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Marketing of Revenue-generating ESL Programs at the University of Calgary:

A qualitative study

by

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Abstract

This qualitative case study endeavored to understand how program managers at one post-secondary Canadian university define, understand and undertake the marketing of their revenue-generating English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Data were collected through interviews with three managers of distinct English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs at the University of Calgary. Interview questions addressed the topics of manager qualifications and experience, how managers promoted their programs and what the concept of marketing meant to them. The study used constructivist theory as its framework. It was also influenced by concepts found in appreciative inquiry.

In the findings section of this study, recommendations are made for how to improve the marketing and general administration of English as a Second Language programs at universities. In addition, a section is dedicated to how marketing may be understood within the context of revenue-generating language programs.

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There are many people who have helped me along through this journey through the Ph.D. program. I am grateful to everyone who has helped in small ways and in bigger ways. Though I will surely forget to mention someone here, it will be completely unintentional. The list of names that follows is by no means exhaustive. Nevertheless, there are a few people who have helped me in significant ways and whose support made a significant difference to the quality of my work and my life during the past four years.

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Epigraph

Leadership is a personal thing. It is comprised of three important dimensions: one's heart, head, and hand. The heart of leadership has to do with what a person believes, values, dreams about, and is committed to.… The head of leadership has to do with the theories of practice that each of us has developed over time and our ability to reflect on the situations we face in light of these theories…. The hand of leadership has to do with the actions we take, the decisions we make, the leadership and management behaviors we use…. How we choose to manage and lead are personal reflections not only of our vision and practical theories but of our personalities and our responses to the unique situations we face as well. (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 41)

Chapter One: INTRODUCTION

This investigation describes the evolution of a project that began with the intention of examining publicly available documentation related to the policies, strategies, principles and practices of marketing revenue-generating English as a Second Language (ESL) programs at a number of Canadian post-secondary institutions. The study explains how and why a qualitative case-study examining only the University of Calgary, using interviews with ESL program directors, was instead adopted. The interviews delved into questions around the directors' experience in the field, as well as their understanding of what it means to market an ESL program and how they go about it.

The dissertation begins by offering a historical and contextual overview of ESL programs. It briefly outlines how language programs have been an integral part of university programs since medieval times, and focuses on the evolution of language programming in the twentieth and twenty first centuries. In particular, it examines how ESL programs have transformed in the last several decades into revenue-generating programs for universities.

A broad overview of how and why marketing has been integrated into post-secondary institutions (Geiger, 2004; Hesel, 2004) in general is offered, to add breadth to the overall understanding of how education itself has changed and begun to adopt business practices such as marketing as part of its administrative practice.

A variety of questions are raised about the nature of what it means to administer and manage ESL programs. Key research questions for this study that focus specifically on marketing are outlined in the form of one major research question, followed by sub-questions. A detailed description of the methods used to address them comprises much of the research design chapter. The results of the study are discussed, drawing heavily upon what the participants said during their interviews. Finally, a number of conclusions are drawn and explained. Implications of this research, along with some recommendations, are presented and discussed. The study concludes with a proposal aimed towards a new understanding of what marketing in the ESL context means.

Personal Statement

I came to this study as a Canadian researcher, language teacher, and language program administrator. My interest in this study stemmed from both scholarly interest and field experience. I first began to grapple with questions about marketing language programs when I was managing the University of Calgary's Continuing Education English as a Second Language program. When I began my work there in 1997, the program was undergoing a shift from being a cost-recovery program, to being a revenue-generating one. This meant both a philosophical and practical shift in terms of management and required swift action in order to increase enrolments.

My language skills in Spanish led me to take part in recruitment trips and educational trade fairs in Latin America (Venezuela in 1997 and Mexico in 1999) where the purpose was to market the program and recruit students from those countries, as part of my job. Thus, while employed at the university, I gained first-hand experience working at international education fairs and in the preparation of marketing materials to be distributed during and following the fairs. I was involved in the development of the program's first web site and international marketing materials, in English, French and Spanish.

In early 2000 I was briefly seconded to the Universidad Católica de Honduras in Tegucigalpa to collaborate with their administrators and academics to set up a Spanish language program for foreigners that modelled the University of Calgary's ESL program. That work included discussions on how to promote the program to native speakers of English so as to attract students (and revenue) to the Honduran university. This experience revealed that at least one university in a developing country was interested in establishing language programs for foreigners that had the dual purpose of not only teaching the language, but also of generating revenue for the institution. I worked with them to help set up their program and to enable them to build their own capacity to market their programs internationally. Unfortunately, there was little time to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy during my stay. The project left me with a growing desire to understand how schools could better market their programs to attract international students.

By the time I left my position at the University of Calgary in 2001, the mandate of the program was clearly focused on generating revenue, with a view to expanding contracts from the Japanese and other Asian markets. During those four years, from 1997 to 2001, I grappled with questions related to marketing, which led me to delve further into the subject matter. My interest led me to local (Eaton, 2002b), national (Eaton, 2003c) and international conferences (Eaton, 2003a, 2004a) where I presented on the topic of marketing language programs.

Seeing the need for a practical “how to” marketing guide for language program administrators, I prepared a manuscript to address this question. The manuscript was rejected by publishers who deemed that there was not a significant market for such a book. With entrepreneurial zest, the book was published by an incorporated consulting company, of which I was the sole owner (Eaton, 2002a). Within the context of this academic work, it should be noted that the guide was intended to help other practitioners in the field, rather than as any kind of theoretical or academic endeavour. The book sells internationally through Amazon.com.

After leaving the position and founding a consulting company, I began assisting other language schools and programs in marketing their courses. The consulting company’s clients included non-profit organizations such as the YWCA of Calgary (Alberta, Canada) and Kamloops Immigrant Aid Services (British Columbia, Canada), private language schools such as English Made Easy (Toronto, Canada) and the Colorado School of English (Denver, U.S.A); as well as post-secondary institutions such as Grant MacEwan College (Edmonton, Canada), Georgia State University Intensive English Program (Atlanta, U.S.A) and Custom Language Services at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (California, U.S.A.).

Working with these different types of programs throughout Canada and the United States both broadened and deepened my understanding of the problems and challenges faced by language program administrators. I began to see patterns in the kinds of conversations I was having with these managers and I realized that not only were the problems more widespread than I had originally thought, so were the feelings of isolation and helplessness felt by those in charge of managing schools and recruiting students. Very often, the job of managing and marketing the program were two jobs combined into one.

As a way to respond to this, I began (and continue) to moderate an on line newsgroup forum which brought together members from around the globe, all of whom had an interest in how to market their programs better (http://ca.groups.yahoo.com/group/marketinglanguageprograms/). My intention was to create a virtual community where language program managers could discuss their challenges and exchange information. The stable membership between 350 and 400 members worldwide is comprised of language school managers, recruitment agents and members of professional organizations. The forum presents a moderated space where questions are encouraged, tips are exchanged and questions are asked. Though the group has varied in its activity level since I began it in July 2003, it is apparent that language program managers continue to struggle with questions related to marketing their programs effectively and recruiting more students, often with very little training and shoestring budgets.

Through my experience managing a university program, working as consultant in the field, and as a moderator of the international online newsgroup forum, I came into contact with other language program administrators. My communications with these administrators confirmed that the problems I had faced were not unique. In fact, the stories were common across programs and across nations. I felt deeply moved to help my fellow educators and administrators in a practical way, and at the same time, I was becoming preoccupied with certain themes which repeated themselves in conversations and on line interactions and which will be expanded on in the statement of the problem, which follows shortly.

My interest has, over the past several years, undergone a shift from the purely practical to a more theoretical and philosophical approach. I believe that this shift has happened because of my breadth and depth of experience in the field over the past 10 years. My work shows that this is an area that requires further study and development. I have many questions and see much potential for research in this area. However, to date, there has been little work done to examine some of these questions deeply. It was my intention to undertake such an examination with this thesis, by studying the problem from one particular angle.

Statement of the Problem

This study attempted to delve into the themes noted above around some of the challenges faced by language program administrators. The themes include: a lack of training in marketing, having little to no budget, a perceived lack of support from upper administration, increasing demands to recruit students, and the feelings of isolation and frustration that ESL program managers have repeatedly expressed in conversations and on line discussions. It attempts to formally address, through interviews with program managers, what has, by and large, previously existed only as anecdotal evidence. Moreover, it delves into the question of how program managers define and understand marketing in the ESL context.

Significance of the Research

This research is significant because, as the literature review will demonstrate, little work has been done on the problems and challenges faced by language program administrators in terms of marketing their programs. This work adds a new voice to the dialogue that already exists on the topic of marketing of post-secondary institutions; one that focuses on the topic of marketing language programs, particularly in a Canadian context. It also provides directions for future research that will hopefully not only form the basis for future work in my own career, but will open the floor to dialogue among educational administration researchers broadly (and specifically to those interested in the management of language programs). If that is the case, the dialectal process of considering these questions from a research point of view would begin, adding to the pragmatic dialogue that happens informally between and among language program managers.

It has been pointed out that text and context are mutually constitutive (Tyson, 1999). It is my intention to find out what texts have emerged from the situation as it exists now and how those texts might shape (or be shaping or have shaped) the administrative and management practices of language program managers when it comes to marketing.

Limitations of the Study

This study set out to survey only publicly available documentation. The rationale for this was to examine the same literature that is readily available to program administrators themselves. As such, the study would not take into account all the writings that were available. It may be that many of the concerns of program managers would be neither acknowledged, nor addressed, in the documents sought. In other words, it was possible that this dialogue has not yet entered the public sphere.

Another limitation of this study is that it focuses only on revenue-generating English programs. While there is little doubt that both French and English language programs generate revenue at post-secondary institutions in Canada, this choice is a reflection of the inadequate French language skills of the researcher, rather than a statement of the importance of one language over the other.

Finally, the study is also bounded by time insofar as it examines the situation as it exists in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The data that were collected capture the situation as it existed at the time the study was conducted.

Delimitations of the study

This project was delimited to Canadian post-secondary institutions which have English language programs designed to generate revenue. Due to the large number of post-secondary institutions in Canada, the study was further delimited, only to universities (as opposed to colleges or university colleges) and one professional organization, the Canada Language Council, of which the majority of university English programs are members. Universities were chosen because the dynamics of college or university college programs is somewhat different from those of universities. Many college programs include government-funded immigrant-serving programs, for example, and since this would add an additional variable into the study, such programs were excluded. It was the intention of this study to examine one university from each of the following regions:

- Western Canada – The University of Calgary
- Central Canada – The University of Toronto
- Eastern Canada – Saint Mary's University

The reason for these choices was the researcher's own experience working at both the Eastern and Western institutions, having seen their programs evolve and change over time. It should be noted that the researcher's connection to the revenue-generating programs at both of these institutions was not based in any current dealings with the staff or managers of the programs there. Employment at Saint Mary's University was terminated in 1993, due to a move to Calgary to undertake Master's work. Employment in the University of Calgary's, Faculty of Continuing Education, ESL program, terminated due to resignation in 2000. So, while experiences there makes these programs significant to the researcher from a historical and professional perspective, there was no vested interest in what the data may have revealed.

The University of Toronto was chosen because it is a large university in central Canada and precisely because the researcher had no personal connection to their language programs. This contrast, both in terms of geography, as well as perspective, was desired in the study. Due to factors that will be explained in the research methods section, the study ultimately focussed solely on the University of Calgary.

Definitions

It is important to understand what is meant by revenue-generating language programs. ESL programs are broadly understood as English language courses offered to international students. It is true that these programs often generate revenue for the institutions that offer them, but it must be acknowledged that not all ESL programs are created equal. This is an umbrella term which can be used to talk about a variety of programs which may go by different names at different institutions. Lee and Wesche (2000) offer details about the differences in some types of multi-level ESL programs in Canada but some broad categories generally referred to in the field are:

- Intensive English programs (IEPs) – These programs are typically offered over the spring or summer to visitors. Often, participants will come on a tourist (rather than student) visa and stay for three months or less. Often, they are combined with activities such as sight-seeing, sports (such as horseback riding or hiking) and are generally understood to encompass both a learning and a touristic purpose.
- English for academic purposes (EAP) – These programs are offered to students who are otherwise academically qualified for university entrance, but whose language skills are inadequate. Students may spend anywhere from one to four semesters improving their language skills. They usually come on a student visa and have aspirations of undertaking full-time study at the institution in which they are enrolled in an EAP program.
- English for specific purposes (ESP) – These courses are often taught to specific groups (i.e., engineers) and include both general and technical language training.

Often groups of students are brought in as a cohort from one country or one company and courses are custom designed to suit their needs. These courses are often done on a contract basis and are often seen as being more labour intensive, due to the highly technical language that is taught, as well as the idea that such groups deserve special attention because they pay a high price for their specialized training and expect "service", as well as education.

This is by no means meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather a general overview. Indeed, the ways of constructing and planning courses and programs may be as diverse or conservative as the institution determines. The literature review offers further details and the glossary at the end of this document provides further references for terms used in this study.

Typically, programs at universities would not include literacy programs, such as those offered by immigrant-serving agencies, for example, but would focus more on low intermediate to advanced levels of competency. Language competency may be defined in a variety of ways, but will often include a placement test administered by the institution or a student self-assessment of his or her own level, or both. It is beyond the scope of this study to offer an in-depth analysis of how such tests may be conducted, but suffice to say that most universities in Canada use some form of placement test before students enroll in a language program.

In addition to the ESL programs, the Canadian context also involves similar programs in French. Such programs are mainly concentrated in French-speaking regions of the country and offer programs parallel to the ones mentioned above for English. This study will concern itself wholly with programs offered in English.

Assumptions

Due to the highly politicized and contested notions of what marketing in an educational context means, or should mean, and how it should "be done", it is worth exploring some of the philosophical assumptions and ethical questions that were present in the study. These lead naturally into the theoretical framework for the study. An attempt has been made to offer a thorough and open demonstration of these beliefs and ideas so that the research may be understood with these assumptions in mind.

Assumption #1 – The value of the study

A major assumption of this work is that the questions posed are indeed worth studying. As the review of the literature and research will show, while the marketing of post-secondary institutions and language programs at those institutions have both been studied independently and extensively, looking at the marketing of revenue-generating language programs has not been studied in and of itself.

One might argue that the principles and problems of marketing an institution are essentially the same as those of marketing a language program. While they are related, they are not the same. Institutions have committees, councils, budget officers, deans, development offices, public relations departments, and entire infrastructures that make marketing them easier. In addition, there are the budgets and the costs. American research points to the fact that "in education, it is frequently impossible to conduct a realistic cost/benefit analysis because neither the costs nor the benefits can be assessed" (Lieberman &

Haar, 2003, p. 213). While most university administrators would concur that it seems that there is never enough funding, few face the same pressures as language program directors. Specifically, such managers fear that if they recruit insufficient students, their programs will be closed by upper administration and they may lose their jobs (Rowe-Henry, 1997). The reality is that universities as institutions “find” money to undertake sophisticated and expensive marketing and recruiting campaigns, but language programs must generate the money to do so.

Language program managers have significant pressure on them to recruit students who pay full tuition. The continuation of their programs, as well as the livelihood of their staff (and indeed, their own livelihood) depends on it. Simultaneously, these same program managers have neither significant budgets, nor training, nor an extensive infrastructure to support them in their quest to fill the seats in their programs. The marketing of these programs presents unique problems.

The fact that these unique problems have not been studied to date is not because the question is not worth studying, but rather because the problem itself is rather new, in the scope of the history of education. Gardner (1994, p. 9) points out that:

> At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were some for whom the idea of education for all was anathema… In the maintenance of social order and national prosperity, popular ignorance was preferable to popular learning. This was a view for which support receded with every passing year of the new century.

As time passes, our understanding of what education is, or should be, evolves. In the last two decades of the twentieth century, government funding cuts to public education at all levels led schools to seek new sources of funding. One of these sources was, and continues to be, programs designed to generate revenue for institutions, as well as provide an education. These programs must be marketed and students recruited to take them. Each year marketing is becoming more and more a part of educational administration, though it has only been in the past twenty or so years that language programs at post-secondary institutions in Canada have shifted from having a community focus to being cost recovery to needing to generate revenue (Eaton, 2006a).

The problems faced by language program managers will certainly change as those in the field gain experience and become better trained. As managers' knowledge of how to better market programs better internationally expands, some of the current problems which may be rooted in lack of training may diminish. In the meantime, the problems that currently exist call for research to be done and for the dialogue to be taken from the cafeterias and hallways, over cups of coffee, to the scholarly realm with a view to advancing the understanding of this emerging field and the challenges faced by those working in it.

Assumption #2 – Marketing as inseparable from the marketer

The first assumption alludes to the second one in that it assumes that the act of marketing is inseparable from those who engage in the act of marketing. Marketing does not happen on its own. It requires that one or more individual(s) think about what marketing is and how to do it. Then they go about doing it. This study seeks not only to understand how ESL programs are marketed but also how those who "do marketing" understand it.

Assumption #3 – History shapes the present situation

A review of the literature shows how language learning and teaching have evolved through the ages, and more importantly, in recent decades. It has been noted that one of the limitations of the study is that it is bounded in time. If, in the future, this study were to be repeated, it is likely that the responses of these same participants would be different, as their understanding and experience of marketing the programs they direct deepens and expands over time. By the same token, the study assumes that their training, skills and knowledge at an earlier stage in their careers was less than it was at the time of this study. Therefore, it is assumed that what they have learned throughout their careers has shaped their current practice.

Assumption #4 – Truth is not absolute

One assumption made in this study is that neither documents, nor interviews, necessarily contain truth, at least in any empirical way. It is important to clarify that this study does not seek truth, nor absolutes, in terms of what it intends to uncover. In its early stages, when it sought documents relating to policies and marketing strategies, it concurred with the words of Atkinson and Coffey (2004, p. 58) who posit that "we cannot treat records – however 'official' – as firm evidence of what they report". They further point out point out that "we have to approach documents for what they are and what they are used to accomplish" (p. 58). The same beliefs have been maintained through the study, even though interviews were ultimately used to gather data, rather than documentation.

Furthermore, the notions that interviews are context specific, and invented, fitting the inter-actional context created by both the interviewer and interviewee (J. Miller & Glassner, 2004, p. 125) have been adopted for this study. Finally, Byrne's claim (2004, p. 182) that "what an interview produces is a particular *representation* or *account* of an individual's views and opinions" serves as a backdrop to the research.

As such, this study proceeded on the assumption that truths provide social facts, not empirical ones. The study does not claim nor intended to offer absolute understandings or explanations, but rather sought to explore and interpret the data provided by the participants.

Assumption #5 - Business and education are not mutually exclusive in a moral sense

One of the underlying beliefs of this research is that, without a doubt, it is possible to incorporate business practices, such as marketing and generating revenue, into educational administration. Further, this study assumes that business management and operational practices may be incorporated into educational administration in an ethical way. That is to say that the use of business practices in an educational setting need not compromise the quality of the education. Moreover, the incorporation of marketing or revenue generation need not inhibit or detract from the students' experience or potential to learn, grow as human beings and learn to think critically.

It could be argued that a "traditional" educational system which disregards business or marketing as aspects of educational administration, but instead forces a political propaganda or religious belief, has far more potential of having a negative effect on students' education. Such a system might focus more on doctrine than teaching students to think critically and question the world around them. On the other hand, an administrative structure rooted in a desire to better the school, its facilities and its environment by generating revenue may in fact, be more beneficial. Revenue that is generated can then be recycled back into resources that support student learning, growth and inquiry.

Furthermore, some current educational theories lend themselves well to a business approach. For example, Sergiovanni refers to educational administrators as professionals and his comments about them could just as easily refer to business managers committed to ethical management practices:

> Professionals need to believe in what they are doing as they practice. They need to believe that professional action does more good than harm and that they are effective in solving problems and serving clients. Professional practice is characterized by close attachment and a commitment to one's course of action. Professionals rely on their own firsthand experience and on the experience of other professionals with whom they work in similar settings. (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 40)

This study subscribes to the belief that revenue generation in education may be a good thing providing that the students and their learning are kept as an essential value that guides administrative practice.

Organization of the study

Chapter One has presented a general introduction, a personal statement, a presentation of the problem and research questions, as well as the significance, limitations and delimitations of the study and some assumptions that are part of the research. Chapter Two discusses literature and research related to marketing at post-secondary institutions and of language program management, as it relates to marketing. The theoretical framework and research design, as well a preliminary analysis of the data, are provided in Chapter Three. The following chapter discusses the results of this analysis in depth. Chapter Five summarizes the findings, explores the themes that emerged from the investigation and discussions implications for practice and research. The final chapter concludes the dissertation by reviewing the work from a theoretical perspective and offering some new understandings of how marketing ESL programs may be understood. The glossary and appendices offer additional resources to support the main body of the study.

Chapter Two: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Introduction

This chapter takes as its inspiration the words of a servant leader, teacher and polyglot who declared, “Let those, therefore, who read such books as these do so with discernment, and take experiments set forth, or let them read the books with patience and digest them thoroughly before acting upon them” (Gandhi, 1948, p. 142).

The sections that follow provide a comprehensive review of the literature and research related to the question of marketing in post-secondary institutions, both in Canada and internationally. They further examine materials related to language program management and marketing. This chapter is divided into sections that outline (a) background information for the topic and a contextual overview, (b) literature on post-secondary marketing in a global context, (c) the moral questions surrounding the practice of marketing and advertising education, and (d) literature related to issues around language program management.

This review of the literature shows how English as a Second Language has evolved into its own discipline during the 20th century. It is appropriate to acknowledge that not only has it developed pedagogically; it has also evolved as a scholarly discipline. Today there are numerous journals dedicated specifically to English as a Second or Foreign language including, but not limited to: *ELT (English Language Teachers') Journal*; *English for Specific Purposes*; *TESOL Quarterly; A Journal for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages and of Standard English as a Second Dialect*; and the *TESL Canada Journal*. These journals, along with others encompassing applied linguistics, adult education and other disciplines, together offer a strong corpus of literature on a variety of topics related to ESL research. These include, and again, are not limited to issues of reading and literacy (Iwai, 2008; Krashen, 1997; Krashen & Yao, 2000), grammar (Krashen, 1999), performance, outcomes and predictors of success of students in ESL programs at various levels of education (Howard Research & Management Consulting Inc., 2006; Huang, 2006; Watt, Roessingh, & Bosetti, 1996), misconceptions about the actual abilities of ESL learners in a college environment (Ward, 1998) or expectations of programs (Watt & Taplin, 1997), to name just a few. The corpus of literature on the administration of ESL programs is significantly smaller. It is this smaller body of work with which this study concerned itself and which is explored in this chapter.

However, in addition to examining literature related to English as a Second or Foreign language, it is necessary to also consider issues related to educational administration and management, focusing on the question of marketing. It would be impossible to offer an exhaustive review of all the available literature. In particular, the issues of morality and ethics of incorporating business practices into public education at various levels is a sub-discipline of educational research in and of itself and is well beyond the scope of this study.

Some of the available literature discusses how and why marketing practices have been adopted by, and, as a result, have influenced educational administration and policy (Geiger, 2004; Moore, 2004; Vining, 2000). My preliminary research to date (Eaton, 2006b; Eaton & Goddard, 2007) points to a lag between the implementation of market practice in educational administration and the development of a deeply reflective philosophy of marketing in education in North America. It would appear that North American educators are not convinced that the educational system can maintain its traditional values, while marketing itself. On the other hand, Australia seems to have cultivated both its philosophy and practice of educational marketing simultaneously and, hence, has become a world leader in this emerging aspect of educational administration.

The global context

It is important to recognize that while the study focussed on Canada, similar trends can be identified in other countries. The literature review explores broader questions of the marketing of post-secondary programs not only in Canada, but other countries as well (principally the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia), thus situating the study within a global context.

Australia has emerged as a world leader when it comes to successfully marketing their educational programs (Clyne, Marginson, & Woock, 2000; de Zilwa, 2005; Geiger, 1988; Marginson, 1997, 1998, 2002a, 2002b; Vining, 2000). One practitioner in Australia, Linda Vining, established the Centre for Marketing Schools (http://www.marketingschools.net/index.htm), which not only publishes books and reports on marketing schools, but offers courses to public and private school administrators on how to market their schools effectively. Being the only centre of its kind in the world, its courses attract participants not only from Australia, but from various other counties as well.

Vining's work centres around marketing both public and private primary and secondary schools. Australians are also leaders in the marketing of post-secondary institutions. This can be traced back to the mid 1980s, at a time when Australian universities received 85% of their revenue from public sources and did not charge tuition. The government changed its policy, cutting funding to public institutions, while encouraging them to charge – and retain – full tuition from foreign students, effectively turning education into an industry. By 2002, the United States had seventeen times the population of Australia, but less than four times the number of foreign students (Marginson, 2002a). For the Australians, marketing their post-secondary institutions was a means to an end, that of continuing to provide a quality education to their own students, despite severe government cutbacks in funding.

In the England, marketing is part of a general change in how schools, as well as other public institutions, are run. In England "one of the most significant social and political developments in recent years has been the introduction of market principles into the provision of public services" (Naismith, 1994, p. 34). The debate seems to extend beyond education to other public services as well, but the issue of how business practices affect schools, school management and education in general has been studied in some depth (Clayton, 1994; Downes, 1994; Gardner, 1994; McLaughlin, 1994).

In the United States, much of the research around marketing of post-secondary institutions seems to focus either on partnerships with the corporate sector or how institutions brand themselves. The latter of these, branding, has become somewhat of a buzz word in post-secondary institutions in recent decades (Molnar, 2002; Moore, 2004; Patterson Lorenzetti, 2002).

Practices of marketing and "branding" institutions have led to another facet of the study of how business practices are applied to education, and that is issues around power, ethics and morality. This is an important aspect that merits further exploration.

The moral debate

In the U.K. and the United States, marketing has become part of educational management, but in contrast to Australia, strong debate around the morality of whether business practices should be incorporated into education has arisen.

Vining, an Australian, argues that the very definitions of marketing as they apply to education differ from those of business, likening it more to communications and public relations, rather than selling. She points out "the school uniform, designed for identification, is described by marketers as 'branding'. School colours and chants provide 'product differentiation'. The school's crest is a 'distinctive brand symbol'" (Vining, 2000, p. 13). The premise is that the idea of marketing in schools is not new, but the language we have borrowed from business to describe these practices is what is new. This may be more than semantics in that it represents a general shift that includes business activities in educational management.

Some agree that not only is it inevitable that business practices are being incorporated into education, but that this is a positive trend, as it raises standards and increases accountability (Clayton, 1994). However, not everyone would agree. The incorporation of business practices and philosophy into education is a contentious issue in certain circles and some researchers argue that it detracts from, and may even degrade, the notion of education as a public service (Apple, 2001; Oplatka, Hemsley-Brown, & Foskett, 2002).

Others view the matter from a postmodern perspective which posits that recent and current economic conditions have resulted in a decentralized, media-dominated society that in turn, has led to the incorporation of business practices (including marketing) into education. This is perceived to be simply a global reality and the question is not whether this is good or bad, but rather how do we work within this reality effectively (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Marginson, 2002a).

Still others claim that it is almost absurd to consider questions of efficiency, when management practices differ drastically between the public and private sectors and attempting to align them is nearly impossible. Lieberman and Harr (2003, p. 213), for example, posit that “in education, it is frequently impossible to conduct a realistic cost/benefit analysis because neither the costs nor the benefits can be assessed”. While this may be true, it reinforces the notion that education and business may have irreconcilable differences, at least philosophically speaking.

Hope may not come from educators who lament that traditional models of education and educational administration are changing, bur rather from those in another sector. There are researchers and professionals in the business sector who are committed to the values of corporate social responsibility and ethical leadership. For example, Thoms notes that “ethical integrity of leaders is defined as a measure of how they deal with morals, the principles of morality, and right and wrong conduct within the business environment in accordance with the rules or standards for right conduct or practice" (2008, p. 420). What Thoms states about business leaders could just as easily apply to a school principal, a teacher or a manager of a revenue-generating ESL program. It is worth asking whether questions of leadership, integrity, ethics and morals might transcend a job title or industrial sector. While there are clear differences between the sectors, one point of view might be that while education and its management may be changing, that does not necessarily mean its core values are in peril. While it may be reductionist and ineffective to superimpose ways of evaluating success used in business (e.g., a cost/benefit analysis) onto an educational context, it may be worth considering that polarized views of "us and them", "education is good and business is bad" may not reflect the kind of deeply thoughtful reflections encouraged in educational leadership. There are a variety of points of view. Considering the benefits of all of them may lead to deeper understandings and hope, rather than despair and hopelessness.

Regardless of the philosophical points of view that may be considered and debated, what is clear on the level of practice is that marketing is just one of a variety of business practices that are being incorporated into educational administration. This study will examine both facets of this situation – the practice of marketing in education and the philosophical notions around it.

The paradigm problem: Education vs. business – Where does ESL fit?

Some ethical and moral issues around incorporating business practices into education have been highlighted. As previously mentioned, an in-depth investigation of this would require another study entirely.

Both Vining (2000) and Moore (2004) re-frame the marketing of schools and education in a gentler, more positive light, laying professionalism and integrity as the foundation for both philosophy and practice. They do what other marketers working in the educational sector who clamor for their "share of the market" fail to do. They remind us never to lose sight of the student in the marketing process. When professionals working in education refer to parents and faculty as "consumers", saying that the school must "sell" its philosophy (Spring, 2003, p. 8), this may not be an effective or helpful way to express the idea of promoting educational programs. Students and faculty do not "consume" a school and philosophy can not be sold.

Contrast Patterson Lorenzetti's (2002) comments about branding a university with Moore's (2004). The former claims that "students develop collegiate brand loyalty based on memories of football games, parties, and late night discussions in the dorm, not necessarily from the breadth, depth or quality of education available" (Patterson Lorenzetti, 2002, p. 1). Moore argues that:

> The goal of any branding or integrated marketing program in academe is to help stakeholders – both current and prospective – understand the real merits of the institution and the value it holds for them. We're asking prospective students to invest four or more years of their lives with us – and have their identity forever intertwined with ours.
>
> We're asking the parents of those students to entrust their kids to us – not to mention making what might be the second most expensive investment their family will ever make.

> We're asking alumni – even after they're distanced by hundreds of miles or a handful of decades – to keep us in their hearts, minds, and estate plans. We're asking donors to recognize their own interests in our aspirations, their passion in our programs. (2004, p. 61)

There is significant difference in these two points of view. Patterson Lorenzetti offers the reader a superficial view of branding at best. While it is true that social life and discussions with peers are part of the post-secondary experience, to say that students will put this above their education is perhaps somewhat short-sighted. In Canada, where *MacLean's* news magazine puts out an annual issue ranking universities, the students have the opportunity to rank their in institutions. In 2004, "12,334 recent graduates delivered a report card on their university experience" ("2004 Overall rankings chart: Primarily undergraduate," 2004). In the section called "Degrees of satisfaction" ("Degrees of satisfaction," 2004), respondents were asked to answer the question, "Thinking back on your university experience, was it of significant benefit to your life today?" Students from nine program areas responded, including sciences, arts, engineering and humanities. Responses varied from one program to another, but a minimum of 69% and a maximum of 84% answered yes.

Moore's (2004) views are much more thoughtful, expanding the frame of reference from a snapshot of a student in an isolated moment in time (such as a football game) to a larger, community sphere that includes family and a longer time span, that stretches as far as an alumni's passing. He recognized the financial strain that post-secondary education places on the individual and the family, and the emotional connection of the student with the institution. In other words, Moore's insight shows us that a student's identity is, in part, constructed by the institution that he or she attends. The identity of the individual and the identity of the institution become "intertwined". This thoughtful, more comprehensive view offers a framework for understanding branding that is not only more humanistic, but also accurate.

These examples have been highlighted because marketing and by extension, branding, are activities that have taken on a greater role in university and school administration, both at the policy and practical levels. Vining points out that "marketing concepts and practices are being applied at a rapid pace in schools. It is generally believed that as the role matures, the profession and its functions will be more clearly defined, better accepted and more uniformly applied in schools" (2000, p. 7).

Vining wrote those words almost a decade ago. The role of marketing in educational institutions has matured in some senses, in that institutions are becoming more sophisticated with the gadgets they give away to students, and enrollment management tools are being used on a more widespread basis. But these are, in a sense, superficial activities when compared to the more deeply rooted issues of the philosophies, ethics and morals surrounding education. What lags behind the business practice in the educational system is philosophy. Public educators – including those at the post secondary level - do not yet passionately embrace the idea that business and education can partner. They are not convinced that the educational system can maintain its traditional values of cultivating minds (and therefore, human beings), of creating knowledge and pursuing new ways of understanding in an unbiased environment, if that environment includes a business sector identity. Adopting business practices does not mean forsaking our values, as Moore points out. We can, in fact, embrace the new without entirely throwing away the traditional.

Whether it is at an institutional level, which seems to be the case at post-secondary institutions in Canada and the U.S., or at a national level, such as that introduced in Australia, business and education are merging and marketing practice is a growing aspect of post-secondary educational administration.

Historical context: The evolution of ESL

Now that the overall context of marketing at post-secondary institutions has been considered and it has been established that business practices are being employed institution-wide and on a global level, the focus will be narrowed to language programs. Before reviewing the literature on current research relating to ESL programs, it is important to first understand how these programs came into existence, as their evolution is intertwined with factors such as political and economic world events, as well as how they grew into the “cash cows” referred to by Eskey (1997, p. 25) and Kaplan (1997, p. 7).

Kaplan (1997) explains that universities began teaching languages in medieval times. Only classical languages (Latin, Greek, Sanskrit and Hebrew) were taught and the point of learning the language was to be able to read and understand sacred texts. He notes that “enrolment was restricted to the most able students” (Kaplan, 1997, pp. 4-5). Since these were dead languages (meaning that no living speakers of the languages existed) the endeavour was purely intellectual and was not meant to serve any communicative purpose.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, the teaching of modern languages was introduced. The teaching methods that had been used for centuries to teach classical languages were simply transferred over to modern languages. The emphasis continued to be on grammar, reading and writing (Kaplan, 1997). Language learning was still purely a scholarly activity, limited to the elite who received formal university education. This continued into the 20th century, until the mid-1940s, when “a new language teaching methodology and a different underlying linguistic model” (Kaplan, 1997, p. 7) were developed. He notes (p. 7) that:

> During the years of World War II, Charles C. Fries and his colleagues at the University of Michigan had devised a methodology and a linguistic model for teaching critical foreign languages to military personnel. This work constituted the basis of instruction in United States military language institutes. In these institutes, motivation was very high because failure often meant assignment to combat duty.

This marked a shift in how languages were taught and learned, as the focus was no longer solely on reading and writing for the purposes of understanding written texts, but expanded to include listening and speaking for the purposes of communicating with living speakers of the language (or at least understanding them).

In the early part of the 21st century, the U.S. military maintains a strong interest in language training, as evidenced by an announcement on May 9, 2007 that the U.S.

Military sought to establish a bank of over 1000 volunteers, with a collective demonstrated competence in over 150 languages. The three year pilot project is creating a "civilian language corps" to be called upon during times of war and national emergency. ("Department of Defense creating foreign-language corps," 2007; "Pentagon creating civilian language corps to help in times of war, emergencies," 2007).

At the same time the U.S. Defense Department announced that it was awarding "four grants totalling $2 million to four U.S. universities to teach cadets and midshipmen foreign languages including Arabic, Russian, Pashto, Chinese, Hindi and Farsi. The universities slated to receive the grants are Indiana University, San Diego State University, the University of Mississippi and the University of Texas at Austin" (Jelinek, 2007, para. 6). These examples show that language learning in universities over the past 50 years or so has gone beyond a purely intellectual or scholarly pursuit to one that is also influenced by political, military and economic forces.

Concurrent with this fundamental shift and interest in foreign language learning, English as a second language gained importance and interest, with ESL programs of various types starting in the U.S. in the 1940s (Pennington & Xiao, 1990). One particularly notable example from that decade is that the first intensive English program was established in the United States at the University of Michigan's English Language Institute in 1945 (Eskey, 1997), the same university where Charles C. Fries was developing the audio-lingual method of foreign language teaching around the same time. ESL teaching began to emerge as a profession in the same decade (Fox, 1988), since teachers were being hired specifically to teach the English language to foreign students, rather than to teach the language or literature to native speakers.

In the 1950s and 1960s other universities in the U.S. soon joined the trend of opening ESL programs, but as Kaplan (1997, p. 4) observes, they did so “without any forward planning, without any clear idea why such programs should exist”. He goes on to explain that “because there was no forward plan in establishing [ESL programs], they were not clearly defined in relationship to other academic units with the university. Consequently, no definitive placement for [ESL programs] exists within the university framework” (Kaplan, 1997, p. 6). This may explain, in part at least, why ESL programs are housed in a variety of units across campuses today and why their programming, operations and budgetary structures vary widely from one institution to another.

It was about a decade or two after ESL programs were first established on most campuses that there was a boom in their number across the U.S., with many more being established in the 1970s. By that time, they were no longer viewed simply as a way of teaching foreign students English, but also as a way of generating revenue for the university. As Eskey (1997, p. 25) notes, “a great many new (ESL programs) were established in the 1970s”, adding that this led to the “widespread perception, probably accurate at the time, that such programs were sure-fire money makers” (p. 25). This marks a shift in how language programs were viewed within the institution, as they were no longer purely a scholarly pursuit, reserved for the most academically inclined students.

About the same time, we can observe how global market forces come into play when we examine where students came from in order to take ESL courses. “In any given year, larger numbers come from certain parts of the world (the Middle East in the 1970s, the Far East in the 1990s), mainly as a consequence of economic and political factors" (Eskey, 1997, p. 22). One key point here is that the 1970s were a critical decade for ESL programs because three things happened at the same time: the number of programs increased dramatically; the programs began to be viewed as mechanisms to generate revenue for the institution; and, it became evident that students from particular regions populate these courses, according to political and economic conditions.

After the boom in the 1970s, enrolments levelled off in the 1980s and competition increased (Eskey, 1997). Possibly due to this increase, "the late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed a rise in visibility for workplace instructional programs to improve workers' basic skills and English language proficiency" (Burt, 1995, p. 2). Perhaps this was, in part, due to the fact that while enrolments for fee-paying foreign students may have levelled off, the numbers of immigrants, at least in North America, continued to swell, increasing the need for English language skills generally. Nolan (2001, p. 3) points out that "the ESL population in British Columbia has increased some 334% from 1986 to 1995". This would seem to indicate that while the university market for ESL courses may have reached a saturation point at some time in the 1980s or 1990s, the need for English language skills among people of varying levels of education and skill continued to increase.

The mid- to late -1990s saw another shift in the evolution of ESL programs, as it was an age of fiscal restraints and changes in the global economy. From an institutional point of view:

> in the 1980s and early 1990s … the willingness of universities and colleges to launch such programs and to make *front-end investments* [declined and] the fiscal restraints and budgetary cutbacks at the same institutions in the mid 1990s have been the motivation for a shifting of risk away from the institutional parent to the program itself. (Staczek, 1997, p. 220) [Emphasis in original.]

Institutions began withdrawing support from programs, or making support conditional on enrolments. This placed many programs in a precarious position in the late 1990s when registrations from the previously lucrative markets of Japan and Korea plummeted, due to economic decline in those countries (Eaton, 2004b), creating additional pressures on program administrators. Heffernan and Poole (2005, p. 226) also note that “limiting factors may include the effects of wars and terrorism, regional or global economic recession, and policy shifts in countries such as China”. Hence, what happens in the world affects language program enrolments.

This history of how ESL programs evolved provides a context for understanding how they came to be viewed as revenue-generators for their parent institutions.

ESL outside of the academy

While this study is delimited to Canadian universities, it is important to keep in mind that the field of ESL is much broader, extending to social services, public schools and other institutions concerned with improving the language abilities of non-native speakers. Cumming’s 1991 study of almost 1000 ESL programs in British Columbia, Canada, shows a great variety in those who provide courses:

> Of the total 990 ESL programs offered in B.C. in January 1991, 45% were provided by community colleges and university extension programs, 11% were provided by immigrant serving agencies, 12% were provided by private businesses, and the remaining proportion (less than 1%) were provided by distance education in people's homes or in specific workplaces. (Cumming, 1991, p. xii)

Although Cumming's study is representative of only one Canadian province, it offers us an idea of the breakdown of the types of providers for ESL programs. Burt (1995) notes similar findings, adding private consultants, commercial job-training providers and union consortia to the list, especially for courses taught in the work place.

Traditionally, language programs have had social justice ambitions, shared with other programs that assist immigrants to integrate into their new communities. An Australian government report produced by Quay Connection (2000), notes the tension between the social justice objectives of such programs and the commercial realities of competing for students who pay for courses. "The commercial imperative to 'get bums on seats' and generate a certain number of student contact hours seems at odds with social objectives and is perceived as a frustrating constraint on the 'real' work of connecting people with their community through learning" (Quay-Connection, 2000, p. 7). Social justice influences are more prominent in immigrant-serving programs. When funds are cut to such ESL programs, it is seen as blocking immigrants from succeeding in the new country. This can result in outcry and even public protest (See "Demonstrating for ESOL: Out to stop language cuts," 2007).

It has been noted that one difference between university ESL courses and immigrant-serving programs is revenue generation. As Kaplan (1997) states, ESL programs are, perhaps more so than most traditional academic units, at the mercy of market forces. In addition, even though ESL programs at universities may have the mandate to generate revenue, they are also not devoid of those goals of public post-secondary education that focus on sharing knowledge and enriching the lives of those they serve. ESL programs, revenue-generating or not, still endeavour to support students' learning, helping them adapt to new cultures and experiences, broadening their minds and challenging them to improve themselves.

Negotiating the purpose of the ESL program on campus is a major philosophical issue with which administrators and instructors grapple. The tension created by the desire to enrich students' lives, help them adjust to life in a new country and ensure their well being, is at odds with the mandate to generate revenue. It is a tension that is unlikely to disappear soon.

Types of ESL programs offered in post-secondary institutions

The introduction of this study offered some basic definitions of the main types of ESL programs offered at many post-secondary institutions. While the definitions of ESL, EAP and ESP are essential to understanding the overall context, the reality is more complex. Impey and Underhill (1994, p. 38) note that types of university ESL courses might include:

- Year-round English – full-time and part-time
- Vacation courses – adult residential / non-residential
- Vacation courses – junior (12-18) residential / non-residential

- Courses for children (under 12)
- Executive / very intensive and one-to-one courses
- Specific courses (ESP) – business, technical, academic English, etc.;
- Courses for teachers.

Other programs that can be added are English for Academic Purposes courses as previously mentioned in the introduction, as well as any others that might be offered on campus.

This range of programming offers a variety of challenges to language program administrators who are expected to adapt both their curriculum and marketing strategies for the array of groups and individuals who take part in these courses. By examining the matter from that perspective, a number of possible audiences or target markets can be identified: students who apply directly to programs; students who apply through educational agents; companies and government organizations; chambers of commerce; teachers; and parents (Impey & Underhill, 1994, p. 41).

In the case of English language programs, the market often encompasses the end-user (the student), as well as other decision-makers in the process, such as the parent who pays for the course, or an agent who might recommend one program over another, and guide student and parental choices in a particular direction. This offers a variety of challenges for researchers. It becomes difficult to identify who the decision makers are, how they might be influenced, what might constitute valid data when trying to establish who pays for courses and why they have chosen a particular course. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon language program administrators who wish to market their courses internationally to do just that. They must not only be cognizant of all the groups involved in the decision-making process, but also try to gather market research data to guide their marketing efforts (Eaton, 2005a).

Profile of the ESL administrator

In addition to the wide variety of courses offered, the administrative structures at post-secondary institutions also vary widely. ESL programs are housed within a wide variety of units, as noted by Kaplan (1997, p. 6): English and Speech departments; Departments of foreign languages; student personnel services; Deans of Students offices; Departments of Linguistics; Departments of Education and Continuing Education. This adds an additional layer of complexity to the issue, as it adds an additional variable into the equation of what it means to be an ESL program on a post-secondary campus.

In addition to a wide range of programming and an array of administrative and organizational possibilities, the complexity is increased when the types of instructional staff are considered. Eskey (1997, p. 23) points out that there are two types of faculty, or perhaps more precisely, teaching staff, who can be identified in ESL programs. There are the tenure-track faculty who generally hold PhDs, do research and teach graduate level classes in TESL, but do not teach foreign students in the ESL program. To offer an example of this, at the University of Calgary, the faculty who hold tenured or tenure-track positions in the TESL specialization of the Graduate Division of Educational Research do not teach in the EAP program, which is also housed in the Faculty of Education. Faculty of the TESL specialization focus on research and working with graduate students in TESL. In general, those who hold PhDs work primarily with graduate students and are less marginalized than those who teach the ESL students, likely due to the fact that they are tenure-track. Such faculty are more likely report to a division chair or department head, rather than ESL program managers.

In contrast there are the non-tenure track full- or part-time ESL faculty who often hold Masters degrees, but do little or no research. An example of this would be the teaching faculty of the EAP program at the University of Calgary. In my interviews with the University of Calgary program managers, questions about staffing were not included in order to limit the study to marketing, however, it is worth noting that there has been research done on this topic which suggests that those who teach in ESL programs have little impact on policy making in their programs (Eskey, 1997).

A national survey conducted in the United States by Pennington and Xiao (1990, p. 1) shows that compared with other academic administrators, the ESL directors “are younger, less experienced, more likely to be female, less likely to hold a professional rank, less likely to be tenured, less likely to have been appointed from inside the department or program, and with less time available for teaching or research”. This synopsis touches on key points related to the nature of the language program administrator’s job and in particular, how it differs from that of an academic department head.

One trait common in the profession is that “typical language program personnel are committed to helping others” (Rowe-Henry, 1997, p. 82). While this may be true of faculty in a variety of disciplines, ESL faculty differ from those in other disciplines and experience additional stress “from the desire to support students who are struggling to adjust to a new environment and to decipher an unfamiliar educational system" (Soppelsa, 1997, p. 135). This may be, in part, because both ESL administrators and faculty "have professional expertise in international education and language teaching, and many have had international experience themselves" (Rawley, 1997, p. 93), making them both compassionate and sympathetic to the situation of their students because they have lived abroad themselves, survived culture shock and struggled with a foreign language.

But this compassion does not prepare them for the management tasks of their positions. Pennington and Xiao (1990) are not alone in pointing out that one trait common to the majority of language program administrators is lack of training and experience. Kaplan (1997) echoes the same ideas in his work and Nolan (2001, p. 3) cites empirical research by Hussein that examines future administrators, summarizing that "In a survey of 100 graduate programs …. future teachers of ESL were seen to have no administrative training (78%), while the majority of program directors (62%) declared that they had been poorly prepared to administer an ESL program (Hussein, 1995)". Lack of training for the position was a concern as far back as almost two decades and continues to be a concern today.

The nature and scope of the University of Calgary ESL managers role(s)

Although this study focuses on the marketing and recruiting aspects of ESL programs that are designed to generate revenue, these are not the only tasks with which directors of these programs are charged. It is important to understand this aspect of the work within a context which includes all of the other managerial and administrative tasks included in the director's position. In this section the responsibilities of three ESL program managers, all at the University of Calgary, will be discussed.

Christison and Stoller (1997a, p. vii) point out that "the job of the language program administrator is multifaceted, requiring a wide range of skills, knowledge, and expertise". The research shows that the range of skills and depth of knowledge necessary to do the job effectively are enormous. Kaplan (1997, p. 10) claims that tasks fall into six broad categories: academic, administrative, institutional, political, fiscal and managerial. While this may offer some perspective on the scope of the administrator's job, categorizing tasks such as marketing into only one grouping, such as fiscal, managerial or administrative, might be difficult.

A less cumbersome way to divide tasks is proposed by Pennington and Xiao (1990) and Davidson and Tesh (1997) who applied Katz's (1974) work on the essential skills of managers, adapting them to language program administers. Katz divides managerial tasks into three main categories: technical, human and conceptual.

The conceptual tasks include such things as strategic planning, which requires "a commitment of time and resources" (Klinghammer, 1997, pp. 62-63), both of which are often limited. As Kaplan (1997, p. 4) observes, lack of forward planning is a major challenge for program directors and has been for decades. Planning becomes a central issue when enrolments fluctuate due to external factors, and yet there is an expectation of revenue generation and the future of the program depends on enrolments.

Another task, which might be considered to include both conceptual and human aspects is consultative or participatory decision making, which requires a significant investment of time, and is particularly helpful in the language program environment (Soppelsa, 1997, p. 126). Participatory decision making may help staff and faculty to feel included and increase their morale.

The human tasks associated with language program administration are extensive. In addition to staffing and personnel management, there are numerous outreach and networking tasks that are involved. Outreach activities for students (such as counselling on immigration, housing, etc.) are included here, as well as outreach to other academic departments on campus and the greater community (Murdock, 1997, p. 161).

According to Murdock, language program administrators must cultivate good relations with no less than 18 different bodies on campus: the public affairs office, the admissions office, the athletics department, campus information centres (such as students' union information desks), the IT department, the business/fees office, the counselling centre, food services (this includes educating them about the needs of international students), the fitness facilities, the grants and development office, the student health centre, the on-campus housing office, library personnel, the registrar's office, campus media, the campus testing centre, alumni office and study abroad office.

In addition, Murdock adds that the language program administrator needs to do outreach to local businesses and agencies such as the "Social Security office, police departments, hospitals, the driver's license office, local banks, doctors' offices, insurance companies, car dealerships, and other local businesses that regularly receive ESL program students as customers" (Murdock, 1997, p. 171). Such extensive networking requires the administrator to develop and maintain excellent contacts on a continuous basis. This alone requires a great deal of time and effort. In addition to managing staff, dealing with students, writing grant proposals and negotiating with overseas partners, we begin to see the scope of conceptual and human tasks alone.

Technical tasks might include such things as overseeing computer labs and associated software. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the program administrator to ensure that data on servers are managed properly and to make choices about "office automation and instructional technology" (Witbeck & Healey, 1997, p. 256). Choosing software, textbooks and developing the curricula for various programs in conjunction with the faculty, are other technical aspects of the job.

Jenks (1997, p. 116) links the human task of outreach with the technical task of promoting when he says that the language program director "must initiate and establish direct, personal contact with (a) campus media relations personnel, (b) local and campus newspaper editors, (c) members of the local chamber of commerce, and (d) student affairs administrators. After personal contacts have been made, weekly or monthly news releases prepared by the [program] staff must be sent to each." These are excellent promotional activities, but are less pressing than a crashed server or a lost shipment of textbooks, and as a result, they may not get done.

Pennington and Xiao (1990) posit that marketing falls under the technical category of management skills. However it is worth adding that by and large, language program administrators are so overwhelmed with human and conceptual tasks, as well as critical technical ones, that marketing and recruitment are often avoided, due to lack of time and training, or else regarded as a burden, on top of more pressing matters. These additional tasks warrant further exploration.

Budgets and funding

The financial operations of a language program consume much of an administrator's time. Staczek (1997, p. 219) points out that "for the language program administrator, resources are key to successful program development and delivery". Managing those often limited resources is of primary concern. One reason is that "nowadays, an ESL program needs to meet its direct costs or to make a 'return to overhead.' Generally, a program that operates at a loss and requires subsidization is imperilled" (Pennington & Xiao, 1990, p. 2). Hence, there is an ever-present, though often unvoiced danger of programs or staff being cut, or a program being closed, if it is not fiscally robust.

In addition to overseeing the budget, administrators are also concerned with requesting funds for expansion of programs. While Jenks (1997, p. 110) asserts that "it is incumbent upon the [ESL] administrator to submit well-documented requests for funding to university capital acquisitions offices on a regular basis", this is not the only way in which they may seek funds. Mickelson (1997) emphasizes the importance of applying for grants. He notes that many language program administrators do not apply for grants because they are unaware of the benefits and are untrained, too inexperienced or too intimidated to write the proposals, but it can be worthwhile:

> Grants and projects are apt to increase the visibility of language programs because they often attract the attention of campus and community publications, television,

> and radio. This publicity is generally considered highly positive by senior administrators and funding agencies, especially if the grant is deemed financially productive or politically attractive. (Mickelson, 1997, p. 279)

Hence, grant writing is both a way of increasing funding, as well as boosting a program's profile on campus. So, the benefits of applying for and receiving grants are numerous. The challenges for the language program administrator are adding this task to an already extensive list of duties, developing the skills to write proposals and finding enough time to write and revise the proposals. In a job with many immediate demands, challenges such as these are overwhelming, resulting in a crisis management approach to administration (Klinghammer, 1997, p. 62).

Programming and services

The theme of culture shock faced by ESL students is discussed in the work of Rowe-Henry (1997, p. 84) who posits that "the very process of second language learning places students in high-stress situations, thus creating the potential for crises to develop". Thus the need for support services is critical in ESL programs. It is incumbent upon the administrator to ensure such services are provided (Fox, 1988). This is another way that ESL programs differ substantially from degree programs. Academic department heads do not generally have the responsibility of providing such services which, as Fox notes, can include everything from providing information on weather conditions, housing availability, health care and insurance, to immigration regulations and procedures for obtaining a visa.

Developing agent relationships and partnerships

Most language programs deal with foreign educational agents who act on behalf of individual registrants or coordinate group bookings for the school. In addition, many programs also work together with the institution to provide training for groups from foreign universities with whom they have institutional linkages. These programs can be both financially lucrative and intensely demanding, as there is pressure to ensure that relations with the partner are smooth and productive, so the alliance continues.

Five main factors affecting the success of such relationships are building trust; face-to-face meetings and personal contact; having a specified, consistent, long-term contact person; excellent communication between partners; and the support of the senior administration on both sides (Heffernan & Poole, 2005; Impey & Underhill, 1994).

Personal meetings require a significant investment of time and money, since hosting international visitors often requires meetings outside regular business hours and traveling to the partner’s country can mean expensive airline tickets and hotel bills.

However, without personal contact, such partnerships are unlikely to be sustained over the long term. Having a designated key contact helps foster an on-going relationship, allowing trust to build and communications to develop. This requires time and patience, as well as cross-cultural understanding.

Although having a signed memorandum of understanding may help facilitate formal relations, having sincere support of senior administrators is key to ensuring the longevity of the partnership. Without this, funding may cease, diminishing the likelihood of the success of the partnership. The key issue for the administrator charged with the task of developing a language program partnership is securing sufficient resources (i.e., funding and time) and the support of his or her own institution, to ensure success over the long term.

Time management and expectations

The examples above show the extent of responsibilities of the language program administrators. The demands on time are extensive and the need to juggle a variety of levels of tasks, from strategic planning to crashed computer servers is part of the job. Rowe-Henry (1997, p. 78) presents a snapshot of a typical day: “Within any single working day, the language program administrator may sign 10 to 20 documents, have four or five meetings, teach a class or two, and write a proposal to bring in a special group of students”.

What Rowe-Henry demonstrates, Christion and Stoller (1997b, p. 235) echo when they state: “the job of a language program administrator is complex, making time management a formidable challenge”. They go on to say that “it is not uncommon … for language program administrators to receive urgent requests for information from senior-level administrators, sponsoring agencies, colleagues, faculty, and staff that require a change in one’s schedule and priorities” (p. 242). This constant shuffling leaves little time for planning, networking, conducting market research or developing a marketing strategy.

Being overwhelmed and overstretched has a direct impact on how well a program administrator can market the program. “There is an understandable fear about marketing on already stretched staff resources. Most individuals already feel that they try to do too much – and they probably do” (Quay-Connection, 2000, p. 14).

Such juggling of tasks is to be expected in any management position at times. The research shows however, that it becomes a way of life for language program administrators who “often get bogged down in the minutiae of daily operations, such as meetings, correspondence, e-mail, personnel and student issues, and faculty and staff supervision” (Klinghammer, 1997, p. 62). This “can result in a reactive, emergency-room culture characterized by crisis management” (Klinghammer, 1997, p. 62). This idea is echoed in the work of Rowe Henry (1997, p. 78) who observes that “language program administrators often feel overwhelmed with the number, complexity, and types of decisions awaiting them” and as a result “operate by perpetual crisis management” . It is fair to say that many ESL program administrators often work in a reactive, rather than a proactive or reflective manner. One participant of this study, Ornelle, commented that finding time for marketing was one of his biggest challenges, noting that “having the time to build up your research tools and then having the time to actually implement them and analyze them. That is probably the most difficult part, I think, of what we do”.

The research in the field points not only to a lack of time, but also lack of training, a topic which will be explored in greater depth throughout this study:

> Some providers [of ESL] have developed an in depth understanding of their markets and work to sophisticated marketing strategies and plans. Others understand marketing as advertising and promotion only. Some see marketing as outside their territory, someone else’s responsibility, someone else’s skill. There is a significant lack of skill in needs assessment, situation analysis, and customer

> research – all too often demand is identified either through intuition or by who walks in the door. (Quay-Connection, 2000, p. 6)

The key point made in the literature with regards to marketing is that administrators do not have the time, resources or training to adequately reflect upon market research data, to constantly research international political and economic circumstances that may affect enrolment trends, and to strategically plan for the short, medium and longer terms. As a result their marketing efforts are at best haphazard, and often not as effective as they could be, given that programs are expected to grow on a constant basis and to continue to generate revenue. It is not surprising that sometimes programs fail or are shut down by upper administration, as will be shown later in this study, and many others struggle to survive.

Human resources management

The day-to-day realities of the ESL director's job require that a good deal of time and effort be spent on managing their staff and faculty. Impey and Underhill (1994) and Eaton (2005a) note that front line staff are as important as managers because they are the first point of contact for most students. This idea is echoed by Geddes and Marks (1997, p. 199) who declare that "ultimately, the success of any language program is determined by the skills and commitment of its administrative, instructional, and support staff". Labour concerns take up energy and distract from student learning (Fullan, 2006, p. 82), so ensuring that personnel are managed, challenged and supported is an important aspect of the language program administrator's job. Some key areas of concern are staff qualifications and training; working conditions and morale; burnout, job security and turnover; and ethical issues around staffing. Each of these will be explored individually in the sections that follow.

Working conditions and perceptions of ESL faculty

The working conditions of those who teach in ESL programs are often in disaccord with other faculty. Carkin (1997, p. 51) notes that ESL faculty are seen as living neither in the ESL world, nor in the academic one.

One problem is “the pervasive belief that anyone who can speak a language can teach it” (Eskey, 1997, p. 23), making the job of teaching the language to foreign students seem somehow less valuable than teaching them literature or any other academic subject. Eskey’s comment points towards a general lack of understanding of the ESL teaching profession and marginalization of ESL programs on a university campus. ESL faculty may be perceived as less than their colleagues who teach other subject areas. This is a recurring theme throughout the literature and serves as an important backdrop to the sections that follow. Soppelsa (1997, p. 135) paints a grim picture of the working conditions of ESL teachers:

> Some ESL teachers must endure working conditions that take a large toll on their energy and commitment to the field. Many are underpaid, and many work at more than one job to make ends meet. They are called on to contribute to more than one program and to teach a variety of courses to possibly large numbers of students. Burnout is nearly inevitable under such conditions.

In addition, Carkin (1997, p. 52) notes that those who work outside the program are unaware of the stress resulting from long-term intensive programs, precisely because they do not teach as many hours or deal with the same issues outside of class, such as helping students with visa issues, culture shock or other matters unique to international students. While clearly the position of the ESL teacher is focused on classroom work rather than research, it also includes a strong service component, which is often not recognized.

Not only is the service component not recognized, but ESL faculty are "perceived as somehow less than regular faculty, as engaged in less academic activities, as delivering work that does not deserve academic credit, and as not deserving of normal faculty status" (Kaplan, 1997, p. 9). It has been argued (Fox, 1988; Staczek, 1997) that remuneration should be commensurate with that of other faculty (e.g., those in English literature, foreign languages and TESL), but this is not always the case as ESL instructors are often "not regarded as having any special expertise" (Eskey, 1997, p. 23) and therefore they may not be perceived as equals. However, as Jenks (1997, p. 114) points out, "The quest for legitimacy is eased greatly if [ESL] administrators and faculty are accorded rank and salaries equal to those of other program administrators and faculty members". Adequate compensation may ease this inherent tension of the position, brought on by the many duties and hours worked and may assist in legitimizing the status of those who teach in ESL programs.

This view of faculty as being inferior to their peers is symptomatic of the marginalization of ESL programs at post-secondary institutions in general, which is discussed in the next section. These perceptions of faculty create difficulties for program administrators who have the "responsibility to advocate for adequate salaries, benefits, and good working conditions for their faculty" (Soppelsa, 1997, p. 135). This may be especially difficult if the job security of the person advocating, the administrator, is also uncertain. Rowe Henry (1997, p. 85) calls our attention to the fact that many language program managers themselves "may not have job security if, for example, they are not tenure eligible".

Perhaps one reason administrators lack status equality among their non-ESL peers is because of "the perception that the activities of the [language program administrator] involve little or no expertise" (Dvorak, 1986, p. 218). The job is often undervalued and it has been said that "the ESL program director is not perceived as a peer among departmental chairs, but rather enjoys a kind of second-class citizenship" (Kaplan, 1997, p. 8). This has a negative effect on how administrators view themselves. A study conducted by Rawley (1997, p. 101) concluded that the directors included in the study "feel that they operate from positions of powerlessness, preventing them from being as effective as they might be". Yet some say that the language program administrator job is more like that of a dean than a department head, because of the scope of responsibilities (Christison & Stoller, 1997b). It is from this position of relative weakness then that the language program administrator advocates both for himself or herself, as well as for the teaching staff.

Job security

Advocating for oneself and one's faculty includes not only working conditions such as salary, permanent positions, and space, but also job security. The number of teaching jobs is often directly related to student enrolments (Mickelson, 1997; Staczek,

1997) and “a reduction in language program staff is often due to a decline in enrolment or organizationally mandated budget cuts” (Geddes & Marks, 1997, p. 212). Soppelsa (1997, p. 135) adds that:

> Many ESL programs at university and college levels are self-supporting, and they may teeter on the brink of insolvency from time to time. Administrators in such situations may be forced into awarding lower salaries than they would prefer or to reducing numbers of faculty at times in which student enrolments and resulting program income are low.

She questions the ethics of such practices, pleading that they should be avoided. While many academic departments hire part-time teaching staff according to student numbers, it might be difficult to identify any other unit on campus that is responsible for recruiting students through marketing, then providing them with support and services from the time they apply to the program (e.g., visas, airport pick-up, etc.), through to the time they finish the program (counselling, housing, academic support, etc).

Motivation, burnout and turnover

Fullan’s (2006) comments about students may also be applied to ESL directors who find themselves marginalized among their peers, “When inequality is high, anxiety and insecurity take their toll even if one is not aware of them” (p. 5). In addition to advocating for program staff and faculty, the administrator must ensure there is as little burnout and turnover as possible, and create a good working environment. Administrators “need to nurture stability, professional working conditions, and a sense of belonging or permanence, whenever possible” (Stoller, 1997, p. 37). When teachers feel undervalued or disrespected they are not motivated to do their best work and therefore, continuity, longevity and commitment in the way a program is managed are critical to its success (Fullan, 2006; Nolan, 2001; Rawley, 1997). "Since the morale of the faculty is important to the success of the program, the administrator must make sure that the ESL faculty are treated not as second class citizens, as they are in some institutions, but as professionals" (Fox, 1988, p. 4). It is incumbent upon the administrator to cultivate an environment where faculty and staff feel valued and motivated, regardless of the possible impermanence of their positions.

Additional challenges faced by ESL program managers

In addition to day-to-day management tasks that are the responsibility of the language program administrator, there are other issues that, while they may seem minor, are still significant because they are systemic, a recurring theme in the literature and among language programs themselves.

Space and facilities

Language programs, because they are not necessarily seen as academic in nature, do not always have a prominent place on campus. While it would be logical for ESL programs to be physically positioned in places that are easily accessible by foreign students who struggle with the language, "many … programs are housed in temporary bungalows, in basements, or on the periphery of our campuses" (Stoller, 1997, p. 40). This assertion is echoed more recently by Quay Connection (2000, p. 14) whose research shows that "Many providers say their facilities are too run down, too small, impermanent, unattractive." This speaks to the question of the legitimacy of such programs, which is discussed later on. For now it is enough to note that the physical placement of such programs on a campus is one indicator of how they are viewed by administration (Stoller, 1997). Program managers must often advocate for improved space and facilities for their programs.

Proving success

It can be difficult to define what we mean by a thriving ESL program. What counts as success in an ESL program? Is a program flourishing when enrolments increase? When students score better on standardized tests such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)? Or is it when a high percentage of students who finish the program gain admission into degree programs? ESL programs differ from specializations or majors in degree programs in that their purpose is different. “Traditional programs do not regard training that leads to eventual success as their primary mission; they teach the content of their disciplines and consider the acquisition of that content to be the end of education in those disciplines, not, like language training, merely a preliminary means to that end” (Eskey, 1997, p. 28). The purpose of an ESL program is to acquire language skills, but the acquisition of *knowledge*, rather than *skills*, may be a more apt way to describe most academic programs.

In addition to these differences, it cannot be overlooked that ESL programs are populated by international students, many of whom must deal with the various aspects of culture shock, as they face life in a new country at the same time as they undertake what is likely their first experience in a post-secondary environment. (For a definition of culture shock, see Storti, 1990.) The personal challenges that students must overcome to have a successful ESL experience are numerous. Sion and Romano (2002, p. 16) ask us to consider that "there are aspects of the program that are not measurable: for example, how much more tolerant, understanding, and less ethnocentric are these young people after the course of study than they were before". Certainly tolerance and understanding are part of a successful study abroad experience, but such qualitative results are both difficult to monitor and equally difficult to use as criteria for success in programs for which one purpose is to generate revenue.

Marketing, recruiting and promoting of language programs

It can be seen that marketing, recruiting and promoting are but one aspect of the language program administrator's job. However, historically they have not been considered an essential facet of ESL programs at all. In Pennington and Xiao's (1990, p. 16) national survey of ESL program administrators in the United States, marketing and promotions did not appear in the survey question on job-related skills, which included 24 items which respondents were asked to comment on. The closest related skills were "making profits" and "recruiting new students", neither of which fell into the top five skills that the respondents believed they needed for their jobs. The top five were: maintaining an environment conducive to teamwork, developing a staff "team" (hire, orient, assign, etc.), managing time, communicating program goals to faculty and motivating faculty members.

In fact, recruiting new students fell into the bottom five skills that ESL directors believed they needed for their jobs. When asked what tasks ESL directors spend their time on, marketing and recruiting were not options in the questionnaire and although respondents were allowed to add additional information about what they spend their time on, not one mentioned marketing or recruiting. Perhaps not surprisingly, the highest rated item was paperwork (e.g., reports, budgets).

Rubin (e.g. 1997) discusses how language programs at universities can be lucrative and generate revenue, dealing with overall concepts of student recruitment and enrollments. Fox goes deeper by underscoring the importance of marketing not only from a revenue generation perspective, but also from a programming one, noting that it is important "to maintain a cultural and linguistic balance so that the student body will not be dominated by any single group" (Fox, 1988, p. 5).

Despite the fact that maintaining and increasing enrolments helps to secure a program's future, and linguistic and cultural diversity keep it vibrant, as I have pointed out elsewhere, one problem is that administrators are simply overwhelmed with tasks and marketing and recruiting fall to the bottom of the list. This may be due, in part, to the fact that many of them lack training in these areas, as well as adequate resources to market effectively (Eaton, 2005a).

Unanswered questions

To date, while some attention has been paid to the role of the language program manager, little of it has examined the marketing of such programs and the role that the language program director plays in marketing. This study sought to open up this aspect of the dialogue. It probed into issues of how ESL courses are marketed and what qualifications and training program directors have that prepare them to take on the tasks associated with marketing and recruitment. More fundamentally, it asked program managers to define what marketing means to them, and how they go about marketing, based on their own understanding of it.

Conclusions

There is a clear gap in the research that has been done on revenue-generating language programs in the context of marketing. This study attempted to add one more voice to the current scholarly dialogue on the issue of marketing in education by studying the matter from the perspective of language programs. One purpose of this study was to generate discussion among scholars and practitioners about the specific and unique problems that language program administrators face. The study had a Canadian focus and while examples and research from other countries are examined in the literature review, they are used to situate Canada within a global context. In the next chapter, the research design utilized in this study is presented and discussed.

Chapter Three: RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

Following a thorough review of the literature on the marketing of education generally, and in particular, within post-secondary institutions, the focus of the study was narrowed to the marketing of language programs in the Canadian context that generate revenue. The study sought to consider what publicly available documents tell us about the marketing of revenue-generating language programs at post-secondary institutions in Canada and what challenges or problems program managers may face. Following that, the intent was to consider the implications of the contents of the documents. That is to say, if the documents contained a mandate or targets for a certain number of students to be enrolled in a given time period, such as a semester, the implications of this in terms of program management and challenges would be considered. Another example would be if program or institutional documentation expressed revenue targets for a program, these targets, how they would be met and what challenges this may have posed would be investigated and analyzed.

As this chapter will indicate, the initial project had to be modified for three reasons. First the documentation collected was insufficient to address the research questions originally proposed. It was necessary to seek ways to further gather data related to the marketing of these programs, by employing the second method of interviews with program managers. Second, the number of institutions to be studied was changed. Particular institutions had been targeted for reasons that will be outlined shortly, but due to either their reluctance or refusal to participate, the research plan was modified. The research reported here focused only on programs at the University of Calgary, which collectively offered enough data for the study and where individual program directors were willing to participate. Both of these changes are discussed in further detail in this chapter, as well as the implications the changes had on the research questions originally proposed. Third, the theoretical framework for the project was also changed to better fit with the adaptations made to the methodology.

This chapter reviews the design and development of the research, including the changes made as it unfolded. The methods used to collect, code, categorize and analyze the data are detailed. A variety of sources were consulted on how to analyze qualitative data (Stake, 2006), and in particular, those collected from documents (Atkinson & Coffey, 2004; Prior, 2004) and interviews (Byrne, 2004; Hramiak, 2005; J. Miller & Glassner, 2004). The major and minor themes that emerged from the data are presented in an organized fashion that serves as the basis for further discussion later on.

Theoretical Framework

A variety of theoretical frameworks were considered for this study. The original theoretical framework for the study, critical theory, was found to be problematic and ill-fitting and was ultimately discarded. A section of this chapter (Initial Theoretical Framework) will discuss how and why critical theory was not the most appropriate lens through which to view this research. The sections that then follow outline the process used to find an appropriate framework, revealing which other approaches were considered and which one was determined to be the most appropriate for the research.

Theory and context: An international perspective

This research situates language programs within an international context. In addition to examining educational issues, it considered world events and economic factors that affect language programs. It borrowed from educational policy theory insofar as it subscribes to the view that "a major theoretical assumption of those who study the international arena is that the world is interdependent and that global forces affect …. education systems" (Fowler, 1995, p. 94). These global forces were positioned within a historical context, showing how they affect and shape the challenges faced by program administrators.

Critical self-positioning and subjective perspective

As a researcher, it is important not only to acknowledge one's own subjectivity, but further, to position oneself within the study, noting (as far as possible) one's biases and limitations. The experience of having been both a manager of a language program at a public Canadian post-secondary institution (in fact, at the very institution ultimately selected for this study) and a corporate consultant who has worked with a variety of types of language programs, brings certain biases to the research. Some of these are expressed in the section that addresses the assumptions made by the researcher about this study. These experiences undoubtedly shaped and informed the study, though that does not mean they diminish its value.

Initial theoretical framework

Originally, this research was informed by critical theory, which as Tyson (1999) points out, assumes "the impossibility of objective analysis" (p. 279), as all events are situated both temporally and culturally and perspectives may change over time. Tyson notes that we “live in a particular time and place, and [scholars’] views of both current and past events are influenced in innumerable conscious and unconscious ways by their own experience within their own culture” (p. 279). Thus, this study contextualized the question within a historical framework, and examined it through a critical theoretical lens.

Theoretical evolution of the research

In some critical ideologies (Apple, 1992, 2001, 2004; Freire, 2001; McLaren, 1997, 2005; McLaren, Fischman, Sünker, & Lankshear, 2005) a polarization that constructed an “us and them” approach to education and educational management seemed evident. The literature exhibited a tendency to classify humans as either benevolent or malicious, with the benevolent being typically poor, socialist and oppressed and the malicious being the wealthy, politically conservative (or perhaps more appropriately, fascist) and oppressive. There was a sense that globalization is oppressive because multinationals (capitalists) benefit and the repressed foreign workers remain repressed. Emancipation is impossible as long as global business profits off the backs of the poor.

As Guba and Lincoln point out, one of the aims of a inquiry rooted in critical theory is that it seeks restitution and emancipation and ethically it has a “moral tilt toward revelation” (1994, p. 112), which this investigation did not have. The intentions of this study were not to seek restitution or emancipation either for programs or administrators.

On the contrary, one of the assumptions of the study, as outlined earlier posited that business and education are not mutually exclusive in a moral sense.

This position begged two pressing and intertwined questions: “What happens when administrators who believe in a type of liberal education that encourages self-enrichment, critical thinking and creates a positive, safe environment for students to take calculated risks in order to break out of their own comfort zone and deepen their learning in ways previously unimagined, must manage programs that are also designed to generate revenue for the institution of which it is a part?” and, “Do such people exist?”

The answer to the second question is of course, yes, and this researcher is one of them. The first question remains a complex issue that reaches beyond the scope of this project, but may serve as a backdrop to it.

The key point is that the theoretical framework which had been chosen and which seemed to be the most logical at the beginning of the study, offered a way of examining data, and indeed, of examining the world, which was ultimately a poor fit with both the study and the researcher’s ideology. This was a turning point in the research, as it revealed an underlying assumption, already expressed earlier in this study, that the use of business practices in education in no way need to diminish the value of education. Furthermore, the belief that business and education needs not be seen in black or white terms, or benevolent versus malicious, was a deeply rooted one. This rootedness was stronger than any desire to adhere to the only theoretical approach with seemed to fit with my work. This meant that either the study had to change or the theoretical framework did.

The following sections explain how both the theoretical framework and methodology evolved at this critical time of the study.

What began first was the process to carefully examine other conceptual possibilities which could appropriately frame the study. This led first to an investigation into appreciative inquiry ("Appreciative Inquiry Commons," n.d.; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2008; Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2003). This approach is used in academia, business and the not-for-profit sectors. It seeks to uncover the best of what an organization is currently doing, using interviews with its members. The interviews challenge participants to examine and discuss what is good about their current situation and explore what works well within the organization. This approach then utilizes the data collected from those interviews to construct a plan for enriching the organization by building on what is already working and what is already considered to be successful.

Appreciative inquiry seemed appropriate because rather than polarizing the interested parties, it assumes that a core of positive traits exists which can be highlighted and expanded up on to create even more success in an organization. The problem is that the approach is one of methodology rather than theory. Appreciative inquiry is very much based on the act of doing interviews with vested parties and then analyzing the data. The underlying idea that good exists in every organization is certainly a philosophical assumption, but it is not an academic theory. So, while the value base of this approach seemed refreshing and valid for the study, it failed to offer sufficient depth from a theoretical point of view.

Adapted framework

Exploring the roots of appreciative inquiry more intensely led to constructivist theoretical approaches. This proved to offer an appropriate conceptual framework for the study. Researchers Guba and Lincoln note that critical theory and constructivism share some commonalities not shared by positivist or post-positivist approaches (1994, p. 112). These common denominators shared by critical theory and constructivism include a values-approach that is included and formative, rather than devoid of influence and values altruism and empowerment over technical theories espoused in positivism and post-positivism.

So, while both critical theory and constructivism share some traits, they differ significantly in some key areas. As mentioned, critical theory seeks restitution and emancipation, while constructivism seeks understanding and reconstruction (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 112). This study seeks to understand and reconstruct notions of marketing in ESL programs, making a constructivist approach more appropriate. Furthermore, Guba and Lincoln further note that the voice of the critical theorist is that of a “transformative intellectual” while the constructivist speaks as a “passionate participant” (p. 112). This also fits better with the voice used by this researcher, who has professional experience in the field, both as a practitioner and a researcher. As such, a constructivist theoretical framework corresponded better to this investigation.

The work of Sergiovanni (1991; 1992; 1994) offered a constructivist approach to studying educational administration and leadership issues that was an excellent fit with this study. Sims notes that “Sergiovanni values reflective thought and espouses a constructivist philosophy. He believes that people are moral beings who, when given appropriate experiences and led by honest inquiry, have the capacity to construct meaningful and moral conclusions" (2002, p. 96).

This researcher concurs with Sims' (2002) point of view and further appreciates his notions of the "loosely structured, nonlinear and messy context" of education (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 42). Sergiovanni adds that "the context for administration is surprisingly loose, chaotic and ambiguous." (p. 43). Though his work addresses public education, the same could certainly be said of ESL programs at post-secondary institutions. As has been shown in the review of the literature for this investigation, university ESL programs are by their nature, different than academic programs, both in their structure and how they are administered. This is, in part, due to their mandate to generate revenue. Sergiovanni's approach fits well with ESL programs. Furthermore, his notion of administrators as leaders who constantly negotiate tensions on both a conscious and less conscious level seems to fit well with the profile of the ESL manager revealed in the review of the literature. Thus, some of the ideas offered by Sergiovanni serve as a lens through which this investigation has been conducted.

In addition to Sergiovanni's work, the writings by Bowman (2002), Lueddeke (1999), Lambert (1998; 2005) added additional theoretical foundation to this study. Lueddeke's (1999) notion that personal experience is an essential component of educational administration (p. 252) resonates with this researcher, who holds that ESL program manager's must construct their understanding of how to administer and market their program mostly through personal experience, since most of them do not undertake formal management education. They make meaning of their experience through their personal and professional experience.

As previously mentioned, the theoretical framework and methodology for the project evolved simultaneously. This was in part due to the fact that the original hypothesis that documentation would be forthcoming proved incorrect, as very little in terms of useful documentation relating to marketing policies or targets for enrolments or revenue generation was obtained for scrutiny. In order to continue exploring this topic, an alternate method of collecting data had to be considered. It was decided to conduct interviews with program managers in order to enrich the minimal data gathered through the collection of documents. This search for a theoretical base was ongoing throughout the interview process and the interview questions were influenced mostly by a constructivist point of view, while also borrowing and being influenced by the appreciative inquiry approach, since this methodology relies heavily on interviews to gather data.

Initial Research Questions

In keeping with traditional qualitative research methods, this study included one general research question and some associated sub-questions (Creswell, 2003, p. 105). The primary research question that guided the study was: What do publicly available documents tell us about the marketing of revenue-generating language programs at post-secondary institutions in Canada?

Secondary questions that were to further guide and shape the study included:

- What do these documents tell us about how language programs are (or ought to be) marketed in Canada?
- Do these documents reveal any challenges faced by language program administrators? If so, what are they?
- What are the implications of the contents of the documents?

The hypothesis underpinning the study originally proposed was that such documentation existed, though it might be difficult to locate. As Atkinson and Coffey (2004) point out, “it is important to recognize the extent to which many cultures and settings are self-documenting” (p. 56). Universities are among those social formations that depend upon policies and paperwork not only for archival purposes, but also as a guide to “inform future action” (p. 57). If the results proved this hypothesis wrong, that is to say, if no resources existed or if the corpus of literature was very small, then this would present a definite direction for future work in the field.

Selection of Programs and Organizations

Before proceeding with the collection of documents, the question of which institutions to approach had to be addressed. While a wide scale, cross-nation study examining the more than 60 accredited English language programs at colleges and universities across Canada ("Languages Canada," n.d.) was appealing from the point of view of gathering a complete set of national data, there were two arguments against this approach. One was that any data collected would only represent a particular point in time. The other was that even if data were collected data from across the country, there would be no guarantee that it would be representative of the true picture of ongoing marketing of language programs in Canada. As became evident through the course of this study, some language programs and organizations in Canada seem to be in constant flux, offering little in the way of continuity or stability. The second factor in not doing a pan-Canadian study was that of keeping the study manageable. Ultimately a decision was made in favour of studying a few programs closely, with a view to understanding them deeply. The value of such an approach is that it offers the potential for deeply understanding the situation, through the richness of the data collected. The section that follows will delve into some of the benefits in more detail.

Multiple case study method

Originally, the study was delimited to three Canadian universities, one in each eastern, western and central regions of the country, as well as the Canada Language Council / Conseil des langues du Canada (CLC). This is a professional organization comprised of member institutions, from both the private and public sectors that operate in one or both official languages. Ultimately three cases at one university were chosen instead. This will be explained shortly.

The plan was to conduct the study using multiple case study method (Herriott & Firestone, 1983; Stake, 2005, 2006; Yin, 1981, 2008), examining documentation from these four sites. It has been pointed out that “the more one knows about the population, the more one knows about the cases, and vice versa” (Gerring, 2007, p. 13). In this study the population consisted of revenue-generating English language programs at post secondary institutions in Canada. Programs at particular institutions were to be selected from the total population.

Before examining the value of a multiple case study, it is worth taking a moment to examine the value of using case study as an overall approach. Yin (1981, p. 59) notes that:

> As a research strategy, the distinguishing characteristic of the case study is that it attempts to examine: (a)a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, especially when (b) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. Experiments differ from this in that they deliberately divorce a phenomenon from its context.

In this study, the phenomenon being studied is revenue-generating ESL programs and how they are marketed. The context could be defined in a variety of ways. One context is that of a Canadian university context. Another context is the economic situation that exists in post-secondary education in much of the developed world. That is to say, the context is one of fiscal restraints and increasing pressure on programs to be financially sustainable or even to generate revenue. For this study, both the phenomenon (the ESL programs) and the context (that of generating revenue) are indeed intertwined Furthermore, case studies are bounded by time and space (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 15) and the very nature of case study involves researching in a current context. This is also true with the current study, which is historically situated in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Finally, the view expressed by Hamel, Dufour and Fortin that "the case study has proven to be in complete harmony with the three key words that characterize any qualitative method: describing, understanding and explaining" (Hamel, Dufour, & Fortin, 1993, p. 39) hold true for this investigation which sought to describe the situation of revenue-generating programs as they currently exist at the University of Calgary, understand what challenges their directors face in terms of marketing and explain what the findings mean.

As both Hancock and Algozzine (2006, p. 26) and Stake (2006, p. v) note, the research design of a *multiple* case study endeavours to study individual cases linked together in a particular manner, such as a common issue or problem. The common denominator among them would be publicly available materials in the form of reports, minutes of meetings (insofar as they are considered public), web documents and any other texts related to the marketing of these language programs. As is expected of a multiple case study, each case was going to be studied individually in an in-depth manner (Herriott & Firestone, 1983). Due diligence would be paid to each of the four organizations selected. At the same time cross-case comparisons would be considered, since the preoccupation of a multiple case study is the commonalities shared by the cases and, more importantly, and what they reveal. It must be emphasized that a multiple case study approach does not attempt to draw generalizations from the cases, claiming that the findings represent a reliable sample of the overall population, but rather to explore the commonalities shared by individual subjects, or in this case, organizations.

After further considering which institutions might fit the study most appropriately, Saint Mary's University for the eastern region, the University of Toronto for the central region and the University of Calgary, for the western region were selected. The case of each institution is addressed individually in this study.

Rationale for the selection of institutions

Instead of subscribing to the philosophy that leaders learning from each other raises the bar for all (Fullan, 2006), there is instead a tendency for language program administrators to guard information about enrolments, marketing and agents out of a sense of fear and apprehension (Impey & Underhill, 1994). The researcher's previous experience in the field supported the notion that managers of revenue-generating language programs would be somewhat afraid or reluctant to participate. Therefore, the rationale for the selection of two of the three institutions was based partly on personal contacts at these institutions. It was hoped that having had good collegial relations with these program directors would have a positive effect in their decision to participate in the project.

In the case of Saint Mary's University, the researcher was acquainted with the Director of the TESL Centre ("Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) Centre " n.d.), having met her on various occasions, including a trade fair in Mexico in the late 1990s. Furthermore, as Saint Mary's University is the alma mater of the researcher and the university is known to have a strong sense of loyalty among its students, staff and alumni, it was felt that a personal connection to the institution, as well as a professional acquaintanceship with the TESL Centre director would be positive factors in having Saint Mary's University participate in the study.

It was a similar situation with the University of Calgary, where not only was the researcher an alumna, but had also worked in the ESL program in Continuing Education some years prior, having left the position approximately seven years prior to the start of this project. Familiarity with the program, as well as with the directors of both that particular program and the English for Professional Purposes Program, were factors in favour of the University of Calgary. It was hoped that personal connections would benefit the study by providing some pre-established trust and mutual professional respect to aid with what was expected to be a somewhat delicate process.

Having no connections with universities in central Canada, the University of Toronto was chosen because, like both the University of Calgary and Saint Mary's University, it has a long-standing, reputable language program accredited through the CLC.

The CLC was included because it is the national organization which concerns itself with quality assurance and program standards. Organizations must meet minimum quality standards in order to be granted membership. Among these are standards for marketing and promotion which have been extensively documented on their website. The only organization of its kind in Canada, the CLC was generally accepted in the field as the organization that advocates both for its members and the students they serve.

The sections that follow outline the process undertaken to contact each of the organizations. It should be noted that for the purposes of organizing the findings of this study, a case-by-case approach, as opposed to a chronological one has been chosen. While each case is examined individually here, it may appear as though there are sometimes long gaps between periods of contacts with program directors. This is because numerous tasks were often undertaken at one time, from leaving voice mails for some people to e-mailing others and meeting personally with still others. Detailed research notes helped to facilitate the organization of the writing. If it appears that there were long absences between periods of activity with one organization, it was likely due to a high level of activity in other aspects of the project.

First Saint Mary's University and then the University of Toronto will be discussed. Following that the Canada Language Council / Conseil des langues du Canada will be addressed. Finally, the University of Calgary will be considered. It may seem more logical to group all of the universities together first and then examine the umbrella organization. However, it should become clear why the case of the University of Calgary ultimately stands out among the others and has therefore been left until the end.

Selected participants: Saint Mary's University (SMU) and the University of Toronto.

Starting in November 2007, the TESL Centre at Saint Mary's University was contacted on numerous occasions about the study. On February 1, 2008, three months after initiating contact about the project, personal contact was made with the Director. A 24-minute telephone conversation resulted in the director stating that due to the competitive nature of language programs, she did not feel comfortable releasing information and that furthermore, she did not feel that she was authorized to speak on behalf of the university. While being extremely cordial, polite and kind, the Director's reluctance to participate in the study was puzzling, although not entirely unexpected. Some earlier indication of her reluctance was evident in the fact that we had been unable to communicate about the project in a timely fashion. Reluctance to share information would prove to be a recurring theme throughout the entire research project and will be examined in the discussion of the results.

The case of the University of Toronto was not dissimilar. Repeated and persistent attempts to make contact with the University of Toronto's English program from November 2007 through to the end of January 2008 failed. Being unable to communicate with the Director, it was decided to abandon further attempts to make contact and ultimately, to exclude the U of T from the study.

The Canada Language Council / Conseil des langues du Canada (CLC)

The Canada Language Council / Conseil des langues du Canada (CLC) was a professional organization comprised of member organizations that operate in one or both official languages, from both the private and public sectors. The CLC emerged in 2003 as an amalgamation of two umbrella organizations, the Council of Second Language Programs in Canada (CSLPC), which represented language programs specifically at public post-secondary institutions, namely universities and colleges, and the Private English Language Schools Association (PELSA) ("One association for Canada?," September 2003). The CLC was originally founded to serve only those institutions who had previously been members of either CSLPC or PELSA. However, in 2004 it opened its doors to additional private sector schools, providing they met strict standards criteria ("Canada Language Council evolves," April 2004).

The CLC concerned itself with quality assurance and program standards for programs across the country. Organizations were to meet minimum quality standards in order to be granted membership. Among these were standards for marketing and promotion. I had intended to analyze the marketing portion of the standards documentation, as well as other relevant literature from the field, as it was the only organization of its kind in Canada.

The Canada Language Council made documentation on standards publicly available at http://www.c-l-c.ca/standards/english_standards.html. Section G of the document focused on marketing. Although the entire document was to be reviewed in detail, as it would provide an important context for the rest of the study, the analysis itself was to focus on, and be limited to, the marketing standards. This document in its entirety was retrieved on September 13, 2007.

On November 5, 2007 the Director of the TESL Centre at Saint Mary's University sent a copy of a news release stating that the CLC had been dissolved and a new organization, Languages Canada/Langues Canada had been established. The press release stated that:

> Canadian Association of Private Language Schools (CAPLS) and the Canada Language Council (CLC) – jointly representing over 180 ESL and FSL programs at universities, colleges and private language institutions across the country - made a landmark decision by voting to join together and form one unified national association and accrediting body for language training programs in Canada. ("Languages Canada / Langues Canada: United strong voice for Canada's language training industry: A strategic move towards the future: A new organization with a new identity for language training in Canada," 2007).

It should be noted that the Canada Association for Private Language Schools (CAPLS) was not chosen for inclusion in the project, as this study was delimited to public post-secondary institutions. It is the understanding of the researcher that the Private English Language Schools Association (PELSA) that was combined with the CSLPC to form the CLC in 2003. Both of these were entirely separate organizations from the Canada Association for Private Language Schools (CAPLS), even though both PELSA and CAPLS focussed solely on private, for profit language schools. It is beyond the scope of this project to delve into the history of language associations, though an overview of some of the changes that have occurred over the past ten years may be helpful in developing an understanding of the evolution of language programming in Canada in recent years.

The news release announcing the establishment of the CLC in late 2007 further stated that the new association was to have its inaugural meeting in March 2008. And so, the documents previously retrieved were no longer helpful, since the national standards organization originally included for study no longer existed. Its replacement, Languages Canada / Langues Canada, was in its infancy and while it would certainly have sector standards as one of its main foci, the organization itself had barely been established at the time of this study. Given these factors, it was decided to exclude the documents previously retrieved and not to pursue the search for documents from the new organization, but rather to explore documentation and data from the professional standards agency in future research.

The University of Calgary (U of C)

The University of Calgary was perhaps the most organizationally complex of the universities included in this study, at least in terms of ESL programming. It was also the one with which the researcher was most familiar, having managed one of its programs from 1996 to 2000, thus providing a certain advantage in understanding and navigating these complexities.

A variety of language programs exit at the University of Calgary, some of which generate revenue and others of which do not. The Effective Writing Program, which helps students improve their writing skills, is one example of a program that is neither focused on generating revenue, nor is it restricted to those whose first language is not English, even though it does charge a fee for some courses and ESL students are welcome to enroll in them ("Effective Writing Program," n.d.). In order to be included in the study, programs had to focus on teaching English as a Second Language and had to have revenue-generation as one of its mandates. As such, services such as the Effective Writing Program were excluded.

In addition, courses and services that may be offered on an ad hoc basis for specific groups of individuals and organized by individual faculty members were also excluded from this study. Though there was some anecdotal evidence that such courses had existed in the past at the University of Calgary, and may even have existed at the time of my study, this project was more concerned with established language programs, available and marketed to the public.

There were three such programs at the University of Calgary, all of which have or had a mandate to generate revenue. These programs constituted the three individual cases studied in this investigation. They are (in the order in which they were established):

1. The English Language Program (ELP) in Continuing Education serves international and immigrant students with part-time and full-time non-credit courses.
2. The English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program in the Faculty of Education serves international and immigrant students with full-time, academic courses for university credit.
3. The English for Professional Purposes (EPP) program was a flexible program focusing mostly on groups of visiting professors or scholars and also had a mandate to support other projects on campus.

Methodology and data collection – documentation analysis

Appointments were made with the directors of each of these three programs, who will be referred to by pseudonyms throughout this study. The purpose of the initial meeting was to introduce the study, find out about their courses and generally determine the directors' openness to be involved in the study, as well as to request the documentation. These meetings took place in the fall of 2007.

One approach was to collect documents that were readily available on line. The rationale for this was that if a language program manager were seeking information on how to better market his or her own program, develop a strategy or obtain market research information about policies, procedures and methods used by other program, many would proceed first by undertaking a search of the available literature and documentation on the Internet. If documentation was readily available using this search technique, the analysis would focus on what was electronically available. If documentation was not readily available on line, an attempt would be made to acquire hard copies of reports and other documents that are considered public.

In an initial on line search of each of the English programs at the University of Calgary, little was found little in the way of policy documents, reports or market analyses. Although each program had its own website, these sites lacked information on enrollment data, demographics, program growth or financial matters. This is not unusual for educational programs. The next step was to request the documents from the program managers directly. This was done between October and December 2007.

The Director of the EPP program, Lynn, offered her full support for the project, by sharing copies of a variety of brochures for the program. She offered electronic versions (copied onto a USB stick) of numerous documents, which would be analyzed at a later time. As there seemed to be many more folders and files than anticipated, assurance was sought that all the documentation was considered public and could be used in the study. She confirmed that it was.

The Director of the EAP program, Uma, stated in a meeting that although the program she directed had a mandate to generate revenue, they did not market their program very much. They had no brochures. Apart from some posters that appeared in the front of the office and in hallway of the Education building, the program had no particular marketing or promotions strategy or materials. She gave me a copy of the program handbook, which contained information and regulations about the program and was the only publicly available documentation, other than what could be found on the web site, which would be available for the study.

The director of the English Language Program in Continuing Education, Ornelle, offered a brochure for the program, as well as a one-page Word document, showing some demographic information for the fall 2007 semester. He also referred me to the program website for further information, making it clear that while he was willing to be part of the study, he would not release any proprietary information about his program. It was emphasized that the study sought publicly available documentation in the form of reports, data or other marketing or policy material.

Analysis of the documents

Since this study was intended to be a documentation analysis, even though it appeared that there would not be sufficient data to conduct this type of study, it was still incumbent upon the researcher to review and analyze what had been collected to determine if this was indeed the case.

Documents from the English Language program

The Director of Continuing Education's English Language Program, Ornelle provided a copy of the "English Language Program: Intensive immersion courses and programs", an 8-page, four-colour brochure booklet that is targeted towards prospective students and others interested in the program. As with the handbook from the EAP program, this brochure offered basic information about the program, but a deeper analysis of the program's marketing strategies and policies was not possible by examining this document.

In addition to the brochure booklet, Ornelle also offered a 1-page table illustrating registration information according to language groups for the winter, spring, fall and summer 2007 courses. Below is a re-creation of this table, which was untitled in its original format, but has otherwise been reproduced exactly from the original. Gaps in this table are consistent with gaps in the original.

Table 1: Percentage breakdown of registrations by language groups for Continuing Education ESL classes in 2007

Semester	Winter	Spring	Fall	Semester Average	Summer	Summer
Year	2007	2007	2007		2007	2007
Course	73075	83025	83050		83001	83002
(# Students)	(91)	(78)	(158)		(109)	(166)
Arabic	5%	0%	5%	3%	2%	5%
Chinese	23%	12%	6%	14%	5%	16%
French	3%	0%	1%	1%	22%	16%
German	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Italian	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Japanese	13%	21%	14%	16%	1%	38%
Korean	17%	36%	41%	31%	38%	11%
Porteguese (sic)	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Punjabi	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Russian	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%	0%
Spanish	30%	25%	28%	28%	27%	11%
Thai	3%		1%	2%	0%	0%
Vietnamese		1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
other			0%	0%	3%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

As part of the analysis all the numbers in each column were reviewed and the sums were verified. In the case of the fourth column of numbers, under the heading "Semester Average" it was found that the total amounted to 101%. This was crosschecked this with the original data and these also added up to 101%. Despite one small calculation error, this table serves to demonstrate the major and minor linguistic groups that comprised the registrations in ESL classes in Continuing Education classes in 2007.

These data are of interest insofar as they were the *only* source of demographic information provided about any of the ESL programs at the University of Calgary. They demonstrate that the major linguistic groups in 2007 were Korean (31%), Spanish (28%), Japanese (16%) and Chinese (14%) with the remainder making up the minority. What Fullan (2006, p. 89) states about student performance data may also be applied in this context when he asserts that “interpreting any one year’s results can be misleading (odd blips occur, impact of strategies takes time, and trends cannot be discerned)”. This table offers a snapshot of enrollment data for the year 2007 of one program and as such, generalizations and conclusions can not be legitimately drawn from them. In addition, these data may not be representative of all programs at the University of Calgary. They serve as a point of interest simply because they were the only data provided in terms of registrations.

Documents from the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program

Uma provided a copy of the "English for Academic Purposes Programs: EAPP, ELFP & EAPG" 2007-08 handbook. This was a 55-page document targeted towards students. This coil-bound document consisted of four-colour (also known as full-colour) front and back covers, with black and white and photos inside. The table of contents offers an idea as to the material this document covers:

- Preliminary matter
- Chapter 1: Welcome
- Chapter 2: Academic Procedures
- Chapter 3: Living in Canada
- Chapter 4: University Services for Students
- Chapter 5: EAPG Seminar Courses

From these broad headers it can be seen that the purpose of the document was to offer information to prospective students or those who have recently enrolled in the program. Although helpful in offering a broad, general overview of the program, it was impossible to undertake a deep analysis of the marketing and recruitment of the program from this document because it did not offer any information on policies, marketing strategies, enrollment or registration data or revenue generation. Such information would not be expected in a handbook. The key point is that the information that was considered public was not useful for this study.

Documents from the English for Professional Purposes (EPP) program / Centre for Language Assessment and Learning (CLAL)

The most extensive documentation on any of the programs was provided by the EPP program / CLAL. Lynn copied three folders on to a memory stick, directly from her computer:

- EPP Marketing
- EPP Powerpoints [*sic*]
- EPP Reports

Each folder contained numerous sub-folders and sometimes individual files, as well. The files were in Word (.doc), Power Point (.ppt), Portable Document Format (.pdf) and Excel (.xml) formats. The analysis began with a global overview of each folder, to gain a general understanding of the scope and nature of the documents they contained.

In order to gain a better understanding of what was contained in each folder, a structural analysis of the folder contents was conducted. This was done by opening each folder and subfolder and recording the names of each file, including the file extensions. Each file name was recorded in a table in such a way that it was easier to distinguish the folders from the individual files and to see how many files there were in total. After that, each file was opened individually and skimmed briefly for content to determine which, if any of them, would provide suitable material for analysis.

The folder "EPP Marketing" contained 93 files within various sub-folders. Twenty-eight of the files were of brochures in a variety of languages including French, Spanish, Arabic and Japanese. A further fifteen files were logos or graphics files in .bmp, .gif, .jpg or other graphics files. The remainder of the files included letters, release forms and additional administrative documentation.

The folder "EPP Powerpoints" contained eighteen presentations, each promoting the EPP program and geared towards a specific group or audience.

The folder "EPP Reports" contained 119 individual files, contained within various sub-folders. These consisted of sections of reports such as appendices, schedules and evaluations. In the sub-folder with the heading "2007", there were nineteen files containing letter or copies of letters soliciting support for the creation of a language evaluation centre on campus, and a feasibility study for the creation of such a centre, proposing that EPP adopt that role adopting the name "University of Calgary International Language Assessment Centre (UC-ILAC)." These documents were significant because they speak to the fact that this program had an evolving purpose and identity throughout the duration of this project.

In total, Lynn contributed 230 files, some of which were interesting, such as the brochures produced in various languages, but offered little information in terms of policy or strategy that would be appropriate for an in-depth analysis. In some cases, the reports contained information that might be considered private, such as class lists noting students' names and the researcher chose not to delve further into these documents.

Conclusions about documentation collection and analysis

A thorough review of the documentation demonstrated that there was insufficient data to conduct a thorough study. The process of attempting to collect the documentation served mostly to prove that the original hypothesis of this study was untestable. It was becoming clear that the initial idea of undertaking an analysis of publicly available documentation pertaining to marketing of these programs, with a view to answering the initial research questions set out, was proving to be much more challenging than originally anticipated.

To re-iterate, the main research question was: What do publicly available documents tell us about the marketing of revenue-generating language programs at post-secondary institutions in Canada?

The secondary questions the study intended to explore were:

1. What do these documents tell us about how language programs are (or ought to be) marketed in Canada?
2. Do these documents reveal any challenges faced by language program administrators? If so, what are they?
3. What are the implications of the contents of the documents?

What was being sought were documents pertaining to market strategy, policy, revenue generation and enrollments. It was hoped that such documentation was available and would be provided for the study. The materials provided would neither serve to answer the research questions, nor fulfill the purpose in finding out what challenges were faced by program administrators while marketing their programs.

Although the directors expressed a willingness to participate in the study, the EAP program manager stated that they had no documentation related to marketing or market strategy because they did not explicitly market their program; the Continuing Education program director made it clear that they had documentation, but that it was considered largely proprietary and private and either could not or would not be shared; and the EPP program manager provided so much documentation that it was difficult to determine which, if any of the files, pertained specifically to marketing.

The process was useful in that it led to two preliminary conclusions. Firstly, there was either reluctance to share information or a sense of protectionism over the programs. Related to this was the sense of competition over cooperation, as the reason for this reluctance. These two factors were emerging both as major themes, as well as barriers to the study. These themes are explored more extensively in the Discussion chapter of this thesis.

A final conclusion was that there were serious gaps in the data collected, making a deep and thorough analysis all but impossible. Thus, a re-consideration of how to proceed with the study itself began. This included asking if the research questions might be better answered by using a different method of collecting data.

Revision of methodology and rationale

As previously mentioned, a theoretical reconceptualization of the study was taking place simultaneously with the collection of the documents. Prior to this point in the work, it was thought that either the study *or* the theoretical framework needed to change in order for the study to proceed. The attempts to gather meaningful documents that would lend themselves to a deep analysis had failed. What became evident, through a deeply deliberative process of double-loop learning (Argyris & Schön, 1974) was that "what needs to be adjusted …. is not just the action strategy but the governing value itself" (Tagg, 2007, p. 38). It became clear that both the conceptual framework *and* the methodology needed to be adapted in order to obtain richer data that could be analyzed deeply.

The appreciative inquiry approach influenced these deliberations as it uses interviews as its main method of collecting information. As Byrne (2004) points out, "perhaps the most compelling advantage of qualitative interviewing is that, when done well, it is able to achieve a level of depth and complexity that is not available to other, particularly survey-based, approaches" (p. 182). Conducting interviews with program managers offered a way to continue studying the topic, with some modifications to the original project. Finally, the possibility that perhaps the wrong research questions had been asked was a point that deserved further deliberation.

Adapted Research Questions

There was reluctance on the part of the researcher to change the research questions after initial documentation had been collected, due to the possibility that doing so might undermine the integrity of the research by not adhering to previously established parameters. At the same time, it was clear that an in-depth analysis would not be possible with the data that had been collected.

In addition, the process of attempting to collect documents had been met with apprehension about sharing information that might be considered proprietary. It was possible that research seeking numerical information in the form of documents pertaining to revenue generation, program growth, marketing budges and enrolment data, etc., might be better served by future research after an initial study in the field had been completed. The possibility existed that the study that was originally proposed was premature, though it would be impossible to state with certainty if that were the case or not. In any event, the difficulties in gathering appropriate data were clear. It was apparent that interviews would have to replace the documentation analysis as a way of gathering data. This was the most critical change in the methodology. New research questions were needed to reflect this change.

An additional factor was that the study had been narrowed from a pan-Canadian perspective to one focused on a single institution. Therefore, it was reasonable that adaptations to the research questions ought to reflect that change to the project as well.

Further investigation into the matter revealed that it was acceptable for "research questions to evolve and change during the study in a manner consistent with the assumptions of an emerging design" (Creswell, 2003, p. 107) and that "too much emphasis on original research questions and contexts can distract researchers from recognizing new issues as they emerge" (Stake, 2006, p. 13). After extensive deliberation it was decided that the research questions should be modified, but that they ought to maintain the same intention as the original ones, taking account the methodological revisions necessary for the project to continue. The primary research question became: What can be learned about the marketing of revenue-generating language programs at the University of Calgary through interviews with program managers?

The secondary questions were revised as follows:

A. How do ESL program managers at the University of Calgary describe and understand the marketing of their programs? How do they go about marketing?

B. What challenges, if any, are faced by language program managers at the University of Calgary with regards to marketing their programs?

Once the research questions had been reconceptualized and reformed, the researcher was then able to proceed with the development of interview questions that would guide the data collection.

Adapted Methodology – Data Collection Through Interviews

Using Creswell's approach to interviews which suggests that fewer, rather than more, and open-ended as opposed to close-ended questions are better to elicit opinions and in-depth points of view from participants (2003, p. 188), a set of ten questions were developed which fell into three main categories. Firstly, program managers would be asked about the program itself and how it was marketed. Because of the reluctance and hesitation previously encountered in the study, it was decided that it would be beneficial to begin with non-confrontational questions that would be easy to answer and would serve as a type of "warm up" that would both allow the participant to relax and provide the researcher with useful background information about the programs.

Secondly, participants would be asked about themselves and their own training. The main point of this was to ascertain out what training, if any, the directors of the programs had in business operations, finance and marketing.

Finally, program managers would be asked to define marketing in terms of their program. This last point was important in order to understand how the program managers themselves understood marketing, as their perceptions may shape how they went about the business of promoting their programs.

The final interview questions that were ultimately posed to participants were:

1. Please tell me about your program. When did it start? What kinds of courses do you offer?

2. Who are your students? How would you describe them – for example, where are they from? What are their ages? Why do you think they are taking your program?
3. Do you work with individuals or groups or both?
4. In a minute I'd like to ask you about how you market your program, but before we get to that, I'm interested to know how you would define marketing within the context of your program. What does marketing mean to you?
5. So, how do you market your program?
6. You've mentioned a number of strategies. Which ones do you feel work best? Why?
7. What do you think would make your program even better, particularly in regards to marketing and recruitment? How could you make that happen?
8. How long have you been working in this field, either at your current institution or elsewhere but in similar work?
9. My last question to you is about your own training or professional preparation in marketing and program administration. What can you tell me about that?
10. Is there anything else you'd like to add that you think would be helpful?

These questions formed a loose framework for the interviews and participants were welcome to add additional information about their programs and how they marketed it, to allow for more robust data collection.

Application to the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board

In order to proceed with interviews, clearance from the University of Calgary Conjoint Research Ethics Board was required. An application was prepared and delivered to the Research Services. Following minor revisions, notification that the project had been approved was received on January 23, 2008. The interviews could then proceed.

Interview process

The directors of the three ESL programs at the University of Calgary were contacted and asked if they would agree to be interviewed for the study. All of them agreed and interview times and locations were set up.

Prior to the interview each participant was electronically sent a copy of a consent form which they could preview before data collection began. At the interview itself two copies of the consent form were signed. One was kept by the participant and the researcher kept one on file.

Before beginning the interview, each participant was asked to confirm that he or she had read and understood the consent form. Once they confirmed this they were reminded that they could withdraw at any time without repercussions and that they could also refrain from answering one or more questions if they chose. After they acknowledged that they understood, they were asked if they had any other questions. If they did, these were answered them and if not, the interview proceeded. One participant asked if a list of questions had been prepared and it was answered affirmatively, adding that the questions had been approved by the Conjoint Research Ethics Board. The participant was satisfied with that answer and the interview proceeded.

The interviews ranged from 35 to 53 minutes in duration. In one case, the interview had formally concluded, but the conversation continued. Permission was asked to turn on the recording devices again and the participant agreed, adding almost an additional five and a half minutes to the interview.

Devices and technology used for the interviews

In every case, two devices were used for recording. One was a micro cassette recorder and the other was a digital voice recorder. The idea was to use digital technology both for the interviews and the transcription, but in case of technical difficulties a backup in the form of a more traditional media format was desired. All the participants agreed to the use of two recording devices during the interview process.

Following the interviews the digital voice recordings were transferred to a computer, where they were converted in to .wav files and stored using a program called Memory Stick Voice Editor. File names were changed from the automated numerical name assigned by the recorder to names corresponding to the surname of each participant. Back up copies of the .wav files were saved on CDs. The micro cassettes used as back up media were stored in case they were needed at a later time.

Transcription and member checks

As the digital voice recordings were successful and were stored in an appropriate format (.wav) for transcription, a foot pedal with a USB connection that linked directly to a computer was used. Speech Exec Transcribe, which was the corresponding software for the foot pedal, completed the transcription equipment. Transcription was done using MS Word, due to the researcher’s familiarity with the program, thus expediting the process.

Once the transcriptions were finished, each interviewee was sent a copy of the transcription of his or her interview for a member check. Each person was given a minimum of two weeks and a maximum of four weeks to review the transcript and make any corrections they felt were necessary. All three participants chose to review the transcripts and make minor modifications. Once the corrections were made, the project proceeded to its next phase.

Data analysis and discussion

Data analysis began with a re-reading all of the transcripts, observing major themes that emerged from the data, and reflecting on the overall meaning of each one, as well as commonalities and differences among them. In keeping with the multiple case study method (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Stake, 2005, 2006; Yin, 1981), each interview was examined deeply as both an individual case and as part of the collective to which it was linked through its commonalities. It was important to review and understand the views expressed by each participant, as well as any common themes or differences among them.

After identifying major themes, each transcript was reviewed again, with a view to mining the text for pertinent data. This was done by preparing an Excel spreadsheet with themes that emerged from the data down the vertical axis of the spreadsheet and each participant's name in its own column across horizontal axis. Once all the transcripts had been reviewed in this manner, sub-themes were identified for each of the major themes, thus allowing for further refinement and categorization of the data. Each transcript was reviewed for a third time, with a view to paying attention to the sub-themes that had emerged and determine if there was any further data in the interviews which could be added to the spreadsheet. In doing so, more quotations from each interview were gathered.

Grouping the data in this way allowed for a deeper understanding of the commonalities of the cases presented, as well as the themes that emerged from them in what Creswell refers to as “an ongoing process of continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions, and writing memos throughout the study” (2003, p. 190). In addition, the data were assessed for bias, which would reflect the participant’s point of view, but may or may not correspond with others’ views of the same issue (Seale, 1998).

Themes that emerged from the interview data

Four major themes emerged from the data, each with a number of secondary themes relating to the main points:

- Major theme #1: Profile of ESL program administrators at the University of Calgary
    - Sub-theme 1.1: Education, experience and knowledge of foreign languages
    - Sub-theme 1.2: Training in marketing and administration and challenges of the job
    - Sub-theme 1.3: Skills and qualities directors felt were important
- Major theme #2: International scope of ESL programs
    - Sub-theme 2.1: The need for travel and cross-cultural competence in business and marketing

  - Sub-theme 2.2: The need for a multi-lingual approach to marketing
  - Sub-theme 2.3: How global factors affect ESL programs
- Major theme: #3 History, identity and differentiation among ESL programs at the University of Calgary
  - Sub-theme 3.1: The quest for program identity and programs that constantly change
  - Sub-theme 3.2: The desire to differentiate from other ESL programs on campus
  - Sub-theme 3.3: Perceived lack of understanding of ESL programs by other units on campus
- Major theme #4: Marketing of ESL programs
  - Sub-theme 4.1: Market research
  - Sub-theme 4.2: Development and management of customer relations
  - Sub-theme 4.3: Promotion – Word of mouth
  - Sub-theme 4.4: Promotion – Websites
  - Sub-theme 4.5: Promotion - Print materials

Each of these major and minor themes is carefully explored in the chapter that follows.

Conclusions

This chapter has explained how particular programs were chosen and why the study was eventually narrowed to focus on the University of Calgary. Furthermore, it can be seen that even though only one institution was chosen, the study may still be considered a small multiple case study, due to the fact that three different programs, housed in different units of the institution and each with its own director make each of the programs unique and of interest both as individual cases and as a collective.

The methods used to gather data for this project, specifically the collection of publicly available documentation, and personal interviews with program managers has been outlined. Perhaps most importantly the challenges that emerged as the study proceeded have been discussed. How these problems were addressed, in terms of the evolution of the project which allowed the study to proceed, have been explained in some detail.

The major methodological change was that the documentation analysis began, but was ultimately abandoned due to lack of data. The analysis was replaced by interviews, which ultimately provided more (albeit different) data than the documents previously collected. In addition, the research questions were adapted so that a) they reflected the fact that only one institution was ultimately included and b) they showed a refocusing of the project from the collection of institutional policy documentation (with the hopes of retrieving numerical data in terms of budgetary numbers, enrolment data and targets, etc.) to a highly qualitative study used which personal interviews with program directors as the main source of data. As a result of these methodological changes, interviews became the primary source of information for this study. The qualitative data that were gathered from the interviews were rich with information, opinion and expertise. Some common themes emerged naturally and easily through the three interviews.

Another major shift of the project, which occurred concurrently, was a reconceptualization of the theoretical framework used for the study. Collectively, the changes to methodology, research questions and theoretical framework were critical to the success of the project. It would not by hyperbolic to state that it was only because of the adaptations made to the project that it was able to proceed successfully.

The chapters that follow delve more deeply into the data, discussing and synthesizing the results in detail, as well as offering what directions for future research were revealed by this study.

Chapter Four: DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter the results of this study are presented and discussed. The findings are then linked back to the adapted research questions. This chapter assesses the degree to which the study was able to effectively answer these questions. In addition it connects this project to work that has previously been done in the field.

Reflections on the inability to conduct the documentation study

The fact that the study was unable to proceed as originally planned warrants reflection. The themes of reluctance, hesitation and protectionism emerged strongly during this phase of the original study. In addition, the notion that competition prevailed over collegiality in the ESL sector also became apparent. These are the ideas that will be explored in this section. Finally, there will be speculation about if and how any data that may have been collected could have been analyzed, due to inconsistencies among programs with regards to how and what is counted in ESL programs.

Reluctance and protectionism as recurring themes

A great deal of time was spent at the beginning of this project attempting to find program managers who were willing to take part in the study. In one case, a program manager was willing discuss the project, but unwilling to participate. In another case, communications were ignored. Finally, managers at the University of Calgary agreed to take part in the study. This was the same institution where the researcher had previously managed one of the programs and had known two of the three participants for a significant period of time before undertaking doctoral studies.

Although the study had been approved by the Conjoint Ethics Research Board at the University of Calgary, there remained a question about the validity of any study that only examined one institution, and moreover, one with which the researcher was closely connected. There is no question that the researchers' own experience has influenced the understanding of what was said during the meetings, interviews and other research tasks. However, it must also be acknowledged that this knowledge was also helpful, perhaps even critical, in understanding some of the complexities of an institution with three separate and distinct ESL programs.

It is possible that managers at the University of Calgary were more receptive to the project because of established relationships with them and the researcher's experience at the institution. It is impossible to prove or disprove this claim, though it is a situation that deserves mention.

A reluctance to participate

Some managers' unwillingness to participate in the study is significant because it speaks to a number of issues related to competition, collegiality and fear. The Director of the TESL Centre at Saint Mary's University mentioned the competitive nature of ESL programs during our phone conversation, but did not go into further details and ultimately declined to participate in the study.

No explanation can be offered as to why the University of Toronto declined to answer the researcher's communications, though their response of silence may be interpreted as an unwillingness to engage in discussion about the project.

It could be concluded that of the prospective participants who were approached, 40% of them declined to participate in a study that proposed to examine only publicly available documentation relating to ESL programs.

Reluctance or inability to offer documents of a deeper nature

At the University of Calgary, Uma stated that their program had very little to offer in the way of documentation, as their marketing endeavours had been almost non-existent. This assertion was reiterated during her interviews and her comments indicated she had little experience marketing. As such, she was unable to offer documentation suitable for a deeper analysis.

Ornelle made it clear that his program had documentation, but that it was considered largely proprietary and private and either could not or would not be shared. He indicated a willingness to participate by offering one page with a table of the breakdown of students by linguistic group for one academic year, which was helpful in understanding the demographic break down of the Continuing Education student population for the 2007 year. Nevertheless, it was only one page of information and could not be used it for comparison purposes because no similar information from any other program was obtained.

Of the five people originally approached to take part in the study, two declined. Of the three who participated, only one provided significant amounts of documentation. Lynn showed genuine interest in the program and expressed enthusiasm when asked her to participate, offering to share whatever she could for the study. Despite the fact that much of the documentation she offered did not lend itself to a deep analysis of marketing practices and strategies, she did seem willing and open to participating. This was evidenced in that she offered documentation that may have been private, such as class lists and other documentation, which the researcher herself did not classify as “public” and therefore excluded.

From the experience of attempting to secure participants for the study and then, once some had agreed, to the further experience of endeavouring to collect information it was revealed that there was some reluctance to participate. There was a palpable sense that both the programs and their associated information needed to be protected.

Related to this theme is that of competition. In a telephone conversation with the Director of the TESL Centre, she noted openly that the competitive nature of ESL was a factor in her reluctance to participate in the study. What she expressed directly, Ornelle echoed indirectly when he indicated that the documentation that was sought did exist, but that it would not be forthcoming, as it was proprietary.

A softer approach through interviews

As such, documentation revealing details about marketing strategies, enrolment and revenue targets and other policy and administrative matters proved almost impossible to obtain for this study. This, coupled with the recurring reluctance encountered, and the improbability of conducting a deep and valid analysis of what may have been gathered, required that the approach to the study be reconsidered.

A much softer approach was adopted in the interviews. A point was made to refrain from requesting any quantifiable data. There was a deliberate attempt to avoid asking about the number of registrants in programs, the amount of revenue a program took in, the amount spent on marketing endeavours, the percentage of revenue spent on marketing and recruitment, or any other information that would have required a numerical response. It was felt that it would be more valuable to engage in a dialogue with the participants, with the hope that they would choose to reveal some insights into their situation. The sections that follow discuss the four major themes that emerged from the interview data, as well as their corresponding sub-themes.

Major theme #1: Profile of ESL program administrators at the University of Calgary

Each participant was asked about their experience, skills and training, both in terms of languages, and marketing. In addition, each participant also volunteered opinions on what skills and qualities they felt were important for directors of ESL programs to have, as well as the challenges they face in their jobs. Together, these make up the profile of the directors of the three ESL programs covered in this study.

Sub-theme 1.1: Education, experience and knowledge of foreign languages

The following table offers a brief overview of the profile of the directors. With the exception of the gender of each participant, which was not necessary to ask about during the interviews, the information contained in the table shows the information that was gathered during the interviews and reflects the participants' choice in how they answered questions about themselves. For example, Uma chose to count her time in graduate school as part of her professional experience and so, it was noted as such in this table. Lynn stated that she had a Master's degree in TESOL, but did not indicate if it was an M.A., an M.Ed. or another type of degree, so it has been included in the table in same way that she described it.

Table 2: Profile of the ESL program administrators at the University of Calgary

	Ornelle (ELP)	**Uma (EAP)**	**Lynn (EPP/CLAL)**
Gender	Male	Female	Female
Length of time in the profession	16 years	9 years (including graduate school)	33 years
Higher education	M. Ed. TESL, including some business courses	Ph.D.	Master's degree TESOL
International experience	Japan	U.S.A.	UK, Spain, Italy, Saudi Arabia, China, Oman
Languages spoken (other than English)	Fluent in Japanese	Fluent in Bengali; Functional skills in Hindi; knowledge of French and Spanish	Fluent in Spanish; knowledge of French and Italian

From the information in this table it can be seen that all of the participants had a number of things in common. They all held graduate degrees directly related to their field. Uma held a Ph.D. and Ornelle and Lynn held Master's degrees. Ornelle was the only person who had taken courses in business as part of his graduate level training. He mentioned during the interview that he had taken half of his courses in the Education faculty and half of them in the Haskayne School of Business at the University of Calgary.

All of the participants had lived abroad and spoke at least one other language fluently. Uma had studied in the United States; Lynn and Ornelle had both taught EFL abroad. Lynn had the most extensive international experience, having lived and worked in six countries outside Canada. With 33 years of experience working either in ESL or EFL contexts, she was also the most experienced director of the three.

Overall, it can be concluded that the directors of the various ESL programs at the University of Calgary are, in general, highly educated and skilled, with international experience and fluency in at least one foreign language.

Sub-theme 1.2: Training in marketing and administration and challenges of the job

While the three administrators shared the traits of being highly educated and having personal and professional international experience, they differed markedly in their philosophical approaches to their work and in the challenges they faced in their jobs.

As indicated in the table above, Ornelle was the only program administrator who had taken courses in business during his graduate degree. He stated that:

> I felt that I was getting in a lot of the… the applied linguistics classes was either something that, from ten years of teaching I already knew, or was something that I felt was just obviously wrong, that someone who has taught could never think that. And the tools that I needed to serve my students, I felt, would be better served by improving operations, by improving my understanding of what it was that my students needed as customers, what the best way of reaching the students, the best way of ensuring the deliverables. So those courses I took were very, I think, very valuable. I mean, I wouldn't want to go the other way, either. I wouldn't want to take just business courses. I think the combination of the two was, was very beneficial. I don't… I haven't really heard of other ESL program directors or managers who, who have formal training in marketing or who have a specific interest in following, following a marketing, a marketing directive.

Even though Ornelle had undertaken his Master's degree in Education, he had taken the initiative to include business classes as part of his graduate training. He noted that the combination of linguistic training and business training was somewhat unique and he felt it had better prepared him to direct a program.

This training was evident in the language he used in the interview. He used more business vocabulary in his interview generally, with one of the more notable examples being that he referred to students as customers twenty-six times, which accounts approximately one-third of the references to students during the interview. Lynn used the word "customers" once and Uma never used the words "customer" or "customers" at all.

Neither Uma nor Lynn had taken any formal business or marketing classes and yet, they were expected not only to market and recruit, but to do so in an international arena. In fact, they were emphatic about their lack of training. Uma's comment that her education in marketing was, "absolutely nothing…. Zero. Zilch. If it could be a negative integer, that's what it would be" shows that she not only acknowledged her lack of training was a reality of her situation, she admitted it openly, adding, that:

> I think people in my position need to have that balance of academia, understanding all the rules, procedures, and guidelines, how things in academia need to function, but at the same time they need that other component, of how things work in the real world. And that's the difference. I think it's where academia and the real world hit the pavement. And that's been one of the challenges of this position.

She understood the hybrid nature of her job, as one that spans both the academic and business worlds, and conceded that she was "trained to be an academic". Hence, she had the highest level of academic preparation possible, a Ph.D., and still felt undertrained to take on the marketing aspects of her job.

Similarly, Lynn, with a Master's degree, had ample academic training, as well as work experience in the private sector. She noted that her formal training in business and marketing was "little or none" and that this had proven to be a challenge in her job. It was, perhaps, her experience working with corporations that led her to observe that:

> You're expected to do an awful lot without any professional knowledge, which is quite extraordinary, really, when you think about it. It does not happen in the business world.

Expressing a sense of judgement and lack of support, coupled with high expectations on the part of the university, she said:

> I think there's a certain expectation that because of your knowledge or intelligence base, you will somehow pick it up like osmosis, you know? You are expected to know or learn how to do these things and in fact, you don't and can't without training. And if you don't, you are in a… in a situation whereby you're made to feel that… Don't talk about it, if you don't know it, you know. Go off and do it on your own.

She expresses frustration at not receiving proper training to undertake some of the management tasks, including marketing, in her position and perceives that the expectations exceed the support she received to do her job. Adding to that was the notion of secrecy or the pressure she felt to suppress her frustrations about her lack of marketing education, compounding her sense of isolation and being overwhelmed. What was implicit in what she said was that being more informed and educated about marketing would not only have increased her confidence, but would have connected her with others with an interest in learning about the same subject. Instead, she felt disconnected and frustrated.

She went a step further, talking about a lack of support for professional development, and the consequences of being poorly trained for the job. She observed that “there’s not a lot of that kind of professional development support that I have seen or that has been offered. So of course you make mistakes. You make some very big mistakes.” Not only is she commenting on a gap in the professional development opportunities for those who administer language programs, she is expressing the consequences of not receiving professional training that would help her do her job better.

Both of the administrators who had no formal training in business or marketing were open about the fact that they felt this would have benefitted them in their job. They observed that their lack of education in this area had meant having to learn the necessary skills on the job, making mistakes as they went. All three participants agreed that training in business would be an asset for language program directors.

These comments echo what was found in the work of Kaplan (1997), Nolan (2001), and Pennington and Xiao (1990), all of whom note that ESL administrators are generally poorly prepared to undertake tasks such as international marketing and recruitment, as well as other essential management functions. Moreover, unless they make a point to seek out courses for themselves, there is little in the way of professional development for them.

Sub-theme 1.3: Skills and qualities directors felt were important

Two participants offered opinions on what skills and qualities they felt were important for ESL directors to possess. Their opinions are noteworthy insofar as they expressed somewhat opposing views.

Drawing on experience at two Canadian universities and one American university, where she had either been a student or a faculty member, Uma felt that:

> You can not have someone with a business background in this position. And I've seen that in all three institutions. I saw that with my predecessor here. There's only so far that a business background will take you. Because this is an academic program, you really need someone who understands all of the, the key components to running this program. So everything from marketing, which is the one place I am more than… honest to say, I have a complete deficit in knowledge, and it's grown. Maybe I'm not at zero any more. And I've learned quite a bit on the fly.

This stood in contrast to her previous comment that:

> I think people in my position need to have that balance of academia, understanding all the rules, procedures, and guidelines, how things in academia need to function, but at the same time they need that other component, of how things work in the real world.

Ornelle, on the other hand, never wavered in his opinion that for revenue-generating programs, a focus on business was critical, stating:

> A program director who's… who's looking at, maybe the research in second language acquisition and not looking at the people who are acquiring the second language is not doing their job, I would say. And is certainly completely away from the marketing approach.

Ornelle articulated a need for a managerial approach focussed on customers, adding that program directors who focus on academic programming or applied linguistics research rather than on students follow:

> A technical-centred approach, where you're saying… You're taking the BetaMax approach. 'This is the best product…' We have all of these engineers, all of these technicians who say this is the best thing ever, but if you don't look at what your customers want and your customers need then you're doomed.... Now that said, if you only look at what they need and you don't have the technical expertise to deliver then you're not going to go anywhere either. So, understanding your customers, thinking long term.

So for Ornelle, it was important for language program managers to develop the skills necessary to determine the needs and wants of the students. While not in favour of program directors who focussed on research in second language acquisition, it should be noted that Ornelle was not opposed to other types of research. In fact, he felt that market research was an important aspect of his job, but that one of the challenges he faced was "having the time to build up your research tools and then having the time to actually implement them and analyze them, that is probably the most difficult part, I think, of what we do." So even though he had the training in how to conduct market research, he felt the demands of his job did not always allow him sufficient time to implement what he had learned in his graduate-level business classes.

As a program director, he may have had some control over how he budgeted his time. It was not clear if this lack of time was due to a prioritization of tasks that nudged market research into a less urgent category than some other tasks despite the fact that it was important, or if the perceived lack of time was, rather, a reflection of his values that did not place as much importance on market research. His answers would seem to suggest the former scenario, but it is impossible to say for certain that this is the case.

Each of the administrators faced obstacles with regards to marketing their programs. Whether it was lack of training (Lynn and Uma), a perceived lack of institutional support to develop professionally (Lynn) or a lack of time to undertake marketing-related activities that were central to their work (Ornelle), all the participants expressed that they faced some challenges.

Major theme #2: International scope of ESL programs

By the nature of their existence, ESL programs have an international focus, as their student population is made up of non-native speakers of English, most of whom reside in countries where English is not the primary language. But beyond the obvious, the interviews revealed some specific aspects of the international scope of ESL programs. Lynn noted that her programs were targeted to audiences "on campus, in Calgary and internationally" and Ornelle explained that "working in international education is far more complicated because you… you're working at an international level". The program directors identified that the context of their work extended far beyond the perimeter of the campus and even the local community and this made their work more complicated. This section will unpack some of the complexities identified by the participants.

Sub-theme 2.1: The need for travel and cross-cultural competence in business and marketing

All three participants unanimously agreed that ESL program directors need to understand the international context in which their programs were situated, as well as have cross-cultural competence in business and marketing practices.

Lynn felt that travelling to other countries, rather than having prospective partners or students travel to Calgary all the time, was an important aspect of her work, saying that it was essential part of "creating relationships, especially with international partners". She noted that she had taken direction from the university with regards to her international marketing and travel, pursuing countries that the institution as a whole had determined were of interest. She says:

> We targeted the… sort of… geographical areas that were important to the university namely Asia and Latin America to see what we could do with that. So we … we really found great success in those markets… Mexico, Latin America and also China.

Uma also noted that her job had also involved travel to foreign countries, describing how she adapted her approaches to marketing and even to her attire, while on a university-sponsored trip to Qatar:

> More important than the language is understanding the culture, so that even if you do have a monolingual person on your marketing team, that they are very culturally aware and in tune to the marketing practices that are used abroad. And I think particularly, in the Middle East, I found that to be very effective the two times I've been to Qatar or talking about our program. I know that the students responded to me quite well because I was very respectful of their culture. I dressed a certain way. I knew bits and pieces of the languages where I was able to sort of interface with students and parents on a different level.

She further notes that she felt her approach was successful to personal factors that went beyond dress or business practices:

> And I think, part of it, and I don't want this to be misconstrued or taken in a different way, is the fact that I wasn't Caucasian. I wasn't perceived to be a threat. And I think in a culture where the women are so isolated from the men, having a male marketing person may not always be the most effective strategy, when you're trying to have female students who want their questions answered, but answered in a way that's comfortable for them and their parents, 'cause their parents don't feel comfortable with them talking to a man alone, because they're unmarried.

The need for creating a sense of comfort and respect were themes which ran through Uma's interview. She talked about the need for cultural sensitivity when developing marketing materials, warning that:

> There's an assumption in our marketing that, number one, people are going to understand the images that we put forth when they're done from a Western perspective. What we find funny may not be funny overseas, or humorous or what have you.

She added that, "… we can't apply Canadian marketing rules, you know, overseas, I mean that's a big mistake…" She did not, however, elaborate on what "Canadian marketing rules" might be.

In addition to applying cultural sensitivity to marketing practices, she also discussed how she incorporated this into her approach to programming and students, saying:

> They're coming from diverse backgrounds where you have to run a program that is culturally sensitive, culturally inclusive, religiously sensitive and inclusive of all the varying holidays and celebrations and observances that our students have and I've tried to do my best with that, so that if it's Ramadan or if it's Buddha's birthday or if it's, you know, Shivaratri or what have you, we have students from all religions, from all cultures, and I've always made it known to the students that when it is a special day of observance for them, that they are free to leave class, that they will not be penalized for not being there, because it's the same as Christian students getting Christmas off.

From these comments it seems evident that cultural sensitivity was an important factor in her work and that the imposition of hegemonic, Eurocentric values, assumptions and business practices is detrimental to international education marketing.

While Lynn talked about the need to meet international partners in their homeland, and Uma focussed on the need for cultural sensitivity and understanding, Ornelle focussed on the cultural differences when it comes to how relationships are formed with international partners and the time required for these relationships to develop:

> In North America we tend to be… to look at things in a very efficient manner, what are the outcomes, and that's it. That's how we tend to analyze things and how we tend to organize our business processes. And large institutions tend to not really work in that way. And culturally, a lot of places rely more on personal relationships…And personal relationships take a lot of time. So, we can very quickly determine, assess someone's needs… 'OK, this is the product for you'. We can come up with a good price, we can do all of those sorts of things, but the institution, they need to develop a relationship with us and they need to build trust and good will. And culturally, that's also the case. So, you can not go into a new market, for example, and expect that they're just going to line up, that it's going to take years to develop, to develop the awareness of your program, and then to generate the understanding and the good will towards your program, so that you can actually do business. With individuals it takes years. With institutions it can take far, far longer than that. I've been working with institutions where what I recommended eight years ago, they're doing… they're going to start doing nine years later.

For Lynn, what was most important was being aligned with and in synch with the institutional goals and vision. For Uma, it was important to identify personally and professionally with those whom she met in an international context, adapting to the needs of the other while she was abroad. For Ornelle, patience and time to cultivate relationships with international partners and students was key. So, while all three directors had deep insights and convictions on what it means to work in an international context, their approaches varied considerably.

Sub-theme 2.2: The need for a multi-lingual approach to marketing

As previously noted, all three program directors were fluent in at least one foreign language. Moreover, they all took a multi-lingual approach to program promotion.

Lynn said that they had “designed brochures over the years, both English and Spanish… bilingual versions of brochures”. In the documentation she had provided to me prior to the interview, there were brochures in English, Spanish, Japanese, Arabic and French.

Uma felt that having staff who spoke more than one language was an advantage, saying:

> We are, I think, in a very good position, because between the marketing coordinator, [name], and myself, the languages that we speak cover 50% of the world’s population, ’cause I would have India covered, which is about 1.4 billion people. And he would have China and all of the other Chinese areas of the world, like Singapore, Hong Kong, Taipei, covered, and we’re looking at about another 1.5 billion people there. So, between the two of us, I think, it’s absolutely

> essential when you're marketing internationally, that you have people who are not only proficient in English, but also speak other languages.

Like Lynn, Uma felt that a multi-lingual approach to marketing materials such as websites and brochures was important:

> We live in a country that's officially bilingual, yet our marketing is simply monolingual, and that's not going to fly overseas.…Language barriers, I think, having marketing materials or things that are very legalistic, whether it's admissions or registration processes, I think it's very important to have those in at least the top five languages that are spoken universally. Or if not those five, the top five or six that represent your student profile. And that's what we've chosen to do as a program.

She later identified that in addition to English, the five languages in which they had printed materials were Arabic, Spanish, Russian, Farsi and Japanese.

Although Ornelle did not name the foreign languages used in their marketing materials during the interview, he confirmed that he himself spoke Japanese and used it in his marketing practices. A brief survey of the program website ("English Language Program," n.d.) revealed that it produced brochures in English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Spanish. In addition, it offered videos on the website in Mandarin, Japanese, French and Spanish.

From this we can conclude that all three programs felt that it was important to create promotional materials in Spanish and Japanese. In addition, other languages that were considered important were Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Korean and Russian. In addition, all three programs have made an effort to take a multi-lingual approach to program promotion and reach predominant target markets in their native language, as well as in English.

Sub-theme 2.3: How global factors affect ESL programs

As I have pointed out elsewhere (Eaton, 2003b, 2005b), ESL programs, and by extension their enrolments and revenue, are often at the mercy of economic and political factors that occur at an international level and are well beyond the control of the program directors. For example, in 1997 the "Asian flu", also known as the International Monetary Fund or IMF crisis, hit the markets. The IMF describes the situation like this:

> The financial crisis that erupted in Asia in mid-1997 led to sharp declines in the currencies, stock markets, and other asset prices of a number of Asian countries …; threatened these countries' financial systems; and disrupted their real economies, with large contractions in activity that created a human crisis alongside the financial one. In addition to its severe effects in Asia, the crisis has put pressure on emerging markets outside the region; contributed to virulent contagion and volatility in international financial markets; and is expected to halve the rate of world growth in both 1998 and 1999, from the rates of some 4 percent that were projected pre-crisis for both years, to an estimated outcome of about 2 percent. ("A Factsheet - January 1999: The IMF's Response to the Asian Crisis," 1999)

The impact of this on ESL programs was clear. In 1998 thousands of Korean, Japanese and other Asian students opted to stay home, causing a dramatic and sudden decrease in the ESL enrolment numbers of students from these countries.

In 2001 the World Trade Center in New York was destroyed and for a time North America was no longer considered a "safe" destination for international students. Enrollments dropped again. In 2003, the war in Iraq had a similar effect on educational programs relying on foreign student registration.

The situation worsened in Canada in 2003 when Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) caused the World Health Organization (WHO) to recommend that anyone with travel plans to Toronto "consider postponing all but essential travel" ("World Health Organization Update 37 - WHO extends its SARS-related travel advice to Beijing and Shanxi Province in China and to Toronto Canada," April 23 2003).

Language programs in and around Toronto were hit hard. This study has demonstrated the difficulty in obtaining public documentation relating to ESL program enrollments. The researcher was unable to confirm, through empirical data relating to program registrations, what the actual decline in registrations in ESL programs was. However, anecdotal reports from the field and previous research on marketing indicate that registrations in language programs across the country dropped significantly at that time. International students and their parents may not know that Calgary or Vancouver are thousands of kilometers away from Toronto and hardly affected by SARS, but the reality is that for a few months Canada was branded, however informally, as an "unsafe" country for foreigners.

In his interview Ornelle also mentioned the SARS crisis, along with other examples, as having an effect on program registrations, saying that:

> (If) something happens to you politically and it affects your market right then and there. A terrorist attack, a health problem like SARS, a fluctuation in currency, can have drastic effects on your program. So, you know, all of those sorts of things will affect what sort of numbers that you can maintain, what sort of pricing strategy you can implement.

He also noted how this makes ESL programs different from other programs on campus by adding that:

> If there's a downturn in Calgary everybody knows there's a downturn in Calgary. And everybody's living that day to day, so it's very… it's very clear. But when the dollar goes through the roof, there's only a few of us on campus that really feel that, that pinch. When there's some sort of crisis somewhere in the world, that will affect people personally, generally, but as an institution or in terms of departments, it tends not to, unless it's a department directly related to that, that area.

Uma echoed the notion that global events impact ESL programs, adding that these factors may change from year to year. She explained that:

> You really need to know what the demographics are, who it is you're trying to market to and from year to year. That will change. And it changes a lot based on politics. And that's another thing I don't think marketing and recruitment think about. There are countries we should be targeting that we're not targeting. We

> have openly had students and parents come in and say, 'I refuse to send my son or daughter to an American school because of this war or because of trade embargoes or because of whatever. We are coming to a Canadian school because we're Cuban and the Americans don't want us. Or we're coming because we're Iraqi and we refuse to go to an American school. We're going to send our son here.' And when you think demographically that way, for us, I think it's why we have the high numbers of Iranian students that we do, because we're considered politically neutral to them.

It is safe to assume that when she says "we're considered politically neutral", that by "we" she means Canada and not the University of Calgary in particular. And so, while Canada may be, in Uma's opinion, a "politically neutral" to Iranian students and their families, Ornelle's comment shows that during the SARS crisis, Canada was by no means considered neutral. The point is that a country may be seen as neutral or attractive as a destination at one point in history and at another, it may be considered undesirable or too risky.

These comments seem to provide evidence that marketing and recruitment of ESL programs is directly affected by factors far beyond the control of the program directors. These factors may be detrimental to enrolments, such as SARS was to programs in Canada, or they may benefit enrolments, when parents opt to send their children to Canadian programs because they prefer Canada as a destination over other possibilities. Further, the responses seem to indicate that not only are these uncontrollable factors concrete and quantifiable, such as changes to the strength of the dollar, but they were also perceptual. For instance, how one country may seem more attractive to prospective student or their family, might be based on politics, personal beliefs or other reasons.

Global factors that affect ESL programs are difficult to predict and even more difficult to deal with, especially for a director who lacks an understanding of business issues, market fluctuations and training in international marketing how to complete in a global market place. In general, ESL program directors are ill prepared for these challenges.

Major theme #3 History, identity and differentiation among ESL programs at the University of Calgary

ESL programs at the University of Calgary have a history of changing drastically, in a relatively short period of time. The program directors discussed the history of their programs, as well as issues around program identity and differentiation among the various programs on campus.

Sub-theme 3.1: The quest for program identity and programs that constantly change

At the University of Calgary, ESL programs are housed in a number of different units on campus. Continuing Education's English Language Program (http://www.ucalgary.ca/esl/) has the longest history on campus, having been established in 1979. It offers non-credit revenue-generating courses to foreign students. In addition, it administers courses for students from French-speaking regions of Canada under the EXPLORE program (formerly known as the Summer Language Bursary Program), funded by the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (CMEC) http://www.cmec.ca/

olp/indexe.stm. Due to its connection with bilingual programs, it was closely connected to the French Centre, sharing space in Craigie Hall, a medium-size building on campus. It also shared administrative and management resources with the Centre. In 2005, ESL was detached both administratively and physically from the French Centre. It was moved to the Education Tower and was housed with other Continuing Education programs. It no longer reported to the director of the French Centre, but rather to the team leader for languages in Continuing Education. Despite this one major administrative shift in 2005, it remained the most stable of the three programs.

Both Uma and Lynn explained how their programs had undergone massive changes in the previous few years and even as recently as a few months prior, including name changes, changes to programming, structure and staffing. Both programs began in the Faculty of Education, which, in 2005 and 2006 boasted having the largest initiative on campus, known as English as a Second Language Initiatives Program (ESLIP) (http://www.educ1.ucalgary.ca/research/eslip.html). ESLIP was comprised of the Learning English for Academic Purposes (LEAP) program, the English for Professional Purposes Program (EPP), and the TESL specialization within the graduate degree programs. Each of these programs differed from the others, but all fell under the ESLIP umbrella.

Sometime in 2006 or 2007 (the actual date could not be determined), the term “ESLIP”, and its corresponding function of being an administrative umbrella for these three programs, was abandoned. This coincided with other changes to the two programs studied in this project.

Uma outlined a history of the EAP program during the interview:

> The program is the English for Academic Purposes program. It is approximately nine years old and it originally started off as the English Language Foundations Program and was housed in the International Centre. In 2004 the unit was moved under the auspices of the Faculty of Education, at which point it did a total revision and restructuring, not only of faculty and staff, but in curriculum…

She went on to describe how changes to the program continued after it had been moved to the Faculty of Education, noting that:

> Approximately two years ago (in 2006), it went through another revision and a massive overhaul to curriculum, as well as the trajectory of the program. The Dean, [name], and myself, developed a, sort of set of rules or parameters for the program, which envisioned the entire structure of the program from a different perspective, now that it was going to be housed in the faculty. The program wanted to become more academic in its focus and its structure. And then we became a member of the academic programs committee, making sure that everything we did got certified through that, through calendar changes, through faculty senate and faculty council. We also developed a vision, mission and values statement for the program, which set on our new trajectory as a unit. We re-evaluated our course prefixes, as well rewriting all of the course descriptors for all of the courses at all of the levels that we provide. So it was a massive overhaul to the program. And then during that time I became director of the program.

It can be seen that in a nine year existence, the program had had three names: The English Language Foundation (ELF) program, Learning English for Academic Purposes

(LEAP) program (the name it had when it fell under the ESLIP umbrella) and the English for Academic Purposes program. Name changes also coincided with programming and administrative changes, while it continued to maintain its purpose of offering academic English to prospective degree students. Uma's comments about re-evaluating and re-writing courses, as well as developing a vision, demonstrate that the program, even after almost a decade of existence, had not yet developed a solid foundation of identity.

Uma was not alone in directing programs that had undergone significant transformations in a short period of time. When the study began in 2007, the program Lynn directed was known as the English for Professional Purposes program. By the time the interview had taken place the following semester, it had transformed into the Centre for Language Assessment and Learning. Lynn had also faced the task of redesigning and reconceptualising her programs, with the guidance of her superiors. She explained that:

> The original concept for the (English for Professional Purposes) program came from the Associate Dean Research and International, [name], who hired me to write two courses in 2003; English in Industry and TEFL Professional Development. I delivered the first one in 2004. The program was officially launched as English for Professional Purposes in the Faculty of Education in January 2005 following the approval of a business plan that had been created in 2004. So that was the sort of history of it. It was English for Professional Purposes or EPP up until we decided to change the name in January 2008, to the Centre for Language Assessment and Learning.

In addition to the name change, the program had also been moved from the Faculty of Education to the office of the Vice-Provost (International), an executive position created by the university in July 2007. Six months after the creation of this new executive position, the EPP program had moved under its direction and changed its name.

Lynn felt that the change had been a positive one giving them a "higher profile" saying that by coming under the direction of the Vice-Provost (International):

> We get a much wider profile. We're in touch with other projects, development and otherwise, going on at a university level. In the short time that this has happened I have noticed a difference. People are recognizing me, are recognizing the Centre…

She felt that their image had changed as a result of being called a centre and having made programming changes, such as focussing more on projects and less on seminars. She expressed a sense of security that resulted from these changes when she said, that they were receiving:

> Support now in terms of people who are interested in what … what we do and how to make it work and our financial situation and … and… are actually assisting me in getting to … to reach my goals. So, that has been a long time coming.

This sense of security also permeated into her concept of marketing activities. She said, "We're now a centre. We're in a position to create a brochure for the centre, which represents everything we do." For Lynn, the development of marketing materials proved difficult due to a lack of identity and a weak image for her program/centre. It seemed that the process of developing an image was simultaneous with, or perhaps even prompted by, the development of promotional materials, noticing that "doing the website helped to define who we were, define our message, so that was a good way to help us work out what it is what we wanted to do and what we did well." It is noteworthy that the development of program identity and the development of promotional materials appeared not only to be simultaneous, but that the two activities shared a somewhat symbiotic relationship. The program articulated its purpose through the development of promotional materials and as the sense of program identity solidified, so too did the director's sense of security about the program and its place within the university.

Despite this sense of security, Lynn was aware that the centre's future remained uncertain, remarking that:

> I can see that this Centre for Language Assessment and Learning might morph into something in ten years' time, or five years' time, into something different again because the needs of its clients are changing. The University or the faculties may find that their needs are changing too and so for example, we might turn into a more academic support centre, as opposed to supporting international projects that come in. I mean, if the university does not support international development work, then we will be more difficult to justify going overseas to look for business.

Her words foreshadowed yet another change that took place to the program following the conclusion of this study. Fourteen months after the transformation of English for Professional Purposes into the Centre for Language Assessment, the program was slated to close its doors permanently, as of December 2008. Its employees would either be redeployed within the university or their positions would be abolished, leaving them to seek employment elsewhere (S. Eaton and "Lynn", personal communication September 30, 2008). This entire program, from beginning as the English for Professional Program in 2004, through to its evolution to the Centre for Language Assessment and Learning in 2008, and finally to its termination later that same year, existed for a total of less than five years.

Sub-theme 3.2: The desire to differentiate from other ESL programs on campus

While Lynn and Uma had both commented on the changes their programs had undergone in the previous few years, they both also expressed a desire to differentiate their programs from other English language programs on campus.

Lynn commented the target market of the EPP program in its early days "was immigrant professionals in Calgary, as well as international professionals all of whom are English as an additional language. And that … distinguished us from ESL." She further noted that, "we have been avoiding any undergraduate student work because that's very much covered by other programs in the university".

Uma discussed how the nomenclature of components of her program were changed in an attempt to differentiate EAP from ESL, noting that the word 'level' was no longer used to describe classes that ranked students by their ability:

> We changed it from 'level' to 'tier' to distinguish ourselves from Continuing Education's program. And to make our program distinct, we've moved to the tiers. We've had that accepted by calendar committee and APC, so I don't think anyone else is allowed to use that terminology, which is a safe guard for us to

> keep the program that way, so that when someone says, 'Oh, you've completed tier three,' it's understood that it's this program, whereas before if you said that you'd finished level three, Cont. Ed. had a level three and we had a level three, and it was confusing because people didn't know if you were just boning up on English or were you learning English to meet admission requirements and that would be our program.

These comments seem to provide some evidence that there is confusion about the differences among the various programs on campus and that at least two of the participants in this study had made changes to their program in an effort to differentiate themselves from others.

It is worth questioning whether using the terms "tier" and "level" internally within the University would, on an international level, allow prospective students and their parents to distinguish between these different programs at the same institution and identify the essential differences between them. Whether or not it is true that approval from university committees and councils really prohibits others from using certain terminology is also debatable. However, the efforts reflected by these comments demonstrate a quest on the part of the EAP program to set itself apart from other programs and show its uniqueness by having its programs approved by university councils and adopting different nomenclature in an effort to build identity.

With the constant changes administrative structure, programming and name, it is clear that Uma and Lynn seemed to spend a great deal of time and effort developing a sense of identity for their respective programs.

Sub-theme 3.3: Perceived lack of understanding of ESL programs by other units on campus

Ornelle did not compare the Continuing Education ESL program to others on campus, but, being the director of the longest-standing program on campus, his was the most established, with the clearest sense of identity. He did, however, explore some of the differences between credit and non-credit courses in general at the university, contemplating that:

> In the non-credit side, because revenue generation is such an important part of what we do, marketing is essential, whether it's… whether it's implicit and it's just part of everything we do in terms of customer service or whether there's a very specific mandate, there's no escaping, there's no escaping marketing in the non-credit side of things. In… On the credit side, the credit side usually takes more of a technical-centric, versus customer-centric, approach and a learner-centered style can go either way…

His comments often explored differences in management styles or approaches to administering programs. He was clear that his approach was not technical-centric and that he did not believe a technical-centric approach to program management was appropriate for revenue-generating programs.

He offered this explanation as to how and why ESL differed from other Continuing Education courses:

> ESL instruction, language learning, second language acquisition, is… it doesn't really fit the standard continuing education model. Continuing education,

> generally speaking, you know, somebody comes in, they come a night or two per week, they, they do something that's directly related to either some professional development or some personal enrichment for 12 weeks, 8 weeks, something like that. In most cases it is not life changing, generally speaking, a life changing or dramatic decision to take a continuing education course... Coming from one side of the planet to the other, potentially uprooting your family, taking time off from school or work, going completely into the unknown, is a very, very dramatic thing to do with one's life. And our students require a level of care and a level of support far, far, far greater than a local student ever would.

We can observe then, that Ornelle felt that a technical-centric approach to management of revenue-generating ESL programs was inappropriate. He believed ESL programs differed from other Continuing Education programs because international students had different goals and experiences than local students. In addition, he felt that ESL instruction was not valued by the institution as a whole.

Uma expressed frustrations with regards to marketing. She said that the promotion of her program was closely linked to marketing and recruitment of international degree-seeking students. She called for "a stronger interface between marketing of the university, the branding of it, and whoever is in charge of that" and the ESL programs. She tied this lack of understanding about the ESL programs back to the need for a culturally appropriate approach to marketing ESL programs. She indicated that she did not feel that those who marketed the University of Calgary necessarily understood the needs of her program:

There's marketing that goes on for the U of C as a whole… marketing all the faculties, all the programs, and that… that's great, and it's successful, but it only works within a North American context. The problem with international marketing is having someone who is aware of what marketing and what branding looks like overseas and what's effective overseas, and who it is that you're marketing to. And I find that the U of C has a problem with that. And I know, and I've said that many times, and people have looked at me strangely and I don't think it's anyone's fault, per se, I just think it's part of our times. We live in a very global society. We also live in a very cultural… culturally heightened awareness, you know, sort of sphere, where obviously various countries are at war with each other, people are very sensitive about certain things, and I think ….those are things we need to take effect [sic] into our marketing."

She goes on to add that:

The marketing has become marginalized from the program. And what I mean by that is that I think people in the unit know what the needs of the unit are, and I think it's really not good when the marketing is done externally by another unit… that has no understanding of how the language unit functions, what their demographics are. I think usually someone will come in and ask for stats and say, 'How many students do you have? What languages do they speak?' And then they're off making marketing materials. But they don't ask the right questions, as to who's your audience, who's making the decisions? Parents? Is it the students? What socio-economic background are your students? 'Cause that is huge.

Uma's comments point to a disconnect between institutional marketers and ESL program marketers. She indicates that those who market the institution do not understand the needs of the ESL program. Yet earlier in her interview, Uma claimed not to market her program. She seemed to struggle with the idea that marketing was part of her job as a program director, but not what she wanted to be doing as an academic holding a Ph.D.

In general, these comments would seem to indicate that the management of a university ESL program is at best complex, as program managers must market internationally, generate revenue, tend to the needs of students who may be experiencing Canada for the first time and contend with a general lack of understanding of the nature of their programs on campus.

The research shows overwhelmingly that perceptions of those who work in, teach in, or administer ESL programs, extends to how the ESL programs as a whole are viewed. It has been noted that "perhaps the most sensitive issue for [ESL programs] is academic credibility" (Jenks, 1997, p. 114). Soppelsa (1997, p. 135) declares that ESL programs are "often accorded second-class status within their host institutions".

Ornelle echoed these very same sentiments, using startlingly similar vocabulary, during his interview, when he remarked:

> Within Continuing Education there's always the … "ESL is special". ESL always wants something. ESL always has needs that seem to be… that go beyond what anybody else requires and its expectations are too high or they're too low or this, that or the other. And within the greater university setting I think there's… at times I feel there's… that English instruction is always seen as second class or

maybe fifth or sixth class. (Laughter.) I mean, granted this is an institution of higher learning, academic research…and that's not what is happening in a language classroom. I hope that's not what's happening in a language classroom.

This may be due to the fact that although the ESL program "exists within the culture of the university at large, [its] culture contrasts sharply with the institution of higher education, and as a university entity it is often misunderstood" (Rowe-Henry, 1997, p. 77). Perhaps because they differ from other academic courses, ESL programs are marginalized within the institution, isolated from other disciplines and often viewed as being remedial (Carkin, 1997; Stoller, 1997). Stoller goes so far as to suggest that the physical placement of a program on campus is indicative of the importance placed upon it by the administration. If it is relegated to some distant space that is not easily accessible then it is likely that the program struggles to claim a legitimate place in the academy. The EAP program at the University of Calgary offers an example of this. For some years, it was housed on the 14^{th} floor of the education tower. Not only is the 14^{th} floor far from the main entrance of the building, the building has a peculiarity in the elevator only goes as far as the 13^{th} floor. After that, people are required to vacate the elevator, find the stairs and walk up one storey to the 14^{th} floor. Anyone who does not know about this rather strange aspect of the building might find it puzzling, to say the least. Confusion would only be compounded with limited language skills, particularly if students are asking for directions or worse, simply get off the elevator at the 13^{th} floor and not find what they were looking for. Having the program located in such an inaccessible area could be viewed as a reflection of how little importance the institution gave to it.

It is worth noting that by the time this study took place, the program had been moved from the 14th floor to the first floor of the building and signage had been erected, directing students to its front doors.

Nevertheless, the idea that institutions place little value on ESL programs continues to be a recurrent theme. Jenks (1997, p. 115) shows how perceptions of ESL programs as being remedial affect not only the perception of students, but also how they are recognized:

> Students who successfully complete advanced ESL studies possess English-language skills far stronger than those of matriculated students who have majored in a foreign language, such as French or Russian…. Yet, no academic credit is provided for international students whose foreign language knowledge is measured at the near native-level; at the same time, U.S. students whose foreign language abilities are much weaker receive academic credit or even academic honours.

Academic credit is granted by some post-secondary ESL programs, but not all. As was pointed out earlier, ESL programs provide skills training, while many traditional academic units place value not on the acquisition of skills, but on the acquisition of content or knowledge (Eskey, 1997). This may be one reason why ESL programs are marginalized, why students' success in them is not recognized with academic credit and why their faculty are not regarded as equals among the professoriate.

The inter-relationships between the marginalization of programs, perceptions of student success and the working conditions of staff become evident. "Marginal program status keeps ESL professionals out of the mainstream of academic discourse, and their nonparticipation in academic discourse hinders their ability to influence their marginal status" (Carkin, 1997, p. 54). In addition, institutional policies and regulations (e.g., registration and admission policies) may be "negative, inflexible, and reactionary" (Rawley, 1997, p. 96), making it difficult for administrators to accommodate the needs of their students and advance their programs.

While marginalized, ESL programs are expected not only to be financially self-sufficient, but also to generate revenue (Rowe-Henry, 1997; Staczek, 1997). The surplus may then be used for other institutional purposes and the program itself is not necessarily allowed to keep the money that it takes in (Kaplan, 1997). Two scholars bitterly express concern over this. Eskey (1997, p. 25) contends that "in addition to low status, (ESL programs) are often burdened with oppressive budgetary arrangements. Most are required to be self-supporting and many are frankly regarded as cash cows that are expected to generate large surpluses for the support of more prestigious programs". Rawley (1997) echoes these thoughts by stating that the upper administration is interested in income, not diversity and that it views ESL programs mostly as a source of revenue.

The predicament of the ESL program on a post-secondary campus becomes clearer when these programs are required to generate revenue while, by and large, those who administer them have little or no formal education in business, marketing or how to make money and at the same time, the programs themselves are seen as taking a back seat to traditional academic programs. This creates some obvious tensions, as the expectations may outweigh the support, both in terms of endorsement-in-principle for the programs themselves and professional development opportunities and support for those who manage them.

Major theme #4: Marketing of ESL programs

The participants were asked how they marketed their programs, what worked best for them, and how they could improve on what they were doing. Each manager had significantly different ideas of what it meant to market their program. The data that are analyzed here reflect the participants' responses to the interview questions and the themes that emerged from what they said. In addition, the participants were asked how they themselves would define marketing in their own context. Their responses are shared in the conclusion.

Sub-theme 4.1: Market research

Uma noted that "in the last six months we have done active marketing" and prior to that, marketing had not been part of her job. As such, marketing was a fairly new endeavour for her. The topic of market research did not arise during the interview.

For Lynn, revamping the program's website was the impetus for undertaking some market research and in particular, surveying what other ESL providers (potential competitors) were doing. She said that the process of redesigning the website:

> Forced us to look out and see what everyone was doing, so that we didn't duplicate the services or the other programs on campus particularly, and we didn't duplicate what was being done really well elsewhere, outside of campus by other groups in the city.

Market research was ad hoc and driven by a desire to redo the website. This happened concurrently with the reconceptualization, renaming and restructuring of the program.

Ornelle expressed less interest in knowing what his competitors did, and more interest in “fit”, that is to say, which courses best fit the organization and how well his programs might best fit the needs of his students. He noted:

> The market research will tell the organization which… you know, where its fit is with a particular demographic……which sorts of products best fit the organization, its strengths… you know, the resources that it has on hand. If a customer doesn’t fit us, then we can’t really serve them. They’re better served somewhere else by somebody who focuses on that specific demographic, that customer.

Ornelle talked about how marketing was closely connected with other aspects of management and perception of the program on a constant basis. He identified specific methods he used in his market research, such as focus groups and surveys. He was adamant that:

> Marketing is every single aspect of running a successful language program. Marketing means constantly being aware of the needs and the successes and failures of our students, constantly being in communication with our students. So that means surveys, that means focus groups, that means assessment tasks, that means constantly evaluating where our students are, where they’re going, what their perception of their improvement is, what their perception of the program is...

The idea of continually seeking feedback and using that feedback to improve his operations was a theme that he emphasized again when he said:

> When you ask, you know, ‘How do you market the course?’ or ‘How do you market the program?’ at every point you evaluate how it relates to the customer and is this something that will make the program better for our customers or is this something that will make the program more difficult…… less accessible, less useful for the customer.

For Ornelle, research was essential and he clearly demarcated the difference between advertising and marketing. He noted that market research informed him about how to promote his program and that the process of gathering data through market research was crucial, stating that “the advertising has to come from the research. If you don’t do any market research you’re not… you’re not marketing!”

For Lynn and Ornelle, market research, whether it was conducted formally or informally, was one of the activities that counted as marketing, in their opinion.

Sub-theme: 4.2: Development and management of customer relations

All three participants did comment on what could be broadly termed as “customer relations”. Each participant expressed vastly different views on what this meant to them.

For example, Uma commented that:

> We’ve done well by gearing our brochures and marketing procedures more to the parents. Well, I shouldn’t say more, but as much to the parents as to the student, because at the end of the day, if the parent feels that all of their needs have been met as a parent, that they feel that the institution is safe, that it’s worthy of

> sending their child to – and their money; given the high Canadian dollar that's a big consideration for a lot of parents, that we've found that when we answer questions, whether it's over the phone or in e-mails or in person when we do go to various countries that we really take the time to make sure that the parents get the information that they want, because a lot of the times, at the end of the day, in very traditional cultures.... because their… their children are their children even when they're thirty.... So, we know that when we're marketing our program, a big portion of how we try to explain things is geared toward the parents' understanding of our program, as well as the institution.

Again, we can see the importance that Uma places on cultural sensitivity and awareness. Without using technical vocabulary, she notes the difference between the students as end users and parents, who may be the ones paying for the course. She seems to indicate that by being culturally sensitive, one is developing a relationship based on recognition of, and respect for, differences.

Lynn offered a different angle on developing relationships, emphasizing that it "has required some travel. I don't think you can sell your program sitting in your office in the Ed Tower. You've got to get out there and develop relationships." And creating relationships was an essential aspect of marketing for her. She repeated that, "marketing also involves overseas travel….It should, if you're looking for an international audience and creating relationships, especially with international partners and so on." For Lynn it was important to meet with partners and prospective clients by going to them and not always expecting them to come to Canada. Taking the initiative to have face-to-face meetings with prospective and current clients was seen as important.

Ornelle had yet a different perception of what it meant to develop relationships, saying:

> The CRM [customer relations management] side … is developing a sense of community among the learners and building up on those relationships, fostering those relationships, as much as possible with everything here, with the university, with each other, with the city, with western Canada, all of those things. But I can't do that without the research telling me what it is they want.

He often reiterates the need to connect market research with implementation. At the same time, he notes that in addition to the data gathering and analyzing, there is another aspect to developing customer relationships, which is generating trust:

> When an organization wants a quote for a program three years from now, they need it in three days, or two days. And we can deliver that. That's generating some trust and showing some competency and that's showing a professional attitude that they're going to respect. If they have concerns, then maybe I need to fly out there and talk to them about those concerns. That shows a level of support which means that they know that their students will be taken care of when, when they're here. So the B to B [business to business] side requires far more support than the individual customers, but of courses, as business goes, it's much easier to maintain one customer than it is to find a new customer every single time, so there's some real value for our organization to have these relationships with these,

> with these other organizations, but they do require an awful lot of work and you need a long, long, lead time. And they'll probably not, you know, they'll be very timid when they first try whatever it is that you're suggesting. So, maybe they'll start with a few students. Maybe they'll start with a small program. Maybe the technical sides of, of language instruction… that doesn't fit with their idea of what it is to learn a second language and so, they're going to hedge their bets a little bit and… want a little bit more of a traditional style, a little bit more of a… maybe a more modern style. You have to be flexible…You need to meet them half way or meet them 25% of the way. (Laughter.) And then next year get to half way. And the year after that… If you can, if you can build a relationship with… an esteemed organization somewhere else, that is of far more value than a brochure or an ad, or a radio context or something like that.

Although Ornelle was the only participant who uses the word "trust", all three participants either directly or indirectly touched upon the theme of establishing trust with others as an essential part of what they do. Uma wanted to earn trust from the parents of her students. Lynn felt that by travelling and meeting people face to face she was more likely to develop trusting relationships. Ornelle felt it was important to allow ample time (years) for trusting relationships to develop. So, while all three participants viewed the development of customer relationships from different perspectives, the generation and maintenance of trust was an undercurrent that ran through the ideas expressed by all three.

Sub-theme 4.3: Promotion – Word of mouth

Both Uma and Ornelle commented on how word-of-mouth had been a successful way of promoting their programs. Uma said:

> We really haven't openly marketed in the last two or three years. No brochures. We haven't gone out and hit the pavement or anything like that. And it's been word of mouth. It's been interesting to see how many family members we've had come through. So someone will come through and then, when they're done, a year later they bring their brother or sister or husband or wife, or a cousin. And we've done quite well through family relations and we found that very surprising because, for us, that's a different level of satisfaction, when someone is that pleased with the level of learning and the level of English that they've obtained from us and … that they would want someone that they really care about to come and also join the program. So that's been very nice to see.

Ornelle made a point to differentiate between advertising and marketing, explaining that to him:

> Advertising has… direct advertising has very little to do with my conception of marketing. If I put an ad in a foreign print magazine or put up a bus sign or whatever it is, I'm an unknown entity in possibly an unknown country that's delivering a message, in a language that I don't understand. I mean, it's… there's a lot of… there's so many… so much potential for failure there. As opposed to, if I have a student, who's completed this program and had a wonderful time and their experience here far exceeded their expectations that student will do more for

> me in terms of advertising. Many many many fold more, than that billboard, that newspaper ad, that print ad, that web banner, that whatever. So, the most effective way of me getting my message out is to have ambassadors for the program.

The idea of having students act as ambassadors for the program is a notion the researcher has explored elsewhere (Eaton, 2005a). The program managers clearly indicated in their interviews that word of mouth was a powerful tool for promoting their programs.

Sub-theme 4.4: Promotion – Websites

When participants were asked how they marketed their programs, both Lynn and Uma stated that websites and print materials were a significant part of their marketing. This section will address the comments made about the importance of a website and the following section will explore what they said about brochures.

About websites, Lynn believed:

> You've gotta have a website that's functional, that's funky, that gets your message across, that tells people how to find you, what you're doing and that message is designed for EAL (English as an additional language) readers primarily, but also for … realizing that a lot of our customers are people who are paying for people to come here, so it's also other institutions, ministries, companies and so on.

In this comment Lynn also expresses an awareness that sometimes the end user or student is not the same as the person or organization who pays for the course. She talks about gearing her website toward both parties and moreover, using plain language that is accessible to non-native speakers of English.

Uma also emphasized the importance of having a website that was linguistically and visually accessible, expressing a desire to improve the website the program had at the time of the interview. She said:

> I think what would make us better is definitely a better website. If we were able to implement, I think, sound or video into our website, keeping in mind internationally, and this has been my experience not only here working for the U of C, but when I was in the States, working at an American university, is understanding the demographic of literacy abroad. A lot of times, for a lot of these international students, they are the first people in their families to be literate, not only in their first language, but in another language, being English. And for a lot of these students, the parents are not literate. But the parents want to know what's going on. And if they can't read, a brochure is meaningless to them, as is a website. So, if you have a website where there are various modes of being informed that are available to the viewer, whether it's sound or graphics or literature, and using that sort of multimedia approach, I think that would be great for us to have. And that's our next step.… We're already in the process of translating our brochures into five other languages. And then we'd like to put them up in .pdf format so that parents, people across the world can download it, assuming that they speak one of those five languages.... English, Arabic, Farsi, because do we have a tremendous segment of our student population are from Iran, Spanish, Russian and Japanese.

In this excerpt we notice Uma's frequent concern for others' sense of comfort. Here it occurs in her desire for parents to understand details of the program either through a brochure written in their native language or the use of multimedia for those who cannot read.

Both Lynn and Uma expressed a desire for their websites to be functional, attractive, and accessible. They also felt that the websites should be targeted towards both the students and others who may be paying for the courses, such as parents or companies.

Sub-theme 4.5: Promotion - Print materials

Uma and Lynn used the term "marketing brochures" in their interviews, commenting that this was an important aspect of their program promotion.

Uma noted that within the previous six months, the program had "for the first time, made a marketing brochure".

Lynn mentioned that in her program they had "designed brochures over the years, including bilingual versions. But when I look back at them, they targeted specific courses that we did, and not the program itself." The distinction between a brochure designed to promote specific courses that they offered and one that represented the entire program, or centre, was one she raised a number of times during the interview.

She expressed some ambivalence towards the production and use of brochures, however, noting that:

> Brochures…. are really costly. They're not really sustainable. I mean, you have to keep changing the content to keep them up to date, so … It's not ideal, but it's

> pretty, it's glossy and people like to have something in their hand when you see them.

She felt it was important to have something other than a website that would provide information to prospective clients. Although brochures were expensive and somewhat impractical, she felt they were necessary.

Lynn also commented on how she learned some valuable lessons through her first experience working with someone to produce a brochure:

> The first person who did our marketing brochures, was an outside contractor, and it cost us an arm and a leg for those brochures. And when I think of it now, how I approach the whole concept of marketing and our brochures, I know exactly what I want and how I can get ripped off and by how much I can get ripped off, but I have learned that by having gone through that experience.

With no formal training in marketing, advertising or promotions, both Lynn and Uma learned what they knew on the job. The comments that they made about websites and brochures reflect that they have "learned by doing".

Conclusions

To conclude the discussion of this study, the adapted research questions will be revisited with a view to assessing how well they were answered by the data that were gathered.

To begin, the primary research question was: What can be learned about the marketing of revenue-generating language programs at the University of Calgary through interviews with program managers?

Operating on the assumption that the act of marketing is inseparable from those who do the marketing, the interviews revealed that those who direct ESL programs at the university are highly qualified, and yet in two cases, undertrained to market. All of the program directors hold graduate degrees. All have lived abroad and all are fluent in at least one other foreign language. Of the three, only Ornelle had taken formal courses in marketing, and yet all three agreed that training in marketing would benefit anyone in their respective positions.

All three programs marketed internationally and as such, their directors felt that a multi-lingual approach to marketing was important. In addition, an understanding of cultural differences were taken into consideration, both in terms of how business is done in other cultures, as well as factors such as dress and religious observances. Finally, factors that were beyond the control of the programs themselves, such as political, medical or economic events that occurred on a global level, were noted as having an effect on enrolments.

Building on the primary research question, two secondary questions were also asked. The first of these was: How do ESL program managers at the University of Calgary describe and understand marketing of their programs? How do they go about marketing?

The topic of how ESL managers understand marketing will be addressed in the next chapter, which addresses the major themes that emerged from this study. The chapter that concludes the study aims, in part, to provide new definitions of marketing for an ESL context. With regards to marketing activities, the interviews revealed that the three program directors held distinctly different views on the subject. Ornelle focussed much more on market research than his colleagues, both of whom lacked the formal training he had in the discipline. All three, however, noted the importance of developing customer relations on an international level. Lynn and Uma also talked a good deal about promotion activities such as producing brochures and developing web sites.

The final sub-question asked: What challenges, if any, are faced by language program managers at the University of Calgary with regards to marketing their programs?

Whether it was lack of training, a perceived lack of institutional support to develop professionally, or a lack of time to undertake marketing-related activities that were central to their work, all the participants expressed that they faced some challenges.

The two programs that had undergone massive administrative and name changes in short periods of time struggled with questions of identity. They both strived to differentiate themselves from other programs on campus, while attempting to construct an identity for their own programs.

How ESL was perceived by other units on campus was also a concern for the directors. They expressed that their needs differed from other programs, but that they felt that the support they needed to do their jobs to the best of their abilities was not always provided.

In summation, the interviews provided ample data for the adapted research questions to be addressed. The experience and knowledge shared by the participants was sufficient to allow for a systematic and deliberative analysis and a comprehensive discussion of the results. While the themes of reluctance, competition and hesitation to participate in the documentation analysis made the original study inaccessible, the interviews offered valuable insight into how ESL programs are marketed and what some of the challenges of the job entail. Softening the approach of the research, by eliminating requests for numerical data pertaining to enrolments or budgets and adopting a strictly qualitative approach allowed for a conversation to occur in a research setting that will permit the data to be shared with others who are interested in similar questions. The next chapter will examine the themes that emerged from the investigation and will examine some of the implications these findings may have for administrative practice and future research.

Chapter Five: EMERGING THEMES

Introduction

In this chapter the findings of this study are reviewed. Initially, the major findings are highlighted in point form. Then, the significance of each one, as well as its implications, are expanded upon in subsequent sections.

Themes and their significance

There are two categories of findings that emerged from this study. The first relates to the documentation study that was originally proposed and that was unable to be completed. The second category relates to the interviews and the data that were gathered from them. These were briefly mentioned in the discussion chapter. They will be methodically outlined here again, and then discussed.

Beginning with the documentation analysis, the main findings are:

1. The hypothesis presented in the research methods section of this study, that public documentation relating to marketing of ESL programs would provide detailed strategy, policy, or targets in terms of enrolment or revenue generation, proved untestable. This was because prospective participants were unwilling either to take part in the study at all or provide the requested documentation.
2. Reluctance to share information, protectionism and an unhealthy sense of competition were demonstrated by at least some of the ESL directors who were approached or who agreed to take part in the study.

The interviews provided data that led to these findings:

3. Those who direct ESL programs at the university are highly qualified, and yet in two cases, undertrained to market.
4. The program managers interviewed agreed that training in marketing would benefit anyone in their respective positions.
5. ESL programs are international in nature and as such, having a multi-lingual approach to marketing that takes intercultural communication and business practices into account is important.
6. Factors that are beyond the control of the programs themselves, such as political, medical or economic events that occurred on a global level, may directly impact program enrolments.
7. Program managers felt there was a lack of support from the institution and a general lack of understanding about how and why ESL programs differ from other programs on campus.
8. Demands on managers' time may prevent them from marketing their programs successfully, as they are over-burdened with too many duties and not enough resources.
9. ESL programs as being in a constant state of change and flux characterized some of the programs at the University of Calgary.
10. Marketing was understood and practiced in different ways by each program manager interviewed.

Each of the above noted statements provides the basis for a more detailed discussion and conclusion. They will be addressed individually, in the order in which they were presented.

Emerging theme #1: The hypothesis presented in the research methods section of this study, that public documentation relating to marketing of ESL programs would provide detailed strategy, policy, or targets in terms of enrolment or revenue generation, proved untestable, as prospective participants were unwilling either to take part in the study at all or provide the requested documentation.

Details about which programs were approached for the documentation study and their reactions have been discussed. Ultimately, the documentation analysis that was proposed could not be completed because of unwillingness on the part of prospective participants to contribute.

In her interview, Uma indicated that because their program had little experience with marketing, no such documentation existed. Ornelle, while willing to be interviewed, indicated that any documentation he had was not public and provided only the one-page of demographic data that was reproduced earlier in the study. Lynn offered ample documentation, but little of it offered the type of information sought, indicating that perhaps it did not exist for her program. Therefore, the question about whether documentation exists that details strategies, policies, or revenue and enrolment targets for ESL programs remains unanswered.

The impossibility of analysis? - How, what and who we count when defining language programs

There is, however, another aspect that must be considered. That is, the ability to compare data that may be gathered if they do exist. In order to gather valid data for marketing and research purposes, it is essential to decide “what” and “who” count and why. Typical considerations include registration data, number of classroom or contact hours and types of teaching periods within a given program, as well as program financial information.

Firstly, registration data are difficult to determine, as some schools have specific dates for registration and others have continuous intake. Also “a simple tally of ‘classes’ does not distinguish between part-time, half-time and full-time classes, obscuring distinctions in the amount of instructional contact time provided, as well as situations where students take more than one ESL class” (Cumming, 1991, p. 59). This leads to the question of what constitutes full-time, half-time or part-time classes. Cumming (1991, p. 58) suggests these designations: “full-time studies (over 21 hours per week); half-time ESL studies (10-20 hours per week), and part-time ESL studies (1-9 hours per week)”. Others vary slightly, stating that full-time programs are 20-30 hours per week (Carkin, 1997, p. 49) or even 25-30 hours per week (Eskey, 1997, p. 24). These variances may not appear large, but if we count classroom hours for every course at various institutions over a long period of time, these differences may be significant.

Another variable is that although contact or classroom hours are important and are traditionally how programs define themselves as either part-time or full-time, there is a move towards reducing the number of contact hours and increasing “self access” to study materials, using technology, thus expanding the non-classroom hours and cutting costs (Witbeck & Healey, 1997). This shift makes determining the actual number of program hours even more problematic. Additionally, it complicates decisions for students and others when considering which programs to choose because they can no longer compare prices based strictly on the number of classroom hours.

From an internal administrative point of view, there are also different ways of counting teaching periods, which might include: “weeks, course months (i.e., four week periods), calendar months, terms, semesters, or other artificial units” (Impey & Underhill, 1994, p. 20). If one program counts by semesters and another program counts by weeks, registration data from these programs would be difficult to compare.

If we examine the matter from the point of view of registrations in programs, we must consider the:

> different sources of bookings, such as agency bookings (which are commissionable), direct bookings (which are not), renewals and re-enrolments from former students, block bookings from company clients, and perhaps closed group bookings from other sources such as schools or government agencies…” (Impey & Underhill, 1994, p. 21).

We would need to define the criteria in counting registrations. For example, if students re-enrol, are they counted once (as a student) or multiple times (once for each course in which they register)? Impey and Underhill (1994) pose the additional question of how or if students who attend on scholarship or on free placements resulting from promotional campaigns are counted in registration numbers.

Finally, when considering the variety of possible internal positioning of ESL programs on a campus, it must be noted that different units (e.g., academic departments, continuing education programs, student services offices) may well have diverse kinds of budgetary structures (Eskey, 1997) with different restrictions. An example would be whether they are allowed to carry funds forward from one fiscal year to the next or if their budgets are managed in-house or by a budget officer for a parental unit. This may also complicate the matter of acquiring relevant information for marketing purposes, especially if language program administrators have restricted access to financial information about their own programs and must go through someone higher up to gather necessary figures in order to budget and plan properly.

In conclusion, if all the possible units that may oversee or administer language programs on a campus as well as the wide variety of courses that may be offered are considered, the difficulties in making comparisons becomes evident. Add to that differences in how courses are counted in terms of hours or teaching units, the array of groups or individuals to whom courses may be marketed, the numerous possibilities for how to account for registrations and course bookings, as well as the variation in budgetary operations of programs, and the question of how to compare courses and program registrations becomes even more complex. It becomes clear why few data are available on language programs both from within institutions and across them. Furthermore, it demonstrates the need to be cautious when considering the available data and to take into account that findings for any one program may not be generalized to other programs. Finally, the problematic nature of gathering and presenting valid data on language programs for marketing purposes is important not only for this paper, but also for language program administrators in general who seek reference points, guidance and ways of understanding to better plan, administer and market their courses.

In short, even if there had not been a reluctance on the part of the program managers to share documentary analysis, and data had been collected through that method, the analysis itself may have proven intensely problematic, given the nature of how and what counts as ESL marketing information.

Implication and recommendation: The need for open sharing of and access to information

Canadian universities are considered public institutions. The University of Calgary has an Office of Institutional Analysis, which is dedicated to keeping statistics and publicly available data relating to university enrolments and revenues. ESL programs, in general, are not required to report such data. The reasons for this are unclear, though they may be related to the difficulties expressed above, in how and what count as program data in these programs. Alternatively, there may be widespread institutional concern related to the assumed proprietary nature of the information. This possibility is discussed further in the next section.

There is no logical basis for keeping data about ESL programs at public institutions privately buried in the offices of their directors, if such data even exist at all. ESL program data should be collected and shared in the same way other institutional data are shared. This would provide the opportunity for further research, upon which a dialectical process of understanding about how ESL programs operate may occur. Such data may also provide a point of departure for the design and delivery of professional development programs for those in the profession. In addition, scholarly research may be conducted if the data are available. One of the primary reasons that the documentation analysis that was originally proposed for this study could not be completed is that documentation could not be obtained. If programs were required to report their statistics, such a study could be undertaken with ease.

Emerging theme #2: Reluctance to share information, protectionism and an unhealthy sense of competition were demonstrated by at least some of the ESL directors who were approached or who agreed to take part in the study.

This project demonstrated that there was unwillingness on the part of some managers to participate in the study and of those that participated, a reluctance to discuss any information that may be considered proprietary.

It is one thing for research participants to hesitate to share information with a researcher. It is another when they hesitate to share information with one another. And yet, this is exactly what other researchers have also found. Impey and Underhill (1994, p. 8) explain that "for all language programs, there is the constant threat that our competitors will get an edge over us, will find out how to exploit that lead successfully, and will take business away from us". In language programs, administrators feel compelled not to share information, fearing that they may give away "business" (i.e., lose enrolments). Losing business has a variety of implications, including program closure, if programs are unable to generate sufficient revenue or cover costs.

One noticeable characteristic of the interviews was that not one of the program directors interviewed openly indicated any endeavours to cooperate with other program on campus. There was also no open expression of animosity. Lynn aptly observed that "everyone's working in silos and there's no…team approach". What was expressed was a desire to distinguish itself from other programs on campus. Each operated in a kind of silo, it seemed, acknowledging the others and at times, trying to differentiate themselves from one another, without any desire to pool resources or work together. The idea of institutional marketing, as opposed to marketing individual programs, never emerged during any of the interviews. That is to say, that collaboration among programs was not expressed by any of the participants.

Instead of subscribing to the philosophy that leaders learning from each other raises the bar for all (Fullan, 2006, p. 77), there is instead a tendency for language program administrators to guard information about enrolments, recruitment and marketing out of a sense of fear and apprehension. While some would argue that competition increases the need for efficiency and quality-driven programs (Nolan, 2001), the reality is that once administrators regard their peers as competitors rather than colleagues, they lose the inclination to discuss problems openly. This means that they also lose the opportunity to learn from one another as peers and advance the profession. Until such time as a community of collaboration is developed among ESL directors, this atmosphere of reticence is unlikely to disappear.

Implication and recommendation: The need for a professional community rooted in collegiality, rather than competition

There is a need to build collegiality among managers in this profession. Reporting statistical data regarding enrolments and revenues of ESL programs at public institutions would help to facilitate a collegial atmosphere, in part, because it would eliminate the need for program managers to feel protective of their information. If all programs were required to be publicly accountable to their equally public parent institutions, the playing field would be levelled and program directors could begin to cooperate, as other academic department heads and deans are encouraged to do.

Creating a sense of collegiality among peers, such as that which academic scholars seek through conferences and shared research, would require negotiating, or at least beginning discussions around, the very nature of what it means to direct an ESL programs. This includes a negotiation of the tensions that exist between the need to generate revenue and the desire to serve students.

The challenge is then, to “raise the bar”, as Fullan (2006, p. 77) says so that all administrators build their capacity to engage in a more proactive and reflective style of managing, rather than a reactive one. One goal could be to change the perception of ESL programs such that they are valued by the institution in terms that extend beyond their monetary value. Fullan (2006, p. 60) challenges practitioners and researchers to “assume…. that one reason the situation is not working is that people do not know how to improve it, or they do not believe it can be improved.”

It would stand to reason, then, that the first step would be to entertain the possibility that the situation for ESL program directors can indeed be improved. The Australian report by Quay Connection (2000, p. 14) supports this notion. Their report notes that in terms of marketing “there are … great examples of good practice and people with strong skills but there isn’t a systematic way to learn from these or to use skilled services to mentor others”. One way for this to happen is to encourage dialogue and allow for professional development and training opportunities for administrators through attendance at conferences (Klinghammer, 1997; Rowe-Henry, 1997).

Impey and Underhill (1994) note a fact about conferences that is often overlooked in the literature on language program administration when they observe that “for many people, the real benefit of attending meetings and conferences of national associations is not so much the formal business that is conducted, but rather comes from the trade gossip” (p. 18). This trade gossip might include such vital information as the names of agents who are not trustworthy, which trade fairs are worth the money to attend and which embassies are most helpful when students come to enquire about educational opportunities. This is the type of marketing information that can be exchanged among peers who treat one another collegially within a professional network. But in order to access the professional networks, administrators must pull themselves away from the demands on their time which create the crisis management norm in many language programs.

Emerging theme #3: Those who direct ESL programs at the university are highly qualified, and yet in two cases, undertrained to market.

This study has presented data showing that the ESL directors who participated all held a minimum of a Master's degree, were multilingual and had international experience. It is fair to say that these are highly educated, well-spoken individuals who whose professional backgrounds gave them comprehensive qualifications and credentials. However, their jobs as program directors required them to undertake the task of international marketing, a task for which two of the three of the participants had no training; they learned on the job, as Lynn indicated in her interview. Ornelle's interview responses reflected his business and marketing training. His repeated use of the word "customer", "management", "market research" and other business terms, and general ease of expression when he spoke about marketing showed that he had a more profound understanding of the subject, from a business perspective, than his colleagues.

It is important to differentiate, then, between being qualified to be an ESL director and being trained to compete for students in an international marketplace. Since it is clear that program enrolments and revenues depend on marketing and recruitment, it stands to reason that program directors not only need to be academically qualified, they need also to be trained in what this means and how to go about doing it.

Implication and recommendation: The need to train ESL directors in marketing

As this study focuses on the University of Calgary, and since the university also offers graduate level programs in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), it seemed reasonable to survey the course offerings to ascertain what, if any, courses might prepare students for an administrative role in the field. An examination of the Graduate Division of Educational Research's website ("Teaching English as a second language," n.d.) for the specialization of TESL revealed that the course offerings spanned assessment, pedagogy and teaching methodology, materials development, curricula design, intercultural communication and a practicum. There were no courses offered on program management or marketing.

This research has shown that program directors hold a minimum of a Master's degree. If, in the tradition of educational administration, training in leadership and management are provided at the graduate level, it would be logical for M.Ed. or Ph.D. programs in TESL to offer courses in administration, since graduates of these programs would likely be those identified as having the qualifications to lead ESL programs.

Ornelle's experience showed that unless an individual makes a conscious effort to incorporate business training into their graduate work, then they will not receive any education in program management.

One recommendation is that graduate programs in TESL collaborate either with the business faculty on campus, or the educational leadership, administration or management departments within their own faculties, to provide future ESL program directors with the opportunity to receive an education in marketing or at the very least, in educational administration. Until ESL program managers can become as trained as they are qualified, they will likely continue to perform at less than optimal levels marketing at the international and local levels.

Emerging theme #4: The program managers interviewed agreed that training in marketing would benefit anyone in their respective positions.

Giving weight to the recommendation that program managers need to be trained in marketing is the participants' unanimous agreement that anyone in their position would benefit from such training. Regardless of their training, experience and management styles and philosophies, all the participants expressed the idea that training to do their jobs – especially the management and marketing aspects of their jobs – would be helpful. Although this conclusion differs from the previous one, they are linked. Thus, they share the same implications for research and practice. Conclusion #4, as outlined here, serves to reinforce the recommendations made above.

Emerging theme #5: ESL programs are international in nature and as such, require a multi-lingual approach to marketing that takes intercultural communication and business practices into account.

It is not necessary to review the demographic information provided by Ornelle to know that ESL programs are international in nature. They serve non-native speakers of English and as such, their enrolments will be comprised of those who are either foreign nationals or those who have immigrated to Canada from elsewhere. All of the programs whose directors participated in this study offered marketing materials in other languages. There is more to this task, perhaps, than meets the eye.

Implication and recommendation: The task of producing multilingual materials for an international audience must be appreciated and valued as a time-consuming task requiring a complex skill set.

The production of marketing materials for an international audience should not be viewed as a small feat. It requires that text for the materials is first prepared in English. Then, an appropriate translator must be found. Language program directors are well aware of the fact that they, perhaps more so than other programs, may be harshly judged for grammatical or linguistic mistakes in their publicity material. There may be an underlying belief, however erroneous, that if a language program has orthographic or grammatical errors in its publicly available materials, its quality as a program is dubious. It is essential that language programs provide impeccable translations that take into account meaning, form and cultural connotations. Thus, the task of securing a translator, and perhaps a second translator to proof-read and collaborate, may be necessary. This person will no doubt have to work to a deadline, as brochures are often required for specific reasons, such as an upcoming trade fair or the arrival of international visitors to the university. A perfect translation will need to be produced in a timely manner.

Next, the materials will need to be designed. Cultural considerations may come into play during the graphic design phase of materials production. Photographs that are suitable for one audience may not be suitable for another, as Uma noted in her interview:

> I think a lot of universities have chosen not to put people in their marketing of … and it's all about old buildings with ivy on them, because it's safe, and that does work. And for some schools it doesn't work.

The selection of photographs for inclusion in international marketing materials can be a somewhat arduous task, as images that are not only inoffensive, but also convey messages of safety, dignity, and an enjoyable learning environment are sometimes difficult to capture in a single shot. Nevertheless, this is what must be achieved.

The more types of media that are used (print, web, video) the more complexities there are that must be addressed each and every time. Hence, it is essential to recognize that the production of multilingual marketing materials that are to be truly effective requires mindful consideration of cultural factors (which assumes that an understanding of these cultural factors is present to begin with), an unrelenting demand for high quality translation of copy and an investment of time and resources to produce appropriate materials.

Emerging theme #6: Factors that are beyond the control of the programs themselves, such as political, medical or economic events that occurred on a global level, may directly impact program enrolments.

This research has provided evidence for what was asserted in previous work, but only supported by anecdotal evidence (Eaton, 2003b, 2005b; Impey & Underhill, 1994); specifically that global factors affect ESL registrations. None of the interview questions asked participants to comment on this theme, and yet both Ornelle and Uma took the initiative to address this subject and discuss it at some length.

As has been mentioned, it has proven all but impossible to obtain numerical data relating to ESL program registrations. As a result, the only evidence to support this claim until this study has been anecdotal. This study has provided qualitative evidence through the interviews that confirm the assertion that political (e.g., war), economic (e.g., IMF crisis) and even medical situations (e.g., SARS) that occur on a national or international level may have a direct impact on the number of students who register in ESL programs.

Moreover, specific events may affect ESL registrations in one country, thus driving students to other countries that are seen to be safer at that particular moment. For example, during the SARS crisis in 2003, many students wishing to take ESL, along with their parents or others who help them make their decision about where to study, may have chosen other countries over Canada during that time, as Canada was essentially deemed an unsafe destination by the WHO ("World Health Organization Update 37 - WHO extends its SARS-related travel advice to Beijing and Shanxi Province in China and to Toronto Canada," April 23 2003).

Implications – The need to know how critical incidents affect ESL enrolments

This conclusion has significant implications for future research. Now that some evidence has been gathered, it allows for further exploration into the subject of how global factors affect ESL programs. This may, in turn, lead to studies on how global factors affect international education as a whole. It would benefit administrators who work in language programs to know how much registrations have declined during a time of crisis. This would first involve identifying the critical incident. Then, it would be essential to agree upon a time frame for the study, that is to say deciding when, for the purposes of a study, the incident began and ended. After these decisions had been made, an examination of registration data for a period before the incident would be necessary to assess, as much as possible, a “control group”. Then, a similar assessment of registration data during and after the critical incident would provide evidence as to how the critical incident had affected registrations. Such a study could be conducted at a number of institutions to add depth and validity to the investigation.

The timeline included in this study that outlines the development of ESL programs internationally demonstrates some correlations between key events and the evolution of ESL programming (see Appendix). While the timeline does not attempt to show cause and effect, correlations are noted. A more thorough investigation into how critical global events affect language programs is necessary to determine what relationships might exist between key incidents and ESL programs.

If researchers could determine how global factors affect these programs it would help them to plan their marketing, budgeting and general operations. Both ESL directors and administrators would recognize the dip as a temporary fluctuation in enrolment due to external factors and would not be cause for great alarm. In essence, if a “boom and bust” cycle for ESL, or other international education programs, could be determined, it may help with long term planning and understanding of how these programs operate. Staczek (1997, p. 223) recommends that for ESL programs specifically, “institutions should allow a budgetary carry-over of surplus from one year end to the next”. Doing so would allow for longer term planning and the resources to maintain programs.

Recommendations – Plan for fluctuations

It is not enough that institutions recognize that there are factors beyond the control of any administrator that influence enrolments. Plans must be made and executed to allow for such fluctuations. Impey and Underhill (1994, p. 24) call for ESL programs to conduct an "external forecast – an analysis of political, economic, social and technological factors" that may affect enrolments. This would not only help assure the sustainability of program during times when registration decreases due to external factors, it would remove any sense of blame away from program directors who, during a time of crisis, may be unable to increase registrations or generate more revenue due to circumstances that are most definitely beyond their control.

Emerging theme #7: Program managers felt there was a lack of support from the institution and a general lack of understanding about how and why ESL programs differ from other programs on campus.

The data collected in this study provides qualitative evidence for what others have claimed or asserted based on field experience, particularly with regards to how ESL programs differ from other programs on campus, but had not supported with data. Carkin (1997), Christison and Stoller (1997b), Eskey (1997), Jenks (1997), Kaplan (1997), Rawley (1997), Rowe Henry (1997), Soppelsa (1997), Stackek (1997) and Stoller (1997) all discuss, from a variety of perspectives, how ESL programs are marginalized, unrecognized or undervalued compared to other academic programs. However, none of them offer evidence of any sort to support their assertions. It is not inconceivable, given the difficulty of obtaining data related to ESL program administration that these claims have been based, in a large part, on experience or informal observations.

The current study reported here offers qualitative evidence through the interview data provided by the participants to support what others have asserted. Lynn talked about a lack of support for training to market and prepare budgets. Uma talked about the need for institutional marketers to recognize the cultural needs of ESL programs. Ornelle talked about how ESL programs are perceived as being demanding or seeing themselves as exceptional, when he felt their needs simply differed from other programs. All three participants, in one way or another, discussed the theme of how their programs differed from other programs on campus and yet, how they were misunderstood or marginalized in some way. Finally, all three offered comments on how they as directors, or their programs, did not receive the support, either in principle or in action, that was necessary for their programs to realize their full potential.

Implications for research – The need for more research to demonstrate how and why ESL programs differ from other programs on campus

The fact that numerous others have discussed the ways in which ESL programs are marginalized, undervalued or simply different from other programs on campus demonstrates that this is an issue that warrants further discussion. That these discussions have been ongoing since the 1990s points to the fact that this is not a new phenomenon. Stoller may sum it up best when he offers the following insight, “That language programs are viewed as marginal – physically and educationally – by our home institutions represents a major hindrance” (1997, p. 40).

The current study offers qualitative evidence based on the contributions of three program managers, all of whom are based at one institution. Adding other voices to this dialogue through further interviews would provide further evidence and add strength to the arguments that have been presented. Interviewing more ESL directors at other institutions about the marginalization of their programs and the support that they do or do not feel they receive would add much depth and validity to the discussion among administrators and researchers.

Recommendations for institutions and ESL programs

Research and dialogue, while of interest to academics, may not change the situation for ESL directors who must advocate for program status and constantly prove the success of their program to institutional directors. This is a complex situation, with a long history that is unlikely to change soon. But that does not mean that an effort to ameliorate it should not be undertaken. While it could be argued that it is incumbent upon institutional administrators to take the initiative to value programs that enrich the cultural and linguistic diversity of a university while bringing in significant revenue, this may not happen. ESL directors must continue in their leadership roles as advocates and defenders of their programs, and become more vocal about requesting support for their programs. Evidence-based arguments may become easier in time, as research is done that supports the paradoxical notion that institutions place high expectations on ESL programs while keeping them marginalized in a variety of ways.

If ESL programs are to operate on a business model, that is to say, they are expected to generate revenue, then they should also reap the benefits of such a model. This would include proper start-up funds and investment on the part of the institution, an appropriate location that would attract more business, appealing working conditions (including salary, benefits and job security) that would attract top-notch staff and support for adequate professional development opportunities for managers to ensure they are performing at peak levels in their jobs.

Emerging theme #8: Demands on managers' time may prevent them from marketing their programs successfully, as they are over-burdened with too many duties and not enough resources.

Ornelle noted that the major challenge he faced in his job was finding enough time to undertake all of the activities necessary to market his program, in particular that of market research. Lynn spoke about the time she spent (and lost) working with others putting together brochures for her program. Uma spoke about the time she and her staff spend tending to student needs and concerns. All three participants noted in different ways that finding enough time to undertake all of the tasks for which they were responsible was a challenge on some level.

It is clear that ESL directors are, in general, under trained to market their programs effectively. In addition, they face severe time constraints due to the number and complexity of tasks associated with managing an ESL program. The question is then, how are they going to find the time to become better marketers? Even if they had professional development opportunities, would there be enough time for them to take part in them and reap the benefits of additional training? Furthermore, the question of setting realistic expectations for program managers is one that ought to be considered by program directors, their superiors and researchers who may examine the question from a scholarly point of view.

Implications and recommendations – The need for realistic expectations of ESL directors and programs

If ESL program directors are doing too much and operate by "crisis management" (Klinghammer, 1997, p. 62), finding the time to forecast, plan and strategize may be difficult at best for as Klinghammer (pp. 62-63) points out, "good strategic planning is challenging and requires a commitment of time and resources".

Furthermore, expectations placed upon the programs to generate revenue and increase enrolments must be realistic. If the situation is examined from a business perspective, new products and services are first researched and then tested. Some research suggests that new products take, on average, three years to be developed (Griffin, 2002, p. 297). It must be noted that this is for the development stage, which includes various tests, pilots and revisions to the original design. With respect to the ESL context, Impey and Underhill call for timelines for the development of courses (1994, p. 31), but offer no specifics as to what these timelines might be. One direction for future research would be to investigate exactly how much time new ESL programs or courses are given for their research and design cycle and what the expectations for revenue are during and after the development stage. It may be that programs are anticipated to generate too much revenue too soon and more time is needed to develop and test courses, before insisting upon positive revenues.

If the situation is viewed from an educational, rather than business point of view, one could link program development to research. First there would be a proposal for new courses. This would be reviewed by one or more committees. Research may be done to determine the effectiveness of the course and whether the outcomes were achieved. In the case of ESL, outcomes may include revenue, providing that ample time was given for the development and testing of the course. The results of the research would be reviewed. The results would be written up and shared amongst colleagues. Modifications would be made. The development cycle would continue. Time is taken to mindfully conduct research projects and results are analysed and discussed in detail before conclusions are drawn. Scholars do not expect that sustainable research produces results quickly. Yet, academic programs designed to generate revenue are expected to do just that.

If ESL programs are to succeed, ample time and due process must be allowed for their success. This however, may be challenging if ESL directors are "marginalized, disenfranchised and powerless when it comes to policy making" (Rawley, 1997, p. 97). If this is so, how can they effectively establish, test and market programs with a view to long-term development? There are many questions for policy makers, administrators and researchers to address.

Additionally, little is known about how long it takes for ESL programs to gain recognition in competitive international markets. Ornelle's comment that some of his clients took nine years to accept suggestions he made for program improvements when they first began working together, suggests that earning the trust of the international education student or customer may take a significant time investment of several years. Closing down programs or courses that do not perform in one or two, or even five years may be premature, but as yet, there is little qualitative or quantitative evidence to support this claim and further research is needed. What can be determined for the moment is that long-term planning in ESL programs is necessary to help ensure their success. Finding the time on a day-to-day basis to undertake strategic planning is the first step to making this happen.

Emerging theme #9: ESL programs as being in a constant state of change and flux characterized some of the programs at the University of Calgary.

All programs had undergone some administrative and operational changes in the three years prior to this study. Two of the programs had undergone major changes, including name changes. Building on the notion that long-term planning is essential to program success and that new products take time to develop and be tested before their success may be proven, however that success is defined, it seems appropriate to ask questions about programs that undergo so many changes in a short period of time. Are such changes a normal part of new product or service development? Are failures and successes tracked and reviewed with thoughtful scrutiny or are programs changed because they fall into the "reactive, emergency-room culture" (Klinghammer, 1997, p. 62) that characterizes the management of some ESL programs?

Implications and recommendations – Improving the situation at the University of Calgary

CLAL presents a unique case in point. Less than five years after it was established, the program was dissolved. Was it given sufficient time to establish, test and develop courses? How was success for the program defined over the short term and the long term? Did it receive sufficient resources to cover start up costs and time to establish itself during which no revenues were expected, as would be the case in a business scenario dealing with any new product or service offering? Such questions are beyond the scope of this project, but the implications are that ESL programs at the University of Calgary or elsewhere may not receive adequate support or time for development. The expectations placed on them may exceed the capability of any program to prove its success on a short time line. And success must be defined in modest terms, at least to start, before informed judgements may be made as to the success or failure of the endeavour.

One recommendation would be that ESL programs at the University of Calgary might be given the same consideration as long-term research projects. This would include having their leaders take part in an extensive review of the literature on ESL program management, as well as observing models of other programs that are considered successful. This would require defining and achieving consensus as to what counts as success in an ESL program at the University of Calgary. Next, a long term plan that would include a budget would be developed. This budget would include an investment on the part of the institution to cover costs associated with research and development of programs and courses. The plan would also include extensive market research to determine what is needed by the students. A research and development stage would follow, including extensive testing and interim reporting of results. Finally, products or services related to ESL would be developed that satisfy the needs of the clientele and provide the institution with the revenue it desires.

It is apparent that there is little pooling of resources or information among the ESL programs at the University of Calgary. Programs spend a great deal of time and effort to differentiate from one another. This study has shown that there is an overwhelming sense of protectionism and competition among programs. While competition among programs at the University of Calgary was only ever subtly expressed during the interviews, it is clear that resources are wasted by having numerous programs that essentially offer variations of the same service.

It is the recommendation of this study that all ESL programs at the University of Calgary consolidate under one organizational and administrative structure. Doing so would allow resources and information to be shared within one program, rather than having individual programs operate in silos. The fragmentation of programming would be eliminated. Extensive and thorough market research could be conducted on institutional ESL at the University, rather than individual programs. And finally, ESL at the University of Calgary could be marketed internationally as one united, cohesive endeavour, allowing it to compete forcefully in competitive global markets.

Emerging theme #10: Marketing was understood and practiced in different ways by each program manager interviewed.

The divergence of opinions among the participants as to how they understood marketing and how they "did marketing" further illustrates the fragmentation, both in thought and in practice, of the various ESL directors at the University of Calgary. Ornelle spoke extensively about market research and often referred to students as customers. He felt that brochures were ultimately an ineffective way of marketing. Lynn also indicated that brochures were not particularly effective though a necessary evil and she spoke about them at some length. She also spoke about websites, as did Uma, who never once referred to students as customers. These three highly-educated, multi-lingual program directors, all of whom have international experience and have travelled abroad to promote their programs, showed a full range of opinions and attitudes about what marketing means to them, with minimal consensus.

Chapter Six: CONCLUSIONS

There is a need for more insight into what it means to manage and market ESL programs, particularly those that generate revenue in publicly funded universities. The data provided by the participants, in combination with other sources, provides the means for a deeper, more thoughtful understanding of the issues. This chapter endeavours to review the study through the lens of constructivism, offer some final thoughts and look towards the future. Perhaps one of the most significant results of this study is the examination of the ways in which marketing is understood in an ESL context and how those who “do marketing” as part of their daily administrative and managerial tasks, define it. As such, while a re-writing of the definition is not provided, a series of perspectives intended to point towards a new understanding of marketing for the ESL context are proposed.

Critical and methodological assessment of the study

The original intention of the study was to examine publicly available documentation that related to marketing strategies or policies. Being unable to obtain such documentation, qualitative interviews were instead selected as a method of gathering information about the marketing of ESL programs. Three programs at the University of Calgary have been studied in depth. The managers of each program have provided rich and significant data about their experiences, education, and training, as well as how they understand and do marketing. Their frank and open comments may well offer the opportunity for the dialogue to continue among administrators and researchers, as the results of this work are disseminated.

A variety of challenges that are involved in managing and specifically in marketing ESL programs have been uncovered through these interviews. A number of implications for research have emerged, including the need for a comprehensive history of ESL programs in Canada; a survey of TESL programs at the graduate level to determine what, if any, education they provide to future ESL directors; an investigation of how global factors and critical incidents affect ESL program enrolments; a continuation of the dialogue on how ESL program managers define and undertake marketing; and, finally, research involving numbers and empirical data relating to ESL enrolment statistics and revenue, particularly at public institutions where such data are readily available for other programs.

As the literature review showed, what is happening in Canada is representative of what is happening internationally. Therefore, research could also be undertaken from a global perspective, allowing for cross-country comparisons. There are many questions to be explored.

The use of case study in this investigation allowed the researcher to probe the issues in some depth, asking the participants about their training, their programs and their views on what it means to market an ESL program. Even though only the University of Calgary was studied, having managers of three distinct programs, each with its own administrative and operational structure, meant that a multiple case study approach was ultimately used, even though only one institution was involved. It is important that in a study encompassing multiple cases, that the cases that are linked together in some way, either through a common issue or because of other similarities among them (Hancock &

Algozzine, 2006, p. 23; Stake, 2006, p. v). This investigation examined three ESL programs that are linked together not only by their mandate to generate revenue and market, but also by their institutional attachments.

As Herriott and Firestone note, "the potential of any study for useful, valid description and generalization depends on the analysts' ability to reduce data to a manageable form without distortion or loss of meaningful detail" (1983, p. 18). This investigation has attempted to manage the data so that the themes could emerge. Ten such themes were teased out and explored in some depth in the previous chapter. These themes helped to organize the data in order to undertake a meaningful discussion about the results and provide the basis for further research and changes to practice that may benefit both the programs and those who administer them.

Guba and Lincoln note that in a constructivist approach to research:

> The aim of inquiry is *understanding and reconstruction* of the constructions that people (including the inquirer) initially hold, aiming toward consensus but still open to new interpretations as information and sophistication improve. The criterion for progress is that over time, everyone formulates more informed and sophisticated constructions and becomes more aware of the content and meaning of competing constructions (1994, p. 113). (Emphasis in original.)

This investigation has attempted to understand the situation of revenue-generating ESL programs at the University of Calgary, particularly in regard to how they are managed and marketed. The researcher's original hypothesis that documentation existed and would be shared proved incorrect. The study was reconstructed so that viable data could be gathered to help to better understand the situation using a different methodology.

While this study has attempted to distil the data into manageable chunks that lend themselves to interpretation and analysis, it is hoped that this research will become simply part of a larger and continuing dialogue on the topic of how ESL programs are marketed.

It is important to keep in mind the notion that these interviews did not seek truth in any absolute sense, but rather sought to allow the voices of the program managers to be heard as they wished them to be heard. That is to say, it is impossible to guess or speculate about any political, personal or political motivations for any of the answers given. It was not the intention of this investigation to ruminate about such matters, but rather to understand the situation through the commentary that was actually given. It is likely that if these same respondents were asked these questions in the future, that they might answer differently, as their own understanding and perspectives change. It is also probable that if different administrators were asked the same questions that there may be some commonalities shared with the participants of this study, but there may also be new and different data provided. This would allow for the new interpretations and sophistication of our understanding of the issues, as discussed by Guba and Lincoln (1994, p. 113) to take place.

Sergriovanni notes that by taking action leaders "seek to make sense of the problems they face and to invent solutions to their problems – to literally *create knowledge in use*" (1991, p. 40). (Emphasis in original.) This study has demonstrated that

ESL program managers are, for the most part, highly qualified and undertrained to market their programs. They seek to make sense of the wide array problems they face as administrators, including how to negotiate the tensions between marketing and generating revenue for their programs and maintaining a philosophical and ethical commitment to students' learning. They seek to invent solutions about how to generate revenue and administer their programs effectively and for the most part, they learn as they go.

These issues go beyond those of simply knowing how to market a program better. At a deeper level we are dealing with philosophical approaches to education, and the personal and professional anxiety over how to deal with complex issues on a day-to-day basis. In essence, we are dealing with questions of leadership. As Heifetz notes in the title of his cornerstone work on leadership, there are no "easy answers" (1994). What seems evident is that the leadership skills of those who manage and market ESL programs is one key to their success. As a group, the participants of this study showed a collective resilience and commitment to their programs, a deep belief in the value of international education and foreign and second language learning and a willingness to do the best they could, despite a perceived lack of understanding about their programs from other units on campus, and a deficient sense of legitimacy for their programs.

Sergiovanni notes that:

> Administrators don't think on one occasion and act on the other. Instead mind and head are constantly moving in tandem. Thus strategies are neither deliberate or emergent, but are both. Indeed rarely does the administrator wind up where

intended, but she or he always begins with some idea as to where to go.

(Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 45)

While the ESL program director may or may not have an idea of how to market their program, he or she may or may not wind up where intended, may or may not reach revenue targets and may or may not achieve a sense of legitimacy for their program that would ease of some of tensions around how ESL programs on campus are valued or understood. They use strategies that are "neither deliberate or emergent", but rather, they manage their programs with a view to serving students, keeping colleagues employed and meeting institutional goals, among other things.

They, "like the surfer… ride the wave of the pattern as it unfolds. Success depends not upon dealing with a collection of discrete outcomes or characteristics, some managerial and others moral, but on mastering the pattern as a whole" (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 39). In the case of ESL programs, such managerial outcomes would include enrolment and revenue targets, while moral outcomes or characteristics might include providing a safe, meaningful, and intellectually and culturally stimulating study abroad experience for students. The "pattern as a whole" involves looking at the evolution not only of ESL programs, but of education as a whole, to understand how it has developed, particularly through the second half of the twentieth century, to recognize how the trends may continue into the coming decades of this century. Such developments are impossible to predict, of course and we must remember Sergiovanni's notion that the context of education and its administration is "messy" (1991, p. 42). But this is all the more reason to endeavour to understand the overall situation in which revenue-generating ESL programs and their managers find themselves.

Sergiovanni's assertion that "professional knowledge is created in use as professionals face ill-defined, unique, and changing situations and decide on courses of action. They rely heavily on informed intuition as they create knowledge in use" (1991, p. 41) may well reflect the situation as it currently exists. The results of this investigation concur with his assertion. However, "informed intuition" may be insufficient in the coming years and decades as a further hybridization of business practices and educational administration occur. This study puts forth a fervent call for professional development and training for those charged with the task of generating revenue in an educational context, as well as the growth of a professional community rooted in collegiality and a desire to help one another so that the bar may be raised for all (Fullan, 2006).

These are some of the deeper issues that have emerged from this study. They warrant further research and dialogue. It is hoped that such a dialogue will continue as understandings of the situation and context evolve. Further, it is hoped that the dialogue will deepen as researchers and practitioners alike become more sophisticated in their understandings.

Towards a definition of marketing in an ESL context

While the previous section ends with a nod towards the development of theoretical and philosophical understandings, this section is squarely grounded in practical matters that may ultimately help us to better understand what it means to market ESL programs. Because this study set out to investigate the nature of marketing of ESL programs, it is appropriate to offer a definition of marketing for the ESL context that may be used by practitioners and administrators, as well as others who wish to comprehend the nature of marketing in the context of language programs.

Normally one would define key terms relating to the study at the beginning of a report on research so that the definitions may underpin further understanding of the work. However, in some cases, such as this one, the research itself may shape the definition. It may be necessary to first to understand the breadth and depth of some of the topics explored through this study to see how they may shape our understanding of the very concept of marketing. This reversal of defining a key term at the end of a study is only possible when the idea in question, in this case, marketing, is one that is generally understood in broad terms beforehand. It could be argued that most reasonably educated people have some notions of what marketing is, whereas the same may not be true of highly technical or deeply complex words or concepts that are often used in academia.

And so, now that the voices of three language program managers who market their programs internationally have been heard and other tasks involved in the management of a revenue-generating ESL program have been explored, some of the challenges and complexities around managing and in particular, marketing, these programs can be identified. Some of the philosophical issues around the hybridization of business and education or, at the very least, the incorporation of business practices such as marketing into educational administration, have been explored. Approaching a definition with this background will be more helpful in edging towards an understanding of marketing in this context, than if the definition had been situated in the beginning of the study.

It may seem obvious that any study on marketing would define that it means. A review of previous research on the topic found that while the *concept* of marketing in education was addressed in research (though little relating to ESL directly), very few offered a precise *definition* of marketing before they proceeded to talk about it and those that mentioned it in passing, did so without reference to other sources. There seemed to be an underlying assumption that there was an agreement about what marketing was and how it was done. As will be shown shortly, there are a variety of ways of understanding marketing, and some of them are contradictory.

It is for this reason that this study finds it necessary to address what the term "marketing" signifies. One must ask: What is meant by the term "marketing"? And what does it mean to "do marketing"? Do pre-conceived views about marketing merit challenging? And further, what are the differences, if any, between marketing in the business world and marketing in the educational world?

These are deeper questions that call for more than a simple classification or categorization of the word marketing itself. In this section various approaches to these questions will be offered. They are called "approaches" rather than "answers", as definitive solutions are elusive. Instead, a survey of a variety of perspectives may be helpful. This will begin with some standard definitions of marketing. Following that, an examination will be conducted of what has been said about marketing by those who work in the educational field, both in ESL and other areas of education. Throughout, the voices of the participants of this study, which speak to their understanding of marketing in their day-to-day administrative practice will be integrated. The conclusion will draw these various insights together and offer a possible approach to understanding the concept of marketing in terms of ESL.

Standard definitions of marketing, applied to an ESL context

The questions posed earlier call for more than a simple classification of the word. It is appropriate to begin at the beginning, laying the foundation for a deeper discussion. Hence some standardized definitions of the word "marketing" shall be explored, so as to offer some common and shared understandings of the word.

The most classic dictionary of the English language, *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) (O.E.D.) defines the verb "marketing" in two ways:

> intr. To deal in a market, buy and sell; to go to market with produce; to purchase provisions.
>
> trans. To dispose of in a market; to sell; also, to bring or send to market. (p. 387)

There is a sub-entry that further describes marketing as "a. the action of the vb. MARKET; buying or selling; an instance of this. b. The action or business of bringing or sending (a commodity) to market."

Clearly these are broad, general definitions that are not intended to offer technical knowledge or discipline-specific insight into the meaning of the word. More precise business definitions shall be explored shortly. But first, a contemplation of some of the implications of the O.E.D definition are merited. In the very first instance, the words "buy and sell" are used. In the second instance it is defined as "to sell". There is the idea that "marketing" and "selling" are synonymous in some way. This idea may be contested by those with a business background who may argue that they are, in fact, two different concepts and activities within a business context. For those who are trained in business, they may in fact, be very different. Ornelle's understanding of marketing falls into this category, as he distinguishes between the two, saying:

> There's a difference between sales and marketing. A sales person has to understand… there's always going to be marketing involved in sales. And there's always going to be some sales involved in marketing. Just like there's always going to be sales involved in accounting or… operations or anything else. In a business these things, you know, things are going to flow over from one area to another. …. There is a… a common misconception that marketing is advertising, or even worse that marketing is promoting some sort of lie that you can use to pull people in and sell them on something that they don't want or they don't need. …. Duping your customers is not marketing. Duping your customers could be sales! And that's a good distinction.

Ornelle suggests that "selling" may be seen negatively by some people, as they may be "duped" into buying something that they neither want, nor need. He is recognizing that some people view sales with suspicion. But in differentiating sales and marketing, he implies that since marketing is not selling then it should not be understood in a negative way. And for him, there is a clear distinction between the two.

What is significant though is the fact that "marketing" and "selling" are noted as being synonymous by the O.E.D. However business specialists may define marketing, it needs to be acknowledged that it is not entirely unreasonable to think that a person, any person, might see "marketing" and "selling" as the same thing. This is more than semantics as it may have serious philosophical implications in the context of education, particularly for those who are opposed to the idea that education may be "bought and sold". Already, with one dictionary definition some of the tensions around the notion of marketing can be seen if generally accepted definitions of the word are applied in an educational context.

But since marketing is a business endeavour, it is appropriate to define it within that context. Two definitions of the word "marketing" from business dictionaries are offered, the first of which is also from Oxford:

> The process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, products, and services to create exchanges that will satisfy the needs of individuals and organizations. Marketing a product involves such tasks as anticipating changes in demand (usually on the basis of marketing research), promotion of the product, ensuring that its quality, availability and price meet the needs of the market, and providing after-sales service. (*Oxford Dictionary of Business and Management*, 2006, p. 332)

There are two points that emerge from this definition that deserve further discussion. One is pragmatic and the other is philosophical.

Beginning with the pragmatic, it is important to consider how this definition might be understood in an ESL context. If we agree, for argument's sake, that the ESL courses and programs are "products", as this definition suggests and as Ornelle does in his interview, then the tasks around marketing an ESL program would include anticipating changes in demand based on market research which would involve an understanding of some of the global and political events discussed earlier on, such as the IMF crisis or SARS, and how these occurrences would affect the demand for ESL courses in Canada.

Marketing would include promoting the courses. This could be defined as advertising, attending trade fairs, working with agents, developing relationships with partners and students and all the other activities associated with promoting the course. It is important to note that this is just one aspect of marketing, according to this definition. Ornelle's interview comments concur with this point of view:

> There is a… a common misconception that marketing is advertising, or even worse that marketing is promoting some sort of lie that you can use to pull people in and sell them on something that they don't want or they don't need. Advertising is a way of adding value to a product. So you can create an image, you can do these sorts of things with advertising. But advertising alone is not going to make a successful program. It's not doing what marketing is about.

When Lynn was asked how she would define marketing, promotion was the main activity she mentioned, saying:

> I guess marketing means trying to promote what we do and how we do it and how what we do makes us different from everybody else to certain audiences. Those audiences are on campus, in Calgary and overseas…. So, marketing means to me… uh… different ways of getting our message out of who we are and … our

> identity; forming an identity, first of all, in order to get the message out. So… it has taken us a long time to form an identity, a clear identity and then… the best way… looking at the best ways to get our message out...and also understanding there's a cost involved in doing that.

Lynn also talks about developing an identity. In marketing terms, this may be related to product development, but it seems more closely related to branding, the process of making your product or company name easily recognizable, which is also part of product promotion. Although as a program director she certainly would have engaged in such activities as product or course development, pricing strategies, anticipating changes in demand and following up with the groups with whom she worked, when asked to define marketing she did not count these activities among them. It would be erroneous to assume, that simply because she does not mention these activities in her definition of marketing that she does not do them. The extensive documentation she provided in the first phase of the study, along with her interview suggest that she most certainly engaged in all the activities listed above as falling under the umbrella of marketing. The significance of the omission of these in her definition, it could be argued, is due to the fact that she did not identify these activities as part of what it means to "do marketing". Lynn may not be alone in her interpretation that promoting *is* marketing, rather than *one piece* of a larger endeavour.

Ensuring that the quality, availability and price of the product or service meet the needs of the market is another activity. In this case "the market" would be those who pay for the ESL courses. This would include organizations who send students to take courses, parents who cover the costs of their children's education and those students who pay for themselves. All of these groups would make up "the market" for an ESL program.

The "after-sales service" would be following up with the students, their parents, or the organizers of study tours or others who have paid for or taken the ESL courses. This may take a variety of forms, such as letters, e-mail, phone calls or any contact after the course had finished (Eaton, 2005a).

We can see that this definition of marketing could be reasonably applied to ESL courses if we agree that these courses are the "products" being marketed. This brings us to the second point, which is a philosophical one. We might begin by asking if ESL courses and programs are indeed "products". Ornelle referred to them as such in his interview.

Without a lengthy digression into how we might define "product", the definition offered above can be revisited for further insight. Impey and Underhill (1994, p. 46) question whether language courses might be classified as a service:

> Is a language course a service? Is it leisure? Is it training? Whatever it is, it is intangible – the thing you are paying money for is not a thing at all. It is the learning that takes place as a result of the teaching, and the management that facilitates the learning and teaching, and the other hidden activities that support the school: accounts, reception, cleaning, etc.

Either way, there is an exchange of money and an expectation that something worth learning will be provided. Impey and Underhill's question leads to a consideration that perhaps education is neither a business, nor a service, but something else, which is difficult to articulate in terms of what is normally bought, sold and marketed.

What is intriguing about the definition provided by the *Oxford Dictionary of Business and Management*, is not only that products and services may be marketed, but that *ideas* may also be marketed. Looking at the first line of the definition again, it can be seen that marketing is "the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of *ideas*, products, and services to create exchanges that will satisfy the needs of individuals and organizations" (emphasis added) (p. 332). The notion that ideas could have a price and could be bought and sold may be a disturbing one to many people, as it contradicts the notion that knowledge is, or ought to be, freely shared. Examining the matter from another perspective though shows that the sharing of ideas may sometimes have a price. For example, if we buy a book because we think it has beautiful photographs and we want to have it on the coffee table, we are buying a product. If we buy a book because it gives us new knowledge and challenges our thinking, what are we paying for, the book or the ideas it contains? The answer is, both. And those who enjoy reading, appreciate owning books (as opposed to only using libraries) and are ethically opposed to plagiarism are not usually opposed to buying books. If we are not opposed to buying books, why should we be opposed to buying courses, if they also give us new knowledge and challenge our thinking? According to this definition, ideas, and by extension, the knowledge they provide, are marketable.

When Uma was asked how she marketed her program, she hesitated saying:

> For this particular program, marketing is very, very different than the other units that offer English on campus. And the primary reason or really, the only reason, for that is because ours is the only program on campus that leads to admission. So we don't market our program…. So what's going to sell them are the calibre and the quality of our faculty programs and then if they can get the English to enter those programs, then they're sold on the idea.... our bent on marketing is very different 'cause we never can market our programs solely, because nobody's going to come all the way here just for English.

At first she said that they did not market their program, but rather that they were, in part, responsible for marketing the university as a whole. Notice that she talks about "selling them on the idea". She shows that on some level, she too equates marketing and selling. She expresses, indirectly, a desire to convince a prospective student (or their parents) to make the decision to come to the University of Calgary. The "idea" of which she speaks is the idea of being a student at the University of Calgary. She flatly stated that she did not believe that students would attend the EAP program if there was no increased possibility of gaining access to degree programs. And so, ESL becomes a means to an end, rather than an experience that is valued and valuable simply because it brings the students new knowledge and enriches their lives. The value of EAP is extrinsic in that it may lead to university admission. This is a very different perspective from Ornelle and Lynn, who believe that they are promoting their programs because ESL courses have an inherent and intrinsic value of their own. Although not articulated in these terms, this may have been what she meant when she said “for this particular program, marketing is very, very different than the other units that offer English on campus”.

Turning to other sources for an understanding of marketing, another definition of the word is provided by the *Dictionary of Business Terms* (2007, p. 402). This states that marketing is the:

> Process associated with promoting for sale goods or services. The classic components of marketing are the FOUR Ps: product, price, place and promotion – the selection and development of the *product*, determination of the *price*, selection and design of distribution channels (*place*), and all aspects of generating or enhancing demand for the product, including advertising (*promotion*). (Emphasis in original.)

This definition differs slightly from the previous one, though both outline that marketing is a multi-faceted endeavour, comprised of a number of activities. Applied to the ESL context, this definition would mean deciding what courses to offer and then developing them (product) and determining how much to charge for them, possibly based on such things as the number of course hours, instructor and space costs, and whether or not books and other materials were included (price). The selection and design of the “distribution channels” would be somewhat more pre-determined, as the courses at a university would likely be housed on property owned or leased by that institution and so the question of space or facilities on the campus would affect the place where the courses were taught. Finally, the promotion aspect, as mentioned earlier would include advertising, brochures, websites, etc. As with the previous definition, promotion is noted as being only one aspect of what it means to "do" marketing.

The definitions provided here, one from a general English language dictionary and the other two from specialized business dictionaries, offer us a basic understanding of what marketing is and how it is done. Although we can see differences among the definitions, we can also see how they might be applied to an ESL context.

What marketing means in an educational and ESL context

Now that some basic ideas on what marketing *is* have been established, what it *means* in an educational context may be considered. Further, it allows for an exploration of whether marketing in educational contexts and business contexts differ. Impey and Underhill (1994), educators specializing in ESL, offer a broad definition that serves us well: "Marketing means finding out what people want, then producing it and offering it to them. It is both a *specific activity* which needs to be carried out as a vital stage in the development of a new product, and a continuous *process* that is an integral part of everyday management activity" (p. 12) [Emphasis in original].

Drysdale, a scholar of educational leadership, offers a similar definition of marketing for an educational context. He states that simply put, marketing can be viewed from 3 different perspectives:

- As a process or function
- As a philosophy
- As an orientation (a process that makes the concept and a process possible) (Drysdale, n.d.)

Together these definitions indicate that it is an ongoing process, grounded by continual reflection of that process, which then informs the practice of "doing marketing". These definitions of what marketing in education means resonate with the two definitions offered by the business dictionaries. Impey and Underhill (1994, p. 12) posit marketing as a "management activity". Other educators, such as Vining (2000), concur echoing the idea that marketing is the responsibility of program administrators.

Differences arise when the philosophies, beliefs or values that underpin these activities are explored. In business it may go without saying that marketing is believed to be a good endeavour because it helps generate business. But whether marketing is valued in the same way in education is questionable. This may be where education and business diverge. A report prepared by an Australian organization on the state of ESL in that country, contends that:

> The marketing mindset – a focus on understanding the needs, desires and demands of customers as drivers of successful services – seems to trivialise the challenges they face and for whatever reason, does not connect with the philosophy of being learner centred. (Quay-Connection, 2000, p. 8)

In that same year, Vining (2000, p. 7) asserted that "the word 'marketing' used to be a negative concept to educators. Not anymore… School marketing has been transformed into an essential management function".

Miller (1997) points out how this applies to language programs, emphasizing the need to "understand that marketing a language program is a multidimensional endeavour with interactions among variables associated with student recruitment, student retention, and administrative operations" (p. 309). All of these concur with the definitions offered by the business dictionaries that assert that marketing is comprised of several activities and is also part of the ongoing process of managing a program.

Ornelle spoke at length about how he defines and understands marketing. His views agreed with those of Miller insofar as he expressed that while there is overlap in business activities, he felt that marketing was its own discipline:

> In a business these things, you know, things are going to flow over from one area to another. What I need to do as an ESL professional, whether I'm a teacher, whether I'm a coordinator, whether I'm a program director, is I need to understand what it is that my students, customers, what it is that they want, what it is they need. I need to be able to assess the market and then I need to be able to look and assess my own resources; what strengths I have, what can I bring to what they need. I need to put it together and I need to deliver it. And then I need to assess how well I did that. And that, that's it, really.

He went on to give some examples of what marketing is about, in his opinion, noting that it is an ongoing process that is incorporated into all aspects of his management practices:

> Marketing is every single aspect of running a successful language program. Marketing means constantly being aware of the needs and the successes and failure of our students, constantly being in communication with our students. So that means surveys, that means focus groups, that means assessment tasks, that means constantly evaluating where our students are, where they're going, what

> their perception of their improvement is, what their perception of the program is.... So, we need to start with knowledge first and then move through the implementation.

He gave some further details about his philosophy and practices on integrating marketing into all aspects of is program and using a “feedback loop” of information leading to implementation on an ongoing basis.

> There’s a concept in, in marketing of, of having a global strategy, an integrated marketing strategy, where every aspect of, of the organization is… speaks to whatever the mission statement of that organization is. And I think that that approach is, that is the approach that we should be taking in, in second language learning. So, that means every point of contact, that means a brochure, that means a field trip, that means a textbook, that means a pen with the program phone number on it, that means everything should echo the pillars or the core strategy of, of that institution. And if it doesn’t, then it needs to be evaluated why it’s there.

Like the business definitions of marketing and like Ornelle, others agree that there is a difference between selling and marketing of ESL courses (Eaton, 2003d). Miller (1997, p. 310) encourages us to:

> Recognize the difference between peddling and marketing a language program. A peddling orientation views language program services as merchandise for sale. A marketing orientation endeavors to align prospective students’ short-term and long-term needs and goals with language program strengths, and helps students obtain the information that they need to make informed decisions.

What is clear is that marketing a language program is a complex task in itself (not to be confused with selling) and that it comprises only one facet of language program management.

Towards a new understanding

An exploration of some of the ways marketing is defined reveals that for a layperson, or one who is untrained in business, it is common to equate “marketing” and “selling”. After all, *The Oxford English Dictionary* does. For those who understand marketing from a business perspective, that is to say, they are trained in the discipline and foundations of business through education, marketing and selling are not only different, but marketing is a comprehensive endeavour that may be simplified into what is known as “the four Ps: price, product, place and promotion” (p. 402).

The last of these, promotion, was seen by at least one participant in this study as being the main activity in marketing, despite the fact that the management role certainly included a wide array of other responsibilities. The participants, however, did not identify them as marketing. It is unlikely that Uma and Lynn are alone in their understanding of what it means to “do marketing”. This is a topic that merits further investigation in future research. What may be concluded from this study, however, is that “promotion” has been understood by two of the three participants in this study as being synonymous with marketing.

It is important to recognize that because there are different ways to define and understand what it means to market, there are tensions between these definitions. For example, in some definitions, marketing and selling are equal and according to other definitions, they are not. This difference is significant, particularly in the context of education, as it leads to a deeper philosophical debate about the nature of education and what it means to be part of a "public" education system, whether at the primary, secondary or post-secondary level.

Furthermore, it would appear that one's understanding of marketing changes if one is trained as a marketer, rather than if one is uneducated in the discipline. The question then is, if more ESL program managers received formal training in business, would they understand marketing differently and therefore, "do" marketing better? Would this lead to increased revenue, more secure jobs for their colleagues and better working conditions? The answers to these questions would be conjecture at this point, but asking them is the first step in exploring possibilities for change that may benefit all parties involved, including the students who take the courses and those who manage them.

Finally, if the aim is to define marketing specifically for the ESL context, it would seem that there is one aspect of ESL that must be addressed first. That is the point indirectly brought up by Uma when she stated that "we never can market our programs solely, because nobody's going to come all the way here just for English", emphasizing that if there was no possibility for admission to degree programs, students would not take the EAP program. This means that essentially her program was a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. And so, the question that must be asked is, do ESL programs at universities have an inherent or intrinsic worth of their own or are they merely a means to an end (extrinsic worth)?

It could be argued that they have both. As this study has shown, language and international education enriches a student's knowledge and understanding of the world around them (and themselves) in ways that are difficult to evaluate and almost impossible to quantify. This personal and academic enrichment in the form of *knowledge* of language and culture is worthwhile in and of itself. In addition, the *skills* these programs provide in terms of foreign language communication and cross-cultural competence may lead to better opportunities in terms of education or employment, which are extrinsic to the program itself.

In order to agree on a definition of marketing in an ESL context, it could be argued that first we must understand, and agree upon, the value of what it is that is being marketed.

Final summation

This research is the culmination of years of work that began with the desire to understand what it means to market ESL programs in an international context. This led to discussions, newsletter articles, discussions, and a short "how to" guide book for language program administrators. After some years of studying questions around this topic informally, it grew into academic research.

This study is, at best, a beginning into research on the administration, management and marketing of revenue-generating programs at post-secondary institutions. It has endeavoured to address and answer the adapted research questions that were put forward during this study. Although these questions may have been answered, in undertaking the research more questions have emerged. It is hoped that these will form the basis for future research so that the dialogue may continue and the situation will be better understood and ultimately, improved.

APPENDIX : A TIMELINE OF ESL PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

This table shows the development of foreign language programs at universities, starting in medieval times, and focussing on the 20th and 21st centuries. The table draws from a number of sources and also shows a correlation among key world events, government cuts to education and how ESL programs developed during the same time period. This table does not intend to show cause and effect, as this would require a more in-depth study. Correlations, however, are noted.

Table 3: Timeline: A historical and contextual overview of ESL program development, with a focus on post-secondary programs

Medieval times	Classical languages (Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Sanskrit) begin to be taught in universities. The purpose of these programs was for scholars to understand classical (often religious) texts. (Kaplan, 1997)
Late 1800s	Modern language instruction is introduced at universities. The same teaching methods are employed as with classical languages with a focus on grammar, reading and writing. (Kaplan, 1997)
1900s	English language for immigrants becomes a growing concern in the U.S. - “In October 1917, by an act of Congress no printed matter regarding the war could be published in any foreign language paper unless a "true" translation had been submitted first to the local postmaster. Other "language laws" took effect. Also, in 1917 a bill became law-over President Woodrow Wilson's veto-to sift immigrants by a literacy test.” (Cavanaugh, 1996, p. 42) Notice the timing of this political interest in language coincides with WWI.

1941	Charles Fries and colleagues at the University of Michigan introduce the audio-lingual method of language instruction. This marks a shift in the purpose for learning a language. It is no longer to understand classical or literary texts, but to communicate with living speakers of the language. (Kaplan, 1997)
mid 1940s	United States military begins to use the audio-lingual method to train military personnel in foreign languages during WWII. Motivation to learn is high, as failure means deployment to combat duties. (Kaplan, 1997) 1945 - The first Intensive English Program is established in the United States at the University of Michigan's English Language Institute. (Eskey, 1997) ESL teaching begins to emerge as a profession. (Fox, 1988) Again we can see an increased political interest in language learning that coincides with WWII.
mid 1950s	"By 1953, some 150 United States institutions had some sort of ESL program for international students." (Kaplan, 1997, p. 4) The launch of Sputnik by the USSR in 1957 generates a heightened interest word wide in science, mathematics and foreign languages as Western nations compete to develop new technologies faster. (Hunt, 1988, p. 36)
1950s and 1960s	Most ESL in United States universities start during this time. (Kaplan, 1997)
Mid 1960s	Educational Testing Services (ETS) develops the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). (Kaplan, 1997)

1970s	International student population grows. Many new English programs are developed in American universities. (Eskey, 1997) In Australia, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) is developed during this decade (Hunt, 1988, p. 17); TAFE includes ESL programming International oil prices rise, contributing to recessions, unemployment and inflation (Hunt, 1988, p. 7)
1980s	TOEFL is augmented with the Test of Spoken English (TSE) and the Test of Written English (TWE) developed by ETS. (Kaplan, 1997)
1980s and 1990s	Significant increase in the number of ESL classes offered to immigrants (Nolan, 2001) and international students in Canada; The Australia government cuts 85% of its funding to public post-secondary institutions. Universities seek other streams of revenue. ESL students become a major source of income. (Marginson, 2002a) The Reagan administration in the U.S. began to "substantially reduce federal involvement in education", including "a reduction in the federal government's financial contributions". (Hunt, 1988, p. 41) Enrollments in intensive English programs in the U.S. level off and competition among programs begins to increase. (Eskey, 1997)

1991	45% of all ESL classes in British Columbia are offered by university or college extension programs. (Cumming, 1991)
1990s	Economic and global factors affect ESL program registrations and international university partnerships. (Heffernan & Poole, 2005). In 1998, declines in Japanese and Korean economies cause a drop in ESL enrollments in the U.S. and Canada. (Eaton, 2004b)
2000s	The World Trade Center in New York is destroyed (2001). The United States is no longer seen as a highly desirable destination for foreign students wanting to study English. A year later, in November, 2002, the first case of SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) appears. ("CBC Indepth: SARS - Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome,") Toronto, Canada is noted as a “hot spot” for SARS world wide. English language program enrolments plummet in Canada, as it is no longer seen as a desirable destination country for ESL students. (Eaton, 2004b)

GLOSSARY

This glossary of terms has been compiled using a variety of sources, but the online reference, ESL Glossary ("ESL Glossary," n.d.), as well as the work of Lee and Wesche (2000) were particularly helpful.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) – a more updated term used to describe English for non-native speakers. This term is often used interchangeably with ESL.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) – English as a foreign language refers to speakers who are learning English in their own home country environment, for example, Mexicans learning English in Mexico.

English as a Second Language (ESL) – Originally this term referred to non-native speakers who are learning English language in an English language environment, for example, immigrants to the U.K., Canada, or the U.S. However, in North America, it has now become a standard term to mean learning English by a non-native speaker regardless of the environment.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) – This branch of ESL/EFL includes teaching students how to write formally, give presentations at conferences, and read academic works. These programs are offered to students who are otherwise academically qualified for university entrance, but whose language skills are inadequate. Students may spend anywhere from one to four semesters improving their language skills. They usually come on a student visa and have aspirations of undertaking full-time study at the institution in which they are enrolled in an EAP program.

English for Professional Purposes (EPP) – Similar to English for Specific Purposes, except that it focuses solely on professional language.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) –These courses are often taught to specific groups (i.e., engineers) and include both general and technical language training. Often groups of students are brought in as a cohort from one country or one company and courses are custom designed to suit their needs. These courses are often done on a contract basis and are often seen as being more labour intensive, due to the highly technical language that is taught, as well as the idea that such groups deserve special attention because they pay a high price for their specialized training and expect "service", as well as education.

Intensive English programs (IEPs) – These programs are typically offered over the spring or summer to visitors. Often, participants will come on a tourist (rather than student) visa and stay for three months or less. Often, they are combined with activities such as sight-seeing, sports (such as horseback riding or skiing) and are generally understood to encompass both a learning and a touristic purpose.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) – A program or course designed to prepare individuals to teach EFL; that is to say, to teach English in a country where it is not the first language. An example would be English taught in France, where the English is not an official language, hence it is considered a "foreign" language.

Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) – A program or course designed to prepare individuals to teach ESL; that is to say, to teach English in a place where it is the first or official language. An example would be English taught in Canada, where it is one of the official languages, hence it may be considered a "second" language, but not a foreign one.

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) – This encompasses the practice of teaching EAL, ESL, EFL, ESP and other branches of English to those who speak one or more languages, other than English.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) – A standardized English test offered internationally. Many universities and colleges require a minimum score on the TOEFL in order for students to be considered for admission. The minimum acceptable score may differ from one institution to another and even within institutions, as some faculties or departments may require a higher score than others.

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