with it and let Asian people know that I am not there to you know be an ESL teacher. (Focus group)

**Jocelyn:** Definitely, if they didn’t learn exact words, I just know, they at least know that there are other languages. Because they know there are other languages. (Focus group)

*Personal Growth*

**Amy:** The fact that you need to keep trying. I think it was personal growth. To prove myself. (Interview #2)

**Kaylynn:** In conclusion, this field experience helped me re-live my childhood. I had so much fun with the children and the best part of it all was that I got to actually get to know every single one of the kids and their parents. This experience taught me a lot about myself as well. I thought that I used to be the type of person who loved children and couldn’t wait to do the little artsy lesson plans and boy was I wrong. I realized how hard it was to make up lesson plans especially for children that young. (Kaylynn, Journal #10)

**Phillis:** I not only learned a lot about how to get young kids to pay attention and stay on task, I also learned how to have fun and play as if I were a 5 year old again. This I think is very cool because before anyone can achieve anything in their lifetime, they should be reminded how to have good old fashion little kid fun. Learning about yourself and how you deal best with different situations is only accomplished through real life experiences. One must first delve into an experience with little or no expectations, then cope and adjust to the mishaps and accomplishments they may encounter, then reflect after the day or experience is over to have a full understanding of what all was learned. After speaking with friends, professors, and my family about the experiences that I’ve had working with the kids, I came to realize that I have learned much more than grades could ever show. (Journal #10)

**Elizabeth:** More importantly, I expect to have my own children some day (though not any time soon!), and the experience taught me a lot about children. I was always afraid of having to interact with children because I knew nothing about them, but now I’m excited for the day when I have my own children. I can’t wait to teach them French and to play with them. Children are awesome! (Journal #10)
*Professional Growth*

**Jason:** I am marching to a conclusion that my time at the ECE Center #1 will be of great significance to my long term career goals. I once learned in one education theories and practices course that a person has a hierarchy of motivation when in teaching children. They are either motivated for personal benefits, the need for change, or to serve the greater society as it exists already. Those who fall into the last two categories are more adept to teach as they have a tremendous conviction in what they are doing. Sadly, my conviction in becoming a teacher is dwindling and I am finding that my want to study language is slightly more selfish than I first thought. To me language is alive and I feel malnourished when I cannot use it in a pragmatic context. It’s like an atrophy of my heart. The children have learned nothing of French and I have learned that I am in truth, ravenous to study literature and linguistics. I can clearly imagine myself teaching French in a high school setting, dying from the lack of interest in foreign studies so familiar to adolescents in America. (Journal #6)

*Teaching skills learned*

**Amy:** Some of the more useful and relevant things that I have learned is that when it comes to actually teaching the kids is a bit more complicated. For one, I realized that it is not as easy as I may have once thought it would have been. I enjoy the challenge, so it is not discouraging. (Journal #6)

**Jocelyn:** Now, at the end of the field experience, I have learned a great deal of new information. I have learned that teaching language to younger students can be very difficult. I’ve learned that I, as a teacher, have to be prepared for every event. I’ve learned that teachers have to be aware of what is going on the classrooms at all times. Most of all, I’ve learned that even when you think a child is not listening to you or paying attention, he or she is soaking in all of the information that you’ve given them. (Journal #10)

**Adriana:** Creo que los estos niños son muy inteligentes, creo que enseñarles otro idioma es difícil, por que a veces ellos solo repiten lo que oyen y no estoy segura si en realidad aprendieron algo o solo están repitiendo lo que se les ha dicho./I think that the children are very intelligent. I think that teaching them another language is difficult, because sometimes they just repeat what they have been told.

*Teacher role*

**Samantha:** One thing that I learned about myself as a language teacher was that my focus should not be in just trying to teach a language but rather trying to teach them about what surrounds them and how they could apply. I learned that being a teacher is more than just teaching, being a teacher is also being able to guide, assist someone when they need help whether is a child or an adult. (Journal #9)

**Kate:** I learned that I do have the patience to work with kids. Being around them helped me to remember what it was like to be a kid and how their minds work,
which will be especially helpful when I begin teaching even if I do not teach preschool aged children. (Journal #10)

* Reflection

**Helen:** Not only do teachers plan, prepare, teach, and evaluate (the students), we also reflect on ourselves. At this point in my career, there is no concrete way to evaluate myself except for writing reflections on my activities and perhaps my overall performance. In this domain I demonstrate my extent of reflecting and the willingness to better myself!

At the same time we should be professional and critical, my outlook on life is optimistic (some may say not-serious-enough). If there is an opportunity to reflect, I take that and learn as much as I can! (E-Portfolio, Domain C, introduction)

**Helen:** I have worked with kids ranging from a year to five years old in the past, but I was never asked to reflect on my experience, and I feel that this course is helping me get more out of the experience by prompting questions. (Journal #6)

**Adriana:** This field experience has increased my knowledge and critical thinking in working with kids. As a future teacher I would like to do things that children like or enjoy, even thought it is impossible to please all the students, I think fun learning activities have many learning benefits that kids can take advantage and learn from them. (Journal #6)

**Kate:** I know that it will be really important for me as a teacher to reflect on my lessons, and I think this experience gave me a head start on that. (Journal #10)

* Adjust instructional activities to children’s needs

**Kaylynn:** One of my biggest responsibilities for this class was to complete a weekly journal that reflected upon the children’s progress. When evaluating their improvement or lack of, I would adjust my teaching strategies according to each individual’s needs. Therefore, the children provided me feedback regarding my teaching efficacy, while carefully changing my instruction to accommodate their needs in order to help them achieve second language acquisition. Domain C, contains information on self-critique and assessment for the teacher. Analyzing your own teaching strategies is important, and it is not easy to change your teaching style, it is just as important to be able to do that. (E-Portfólio, Domain C, introduction)

**Adriana Reyes:** One thing that I have learned during my Field Experience is to adjust to activities that children like to do. I take into account not only what kids enjoy but also the development and learning of the material. For example, I did my activity of numbers about song called “Los Elefantes,” I observed that the kids really liked it and learned from this activity. Therefore, I decided to plan a similar activity to teach animals. I have included my activity plan. (E-Portfólio, C1)
Elizabeth Bour: This anecdote shows that I monitor and adjust my instructional strategies when I find that I could do something better or when I realize that the students could learn better if I did something differently. When I was introducing a body part activity at the daycare, I was finding that it was not keeping the children’s interest. I thought about what I could do differently and the next week, I brought a different activity to try that one instead! (E-Portfolio, C1)

Helen: When I began to think about my activities, I realized I had to assess where the students were currently in terms of their Spanish-skills. To my surprise, they already knew a few words, and from there I altered my ideas for my activities. Below is an excerpt from one of my journals to demonstrate that I have done so. (E-Portfolio, C1)

At the same time I was happy to know some kids are interested, it was a little disappoint to find out they can count to ten in Spanish already. This is because I was going to plan to bring in my number activity to show the kids. The other student I work with talked about it and agreed that maybe we can quickly review that but we can do other ones like colors (which surprisingly they don’t know much in) and shapes. I’m also thinking that maybe I can combine colors and shapes, so that the kids might have to say “the red circle” in stead of doing them separately. My only concern about that is that the kids might associate red with circle all the time; that is, that they might over generalize. Also, I was thinking maybe I can incorporate numbers into animals: have them count numbers. (Journal #3)

Phillis: The first activity that I did with the children had a few defects that I learned from. One thing was that I did not have all kids active during all times. I also did not have an original plan of how to make the game more difficult for those who learned faster. I gave tasks like counting out loud with the person who’s turn it was, and renumbering the board to help keep those waiting their turn active and on task. I also changed the rules of the game by making the students count backwards to blastoff! to make the game more challenging. (E-Portfolio, C1)

Samantha: I learned that to be a successful teacher one should be conscious of one’s mistakes and work to make things more productive and successful. (Journal #6)

Kate: After spending time with them I gained a better understanding of the kinds of things that interested them which helped me when I was designing my activities. I learned that it is very important to structure lessons around the kids and to adapt them to the environment. (Journal #10)

* Lesson planning

Elizabeth: I learned a lot about objectives, like standards and things like that. Like, I don’t think in the long term. I just think about a term, these terms, those
terms. But, I didn’t really think about making themes and that’s really important, because you need to think back on the curriculum. You want to make sure it’s going to be something that works, and it isn’t just giving lots of information. I want to make it more useful. Something like that I never thought about that before. I just thought I would start with easy verbs. Moving from easy to difficult. I feel a lot better than I did before. It is hard to just say how much of that is from working with the little children, because at the same time this my first year as a teacher in the French department. But, all in all I learned so much this year, that I had not learned before. I cannot believe (her emphasis) that some of my classmates ended their undergrad program and got jobs as private schools, private high school teachers. They don’t know anything about teaching. It just amazes me! It is really not as easy as you think it is. I don’t know, I don’t just want to be a teacher I want to be a good teacher. (Interview #1)

**Phillis:** I have developed lesson plans that are fun and interesting for the students that I apply them to. I have also adapted my games during play to keep the children active in the learning experience. (E-Portfolio, A2)

**Phillis:** The field experience in the ECE Center #1 has provided me with the opportunity to work closely with kindergarten students using lesson plans that I have developed with the little knowledge I have from reading the chapters assigned in the book, and from class discussions. The field experience in the ECE Center #1 has provided me with the opportunity to work closely with kindergarten students using lesson plans that I have developed with the little knowledge I have from reading the chapters assigned in the book, and from class discussions. (Journal #6)

**Phillis:** Understanding when you need to revise a lesson plan and when and what worked in a particular one is extremely important for a teacher to improve his or her ability to teach affectively. (Journal #9)

**Jocelyn:** Probably the lesson plans, I think that was one of the major things this semester, I had to do them in all my classes and I never did them before. On writing the objectives you can actually, like I am a very, I have an agenda from the time I get up to the time I go to bed. I like it, because you know exactly, what you want them to learn, and if they didn’t learn that, you have to keep practicing and change it and stuff. (Focus group)

**Kaylynn:** The biggest thing I’ve learned from this experience though is how to basically plan lesson plans. I have learned how to always have a back-up plan just in case the lesson you had planned does not work out. (Journal #6)

**Kaylynn:** I have learned so much from this class. I have learned everything possible about making a lesson plan and I am so happy I learned that because I had no idea what it was all about. I thought it was simply writing down what you wanted to do and get the materials, but I was wrong. This class also made me a lot
more organized than before and I never thought I could be more organized than I already am. (E-Portfolio, final reflection)

Kaylynn: I have learned a lot through based on how to implement interesting activities in your classroom. I think at the age where all my students are at you basically need to have the activities oriented to what they like. I think at this level the classrooms are more student oriented because most of the activities that they do in the classroom are based on what the teacher’s know the children like. As they get older it’s obvious that the classroom is not simply oriented around what the kids like, but what they also need to learn. I think that by oriented the activities around what the children like will keep their attention and it always makes things go a lot smoother. I also think that the children also enjoy the lesson more if they can relate to it. (Journal #7)

Adriana Reyes: This class provided me with the opportunity to put into practice what I have learned in the classroom, such as techniques in teaching, planning successful learning and fun activities for children. (E-Portfolio, final reflection)

Amy: When we first started I really believed that there would be no way that I could come up with these activities to teach the kids Spanish, but I proved myself wrong. (Journal #6)

* Do’s and Don’ts

Phillis: What to do and what not to do as I work with children trying to expose them to another language and what the next steps for me to take are. (Journal #6)

Jocelyn: Now being midway through my field experience, I have a learned a great deal about working with children trying to expose them to another language. I’ve learned of the do’s and don’ts and of the techniques that work best. I have also learned a lot about my personal career goals and of what I what to do when I am a teacher. (Journal #6)

Adriana: I have learned what activities kids like to do and what they enjoy the most. Usually kids enjoy playing so I think involving fun and interesting learning activities would help the children learn better another language. (Journal #6)

Kate: I have learned that it is important not to force the language on the children but more important to focus on and work with the kids who are interested in learning the new language. (Journal #6)

* Classroom management

Jocelyn: I think that in terms of the classroom management, trying to get them to listen to you. I know that when I was in grade school or middle school and kids wouldn’t pay attention, teachers would have you go up and do a presentation or something and then they would show you like if the students were not paying attention when you were talking how frustrating it was, so it is just, a little like
that. When they are wandering, their eyes are wandering, they are talking to each other, and you are trying to talk, and they are all looking at you …something like that. (Focus group)

*Samantha:* As a future teacher I have learned that one needs to be in control in order to have a positive outcome of things. I learned that I need to be a bit more firm; I tend to fall into their innocence and at times that could cause problems.

*Words to describe experience*

*Jocelyn:* I will refer to it as discovery in a way. In my case, I discover that I don’t want to work with little kids teaching languages. You discover what works and what doesn’t work when teaching languages. Discover that there are things that you can do in a classroom with children.

*Kate:* Experiences as a teacher and better than being in a classroom learning about little kids and how they learn languages.

*Amy:* I don’t think I expected what it was, like it was more challenging than I thought it was going to be. In a way, it took a lot more thought, creativity, and things like that and I don’t think I really expected that. It was kind of challenging.

*Samantha:* I don’t know. It was challenging. Trying to get their attention to learn another language.

*Elizabeth:* Eye-opening (Laughs). I struggled a lot, I learned a lot about teaching. I learned so much about children.

*Helen:* I think it is both positive and negative. Sometimes I am just like oh, man! These kids are so hyperactive. In terms of learning how to teach them languages, I think it is really positive. There are certain words that they know, but they don’t know the meaning. But, I felt good about it. It is being positive and negative. (Interview #1)

*Kaylynn:* I think that this entire experience in a nutshell is a learning experience. During this experience you get to learn about the children, lesson planning, and most importantly yourself. I have learned so much from my experience. I actually know now what little kids find fun and that will help me later on in life if I decide to go down this path of study. (Journal #6)

*Aspects to keep learning to become a teacher*

*More background on subject matter, especially to improve speaking skills*

*Phillis:* I want to keep learning how to pronounce things that I just sound, sound “gringo.” I am not really conscious about that, I get make fun a lot, but I think it is cool. I think that it would be nice though those kind of vocabulary, developing
that, making a conscious decision about that. Something that I can really focus on. ‘Cause I don’t know, I am not going to even sit down and just try to memorize words. ‘Cause, I don’t think I’ll…, I’ve done that in the past when I was in Chile. But, I think that after like the first seven, eight months, I would just write down words that I didn’t understand and memorize it. But, right now I am just trying to focus on like phonetics. (Interview #1)

Kate: Learning Spanish! (Laughs). Feeling more comfortable speaking Spanish and more about the history and the background. I think that getting experience in the language is one of the biggest steps that I need to take and I think that going to Mexico will help with that. First, I feel that I need to learn more about what I am going to be teaching. I think is very important to have a good background on the subject matter you are teaching. I think, you should really answer those questions that they have to ask. So, for me I think that I just need to get a lot more background on culture and language. I think I just need to practice Spanish, just so that I know what to say in front of the students. I am not very comfortable. I don’t know. I really don’t. I just say that if I have a native speaker in my class or something, I just feel, I don’t want them to correct me, I don’t want them to have to correct me, you know. I should be confident in my language skills, and right now I am not feeling very confident, I don’t think I have experience. Hopefully, through study abroad, take more classes, read more; I think just from the classes, I’ll learn a lot more. (Interview #2)

Amy: That I can talk more naturally. Being able to talk without thinking. I want to be able to talk as much as I can. (Interview #2)

Helen: I hope I can get keep my Spanish up. What I see with Japanese, it is not just that easy. I speak English 24/7 now and now the Japanese that I know is nothing compared to what I used to when I used it with my parents. Knowing that I think I would be a little bit more cautious about speaking Spanish and what not. At the same time, I want to have a family; I want to have my own life outside of studying Spanish. So, maybe in like ten years my Spanish won’t be as good. But, that’s not going to affect me in my teaching. It is going to be well “Obviously, I am not a good Spanish speaker, but I can teach you.” I know more than the students, so that would keep me going. (Interview #2)

Kaylynn: I feel my talking lacks the most. I think I will have no problems teaching younger students but I think my troubles would start with older children because Penn State focuses more on the grammar aspect of learning a language than the speaking aspect. (Interview #2)

* Theory and methodology applications

Elizabeth: I want to learn the theories, and actually apply them. I know a lot about French, but I want to be someone that knows about French and teaching. I feel that you cannot be a teacher of French, because of your French; you have to
learn how to teach. That's something very different; you need to know how to approach the situation. (Interview #1)

* Study Abroad

Samantha: I am planning to go to Spain next spring semester. I haven’t decided yet, I haven’t decided where exactly in Spain, so I am still looking. I think it will definitely help me expand my knowledge, of not only Spanish, but the culture, the origins of the Spanish language, and the Spanish culture. You know Spain, is the mother of Spanish. I think it is going to help me a lot. (Interview #1)

Samantha: I am hoping to be able to go abroad to expand my knowledge in culture in other countries. (Interview #2)

Jason: Yes, I plan to go back and study in Montpellier. (Interview #1)

Kate: Well, I am going to Puebla this summer for seven weeks, and then next Spring I am probably going to go to Spain. I am not sure where, most likely Salamanca, I am still looking into it. There are several programs in Spain, but I think it would be good to get like the two different, like Mexican vs. Spanish. So, hopefully I can take those experiences into the classroom. (Interview #1)

Amy: I will be doing my study abroad this summer in Mexico. I thought about at one point going to Brazil, for that study abroad, but I wouldn’t put my language to any use. But, I looked at the beach and that looks nice (laugh). I don’t know, I just really when I was in Spain, I just kind of felt in love with it and I would really like to go back for a three month or something. Just doing that actually made me realize that I actually do want to travel. Just seeing other countries, visit the buildings, the history that they have. I would really like to go to Italy, Greece, everywhere. (Interview #1)

Amy: My friend has a friend that lives in Spain, so we were thinking about going there next summer. (Interview #2)

Helen: I would love to go abroad to a Spanish speaking country. For some reason I love that whole culture, it is so bright and happy. (Interview #1)

Phillis: Puebla, Mexico. I know it is a great program. My Spanish teacher, my 301W bilingual recommended it HARD CORE (his emphasis) throughout the entire years, after the summer she came, pushing me towards that program, that’s probably why I want to go. I just probably want to do that. I don’t really want to go to Spain, I am looking into Italy, and maybe I could pick up some Italian. I can already understand a little bit. (Interview #1)

Helen: I always wanted to be more multicultural, now that I am actually going abroad I would like to know more culture about it. (Interview #2)
*Exposure to different age groups

Elizabeth: I just really have to learn more about junior high and high school students. Because, yes I use to be one, but it is hard to go remember sometimes what it was like, what is going through their head, what their interests are. Like, a teacher might think there is not much of a difference between high school and college students, especially a high school twelfth grader and college freshmen. There are many differences, I want to step back and look at the environment, before I actually start teaching. (Interview #1)

Kaylynn: I expect to learn more about how children enjoy learning and what interests children. (Interview #2)

Samantha: I am not sure yet what kind of age group I would like to teach. In my opinion, I think I need more exposure to the different types of age groups, in order to make up my mind and say “I feel more comfortable here than there” or I know I could make “more difference here than there.” (Interview #2)

Helen: I would like to see what the other groups are like. I don’t know, I could only think about what I would be in high school. But if I went there, I could be like “ok, comparing this to what I had in 295A, I guess I like this better or that better.” (Focus group)

* More teaching experiences

Amy: Obviously the next field experience will definitely help that out. Be exposed more to what I am going to be doing as a teacher and learn how teach languages and go from there I guess. (Interview #1)

Elizabeth: I just need more experience teaching. I don’t want to start teaching right now as a professional teacher. I can’t imagine getting hired as a teacher without having done my teaching assistantship in the French department. You just think, Oh, teaching no problem, but Oh, my God! There is so much that you have to take into consideration and I just would like to keep practicing. I just don’t want to go into a position, being with high schools students, until I figure out what I want to do. (Interview #1)
APPENDIX E: RESEARCH MATERIALS

Interview protocol

Initial One-on-One Interview Questions
1- When/where did you graduated from High School?
2- When and why did you decide to become a teacher?
3- Why did you decide to teach specifically a world language?
4- What did your parents and closest friends think about your decision to become a language teacher?
5- What age group, or grade, do you prefer to teach?
6- Have you had any study abroad experiences, or vacations to countries were this language is spoken?
7- What does knowing a foreign language had done for you?
8- How positive or negative have your experiences in your teacher education program been? What classes do you prefer?
9- What about your language classes? Have they helped you improve your language skills, to be able to teach them to others?
10- Have you had any type of teaching experiences? This includes working at summer camps, tutoring, etc.
11- What is language learning and teaching for you? How have you experience it in your life?
12- How will you describe yourself as a language learner and teacher?
13- What experiences have lead you to this understanding of learning and teaching?
14- What pre-conceptions did you have about children and schools before starting your field experiences?
15- What types of activities do you engage with in the classroom? Which ones do you find more interesting, which ones do you find more helpful?
16- What are you learning (have you learned) from the teachers and from the students in your field experiences? Have anything they have done surprise you, or has provoke good or bad feelings in you? What has been your biggest challenge?
17- Have you remembered any schools experiences while you have been in the schools and compare them to the children’s?
18- Do you feel that your presence at the school has an effect on the children? Explain.
19- Did you feel you have good language skills in your foreign language for this experience?
20- What has been your biggest challenge as you try to teach a language to the children?
21- Do you see any connection between the theories you are learning (learned) in WL ED 300 and your field experience? How? Give some examples. Like for example how do kids learn language (s)?
22- How important are field experiences in your teacher preparation program? What do you think is the purpose of having field experiences?
23- If you have to describe your teaching experiences using a metaphor or one word, which metaphor word will you use and why?
24- What are some of the experiences (good and bad) that you went through during your field experiences that you will never forget?
25- How difficult was it to be at the centers/schools? What were some of your biggest joys and frustrations? What bothered you more?
26- What was your idea of being a teacher before starting your field experiences? Did it change or not?
27- Did the field experiences help you see the “realities of being a teacher”? Why yes or not?
28- What did you learn about language learning and teaching during this field experience?
29- What language acquisition theories were you able to observe in action in your classroom?
30- What are your thoughts about the field experiences after finishing or almost finishing it? What will you change?
31- Do you see yourself as a teacher after going through this experience? Why yes or no?
32- Do you feel you have changed personally and professionally after this field experience? In what aspects?
33- Did you ever consider becoming a FLES teacher (Foreign language in the elementary school) before going through this experience? Would you ever considered it in the future?
34- How difficult/easy has been this transition from student to teacher?
35- How do you feel when you teach? What thoughts go through your head?
36- How easy or difficult was to communicate with your mentor teacher?
37- Have your ideas about language learning and language teaching changed since you began studying in this program?
38- How early should students study a world language? Has your experiences this semester shaped this opinion?
39- Would you considered teaching languages to prek-6 children? Why or why not?
40- How will you teach a language to elementary school children? How will you teach secondary school students?

Focus group questions

1- If you have to describe this field experience using a metaphor or one word, which metaphor word will you use and why?
2- What are some of the experiences (good and bad) that you went through during your early field experience that you will never forget?
3- How difficult was it to be at the centers? What were some of your biggest joys and frustrations? What bothered you more?
4- What was your idea of being a teacher before starting your field experience? Did it change or not?
5- Did this field experience help you see the “realities of being a teacher? Why yes or not?
6- What did you learn about language learning and teaching during this field experience?
7- What language acquisition theories were you able to observe in action in your classroom?
8- What are your thoughts about the field experience after finishing or almost finishing it? What will you change?
9- Do you see yourself as a teacher after going through this experience? Why yes or no?
10- Do you feel you have changed personally and professionally after this field experience? In what aspects?
11- Did you ever consider becoming a FLES teacher (Foreign Language in the elementary school) before going through this experience? Would you ever considered it in the future?
12- How difficult/easy has been this transition from student to teacher?

Interview #2 Questions
1- How do you think a person learns to teach?
2- Think on an activity that you will like to implement in your classroom. Describe to me where is your classroom located, the age group you are teaching, what resources you will use, how the students are reacting to your activity, amount of English you are using, etc.
3- How will you describe your future classroom and students?
4- What are your future plans as a language teacher? Where will you like to teach?
5- Will you consider moving to another state to teach? Which one(s)?
6- In your own classroom, what percent of English will you use to address the students?
7- How will you like to be remembered by your students?
8- What personal characteristics do you have that will help you to become a language teacher? What aspects you need to keep learning about that will help you become a “good” language teacher?
9- What is your level of confidence on your ability to teach a language? (Low, high, medium) Please describe
10- What do you expect to learn from your future field experiences, course work, and teaching experiences?
Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research
The Pennsylvania State University

Title of Project: Learning How to Teach Languages: Language Teachers’ Perceptions about Language Learning and Teaching as They Go Through Teaching Experiences

Principal Investigator: Sandra Rodriguez-Arroyo, Graduate Student
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(814) 861-4503; sqr107@psu.edu

Advisor: Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto, Ph.D., Professor in Charge, World Languages Education
255 Chambers Building, University Park, PA 16802
(814) 863-8921; mespinosa@psu.edu

1. Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research is to explore some of the changes—if any—you as a future/current language teacher go through regarding your views about language learning and teaching as you fulfill your teacher education program requirements and/or teaching experiences.

2. Procedures to be followed: You will be asked to fill out a participant profile and participate in an initial one-on-one interview with the principal investigator. This may take approximately 30-45 minutes, during which you will talk about some of the experiences that led you to your decision to become a language teacher and previous teaching experiences (if any). Afterwards, you will be asked to participate in a second one-on-one interview. This will take approximately 30-60 minutes to listen to the experiences you had in your teacher education program, in particular the ones directly related to your teaching field experiences, and discuss your final reflections during and after your teacher education program. Your permission will be requested, to analyze your journals, portfolio reflections, and other artifacts you were required to write/prepare as part of your field experiences in the World Languages Teacher Education program. Further interviews or e-mail communications may be necessary to clarify/expand interview answers.

3. Discomforts and Risks: There are no risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. Some of the questions are personal and might cause discomfort.

4. Benefits: You might learn more about your teacher personality by participating in this study and have a better understanding of why you want to become a language teacher. In addition, you might realize that others have had similar experiences as you, and how your reflections can be useful to future students that want to become language teachers.

This research project will contribute to the written literature on language teachers’ preparation. Moreover, it will provide a better understanding of the key role of teacher education programs and the importance of field experiences in conjunction with foundations’ courses. This research will assist students in deciding their future plans as language educators.
5. **Duration:** You will be asked to commit between 30-150 minutes in the Spring/Fall of 2006 for this research project. The initial interview may last 30-45 minutes, and a second one around 30-45 minutes. If additional interviews are needed they will not last more than 30 minutes. The interview sessions will be scheduled at your convenience.

6. **Statement of Confidentiality:** Any identifiers will be removed from the written documents. Only the persons in charge will know your identity, through pseudonyms. The recordings of the data will be stored and secured at the investigator’s home office in a locked cabinet and the transcriptions and analysis of the data will be saved in a password protected file in the investigator’s personal computer, that only the principal investigator and her advisor will have access too. However, tapes and informed consent forms will be destroyed by the investigator at the end of three years, around May 2008.

The following may review and copy records related to this project: The Office of Human Research Protections in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; The Penn State University Social Science Institutional Review Board; the Penn State University Office for Research Protections. In the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared.

7. **Right to Ask Questions:** You can ask questions about the research at any time to the principal investigator Miss Sandra Rodriguez or to Dr. Miryam Espinosa Dulanto. You may contact Sandra at her e-mail address sqr107@psu.edu or the following telephone numbers (814) 861-4503 and (814) 360-4643 in State College, PA. Dr. Espinosa-Dulanto could be contacted through her e-mail address, mespinosa@psu.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Penn State’s Office for Research Protections at (814) 865-1775.

8. **Voluntary Participation:** Your decision to participate in this research project is voluntary. Moreover, you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer and you can stop your participation at any time. If you have a reason to believe that the researcher is not following this agreement, please communicate your concern to her supervisor, Dr. Miryam Espinosa-Dulanto (mespinosa@psu.edu).

You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study. If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, please sign your name and indicate the date below. You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent for your records.

____________________________________   _____________________  
Participant Signature       Date  

____________________________________   _____________________  
Person Obtaining Consent      Date
Title of Project: Learning how to teach languages: Language teachers’ perceptions about language learning and teaching as they go through teaching experiences

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

1- Pseudonym: _______________________________________

2- Gender: _____M _____F

3- Nationality: _______________________

4- Age: __________

5- Semester Standing: _______________________

6- Is English your first language? ______ yes ______ no

7- If not, where did you learn it?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

8- Are you first generation college student? ______ yes ______ no

9- Parents’ profession (Mother, Father, or Guardians)

Mother- ________________________________________________

Father- ________________________________________________

Guardian- ________________________________________________

10- Do your parents speak (write, read, understand) another language (s)? If yes, which one(s)?

Mother- ________________________________________________

Father- ________________________________________________

Guardian- ________________________________________________

11- Describe the school (s) that you attended from Prek-12. Example urban, suburban, rural; public or private; diverse or not; number of students. How was your experience in them?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
12- Extra curricular activities you engaged on in high school and college

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

13- Languages spoken

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<th>Years studied</th>
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14- Have you lived/visited any countries outside the United States?
YES____  NO_____  
Where / When?
________________________________________________________________________
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15- Work Experience within the educational field (This includes tutoring, summer camps, or any other experience in which you were required to teach)

Position / School (camp, program, etc.) / Date
________________________________________________________________________
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16- Teaching Certificates (expected/current):
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

17- Do you have any family members, close relatives, friends that are teachers?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

18- How many years do you plan to teach?
________________________________________________________________________
VITA
Sandra Rodríguez Arroyo

EDUCATION


PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

*Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania*

Course Instructor, Technology as a Student Tool, 2005–2009
Course Instructor/Field Experiences Supervisor, World Languages Teacher Education Program, 2001–2005
Graduate Assistant, Office of Multicultural Programs, 2001–2003; 2006–2009
Special Programs Course Instructor/Coordinator, Penn State/Sheppard Elementary School Urban Teaching Collaborative Partnership, 2007–Present

*Teaching Experiences in Puerto Rico*


English Instructor, National Guard Privates. Fort Allen Language Center, Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico, 2000

PRESENTATIONS


PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Educational Research Association (AERA); Phi Delta Kappa International; American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE); Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages-Puerto Rico Chapter (TESOLPR)