To my wife Jenny and our growing family
for their love and encouragement;
to my mother for instilling in me a love of learning
and a passion for teaching;
to my advisors for their infinite patience
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and to my remarkable colleagues at ILI
for inspiring me every step of the way.
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This study used Kirkpatrick’s Training Evaluation Model to examine the perceptions of recently hired English teachers towards a blended teacher professional development workshop. To do this, a thorough review of relevant literature on teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design was conducted. This review was used to inform the design of a blended teacher professional development workshop. Seven recently hired (but as of yet untrained) teachers both with and without teaching experience participated in and provided feedback about the workshop. Several types of activities were included in the workshop to promote higher cognitive functions such as application and evaluation as well as community-building. Blended course design best practices were incorporated throughout the design of the workshop.

Since the participant’s perceptions about the workshop were the major focus of this research, this study used thematic analysis of pre- and post-intervention interviews to gather information about the perceptions of participants. It also analyzed rubric data from the demonstration lessons to provide a context for their perceptions. Through the use of this mixed methods approach, the data revealed that no element of participants’ backgrounds consistently played a decisive role in their performance during the
workshop. At the same time, the data revealed that participants’ reactions to the workshop were generally positive. Moreover, the majority of participants reported that they acquired new knowledge about their new institution’s teaching philosophy and a minority that they had or would change their behaviors as a result of their involvement in the workshop.

This study is significant because it explored the use of blended learning as a means of facilitating teacher professional development for a population that has heretofore been underrepresented in the literature. English teachers in Mexico and other developing countries represent a population with unique concerns but this study found that a blended teacher professional development workshop based on the best principles in the existing literature can, with only some small exception, be used to effectively meet their needs and impact their teaching.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

More than two billion people in 138 countries speak English and, thanks in no small part to mass media and international trade, the English language today casts a shadow that reaches well beyond the classroom (Bruthiaux, 2010). At the dawn of the 21st century, English has become the lingua franca of international trade, a point borne out by the fact that fully 80% of English interactions in the world take place between speakers for whom English is a second language (Rudby, 2006). As a result, many see English proficiency as a necessary skill in today’s increasingly competitive global economy.

At the same time, many developing economies lack the innate ability to impart English to their workers. An examination of the case of South Korea, representative as it is of many emerging Asian economies, reveals a trend at work across the globe. In South Korea, the demand for English teachers is large and growing (Jeon & Lee, 2006). There, as elsewhere, natural demand for English education is bolstered by government mandate. The South Korean government is just one of many that has sought to offset the high cost and lengthy commitment involved with learning English abroad by strengthening public school English education programs (Jeon & Lee, 2006). For instance, in 1997 South Korea introduced mandatory English language education at the elementary level, and in 2002 Japan followed suit (Jeon & Lee, 2006; Kanno, 2007).

A government mandate does not qualified educators make, however. Lacking a solid domestic supply of English teachers, the South Korean government worked to solicit native-English speaking teachers from abroad. In 2007, the South Korean Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development instituted a policy that required one native English-speaking teacher per school in each of the nation’s elementary, middle, and high schools (Jeon, 2009).
Unfortunately, demand for qualified native English teachers willing to relocate to South Korea radically outstripped supply, leading to a flood of underqualified and ill-equipped teachers and no significant gains in student achievement (Chosun Ilbo, 2011; Ramirez, 2013).

This problem is not limited only to countries which are geographically distant from native English-speaking countries. The case of Mexico, which shares a nearly 2000-mile border with the United States, is both particularly illustrative and relevant to the present context. Despite the proximity of the largest economy in the world – and the fact that fully 70 percent of executives at Mexico’s largest companies consider English proficiency to be a basic prerequisite (Calderon, 2015) – qualified teachers in Mexico are in short supply (Helpman, Melitz, & Rubinstein, 2008; Rudby, 2006).

As is the case in South Korea, this is not a question of funding. Much of the more than $2 billion the Mexican government dedicated to English language education since 2010 was spent to increase the salaries of English teachers and thereby attract more qualified educators (Krauze, 2015). Unfortunately, these efforts and other factors – not least among them entrenched political interests (Schachar, 2016) – have not prevented Mexico from being one of only four Latin American countries to experience a decline in English proficiency since 2010. As of 2015, Mexico remained last among high-income countries worldwide in adult English proficiency (per the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] as reported in Calderon, 2015).

English education, therefore, is a problem in need of a solution. In Mexico, as elsewhere, the private sector has stepped into this breach but to mixed results. Although no shortage of private education providers exists in Mexico, research from The British Council (2015) suggests
that there is an imbalance between supply and demand that makes it impossible for Latin American countries like Mexico to satisfy their demand for qualified English teachers.

The crucial word here is “qualified.” As was the case in South Korea, the higher, more competitive salaries being offered are attracting candidates, but these candidates rarely have the desired skills and experience. As the Academic Director of one such private education provider, the Mexico City-based International Languages Institute (ILI), I experienced this problem first hand. While some hires came with experience (a little more than half, 55.7%, of the staff in 2017 did), few came with teaching credentials and even those that did were not familiar with the unique context of our organization. As a result, we were forced to devote a great deal of time, energy, and effort to providing professional development to improve the competence of untrained teachers who lacked the skills and experience to make a meaningful impact on the institute’s language students. At the same time, the abilities of more experienced teachers in this new environment had to be refocused.

To enable these teachers to meet the educational goals defined by ILI, they had to be taught what these expectations were, as well as what best practices existed to help them to accomplish them. Part and parcel with these efforts, however, came the question of perception: as these trainee teachers were adult learners and therefore situated in their own unique contexts, it was important to consider their perceptions in response to such a teacher development initiative. To do this effectively would mean coming to terms with the unique backgrounds of these teachers before their involvement in the professional development initiative in question and their perceptions to the same. The information gleaned from this investigation would be valuable not only to the teachers at ILI but could also be used to inform teacher professional development throughout Mexico and other developing countries.
Professional Context and Problem

The International Language Institute (ILI) is a Mexico City-based language solutions provider which serves its clients by offering a wide range of language services. Founded in 2002 to teach English and French, as of 2017 the organization had expanded both the breadth and depth of its offerings to include Spanish, Portuguese, German, and Polish classes as well as translation and multilingual recruitment in four Mexican cities: Mexico City, Toluca, Cuernavaca, and San Luis Potosi. Despite the breadth of its offerings, English Instruction (that is, English as a Foreign Language or EFL, defined below) was consistently the company's largest and fastest-growing service. As such, it is fair to say that the primary focus of the school was to provide students with the opportunity to develop their English abilities in the four fundamental skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Richards & Rodgers, 2001) – using a specialized learning model which was situated to their unique contexts. As the Academic Director of ILI, it was my responsibility to train all new hires on these principles and prepare them to successfully make a meaningful impact on their students.

By 2017, the dearth of qualified teachers alluded to above had hit ILI hard. In Mexico City alone, the number of teachers on staff had grown from 8 in 2012 to 70 in 2017. In 2013, in response to the first of what would become several waves of hiring, it became clear to ILI's managing partners that protocols needed to be created and implemented to ensure that new staff would be able to deliver EFL courses in a manner consistent with the school's vision and values. In other words, new staff needed to be trained to impart what came to be called the ILI Approach.

While a full overview of the ILI Approach and its objectives can be found in Appendices A and B, in its simplest form the ILI Approach can be understood by considering its three major instructional areas: 1) The Role of the Teacher, 2) The Qualities of Effective Instruction, and 3)
Best Practices using ILI Materials. The ILI Approach did not begin as a teacher professional development course. It began, instead, as a set of principles laid out in an induction manual which ILI's Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) felt that all members of the teaching staff needed to internalize in order to effectively impart courses for ILI. However, as the demand for qualified teachers continued to outpace the supply of the same, the need for a more formal, hands-on approach – now known as the ILI Teacher Training Workshop – was introduced in 2015. With the creation of The ILI Teacher Training Workshop, and in light of best practices in teacher professional development, a demonstration lesson—essentially a teaching demonstration presented to a simulated class rather than a real one—was added to foster peer feedback and assessment.

The Workshop proved to be extremely effective in several respects, garnering as it did positive feedback from both trainees and their students but became logistically difficult to manage as the company expanded in size and scope. In response to this challenge, I as the Academic Director, sought to find a workable solution that could effectively and efficiently impart The ILI Approach to new hires regardless of their availabilities and geographic locations.

The ILI Approach Blended Workshop (ILI ABW), which lies at the heart of the present study, (was the result of these efforts.) It was intended to be an extension of and improvement to the ILI Teacher Training Workshop and served, simultaneously, as a teaching professional development course as well as an introduction to the expectations of all ILI instructors. The Workshop had three main objectives divided over five modules, with the first and last module conducted face-to-face and the middle three asynchronously online.

In Module 0 participants had the opportunity to meet face-to-face with other members of the cohort, shared relevant personal experiences, and were provided with access to and an
overview of the course. In Modules 1 to 3, participants learned about the roles of a teacher (Module 1), how to perform those roles effectively (Module 2), and the best practices on how to teach within the confines of the ILI Approach (Module 3). In the fifth and final module, participants again met in person, this time to engage in a teaching demonstration lesson which afforded an opportunity for demonstration and discussion.

In addition to the principles outlined above, it was clear from the start that any teacher professional development initiative at ILI had to also consider the diverse backgrounds of its teachers. Indeed, the ultimate goal of The ILI Approach was not to homogenize but to standardize. This is out of deference to the fact that, while some new hires had next-to-no experience in the classroom, others brought with them teaching experiences which, while considerable, may or may not have been in alignment with the expectations set by ILI administrators.

At the outset of this study in 2017, ILI had 70 teachers on staff. A total of 45 of these teachers (63.3%) were female and 25 out of 70 (35.7%) were male. Of these same 70 teachers, 31 of (44.2%) did not have teaching experience prior to joining ILI while 39 of 70 (55.7%) did. Still, only 10 had 10 years of experience or more when these reforms began. Finally, given the international nature of the enterprise, it is worth noting that although all of the teachers spoke English fluently, less than half – 32 of 70 – of all staff members in 2017 would be considered “native” English speakers. Given the diversity of backgrounds and the challenge of geography, ILI as an organization had to determine if a blended approach could meet the administrative needs of its administrators while at the same time accounting for and incorporating the unique experiences of its staff.
Purpose Statement

As existing solutions were not compatible with the company's geographic dispersion or the time constraints of the senior managers who had traditionally delivered teacher professional development workshops, ILI elected to use a blended learning approach to solve both problems in a stroke. At the same time, it recognized that the views and perspectives of the diverse group of teachers mentioned above had to be taken into consideration. The goal of this study was, therefore, to determine how such a diverse population of novice and experienced teachers would react to a teacher development initiative conducted using a blended approach.

Research Questions

With this in mind, the main research question and corresponding sub-questions that guided this study are as follows:

- **RQ1**: What are novice and experienced teachers’ perceptions of blended teacher professional development?
  - **SQ1**: What are teachers’ perceptions of their own learning as a result of blended teacher professional development?
  - **SQ2**: What are teachers’ perceptions of their behavioral changes as a result of blended teacher professional development?

Design Framework

Given the nature of the current study, it was necessary to design an intervention which reflected an understanding of the principles involved in effective teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design. The research that informs this design and the design itself can be found in Chapters 2 and 3, respectively.

Data Collection and Analysis

The steps involved in the study were as follows: Step One (1) required a review of literature on the subjects of teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning
course design singly as well as in combination. Step Two (2) involved the design and creation of the ILI Approach Blended Workshop using these principles. During Step Three (3) a small group of trainee teachers, purposefully selected to serve as a meaningful sample of ILI instructors as a whole, was invited to join the study cohort. During Step Four (4), and before the formal start of the workshop, entry interviews (the guides for which are provided in Appendix D) about the backgrounds of participants as well as their perceptions of blended learning and teacher professional development were collected from each participant before providing the group as a whole with an opportunity to become acquainted with one another and with the structure of the workshop. In Step Five (5), the online component of the course (with its three distinct modules [see Appendix A]) was completed in such a way as to promote group discussion, self-reflection, and meaningful assessments (reproduced in Appendix D). In Step Six (6), at the completion of the three online modules, trainees were required to give an in-person demonstration lesson to see how they put these principles into action. This demonstration lesson was measured by the workshop leader using the rubric presented in Appendix E but also, so as to leverage the unique experiences of each participant, this unit was used to promote meaningful discussion between and among participants on the appropriacy and applicability of each lesson at the conclusion of each one. Finally, in Step Seven (7), exit interviews which invited participants to reflect on and evaluate the workshop were collected from each participant.

This design enabled the use of Kirkpatrick’s Training Evaluation Model (Kirkpatrick, 1956; 1996) to gather an understanding of the training experience from the perspective of the study participants. Though not used for data collection purposes, the activities which took place during the online part of the workshop (i.e., asynchronous discussion, online assessments, and self-reflection) were included to leverage the power of the blended learning model to impart and
measure “rote” knowledge (through the end-of-module quizzes), while still promoting higher cognitive functions such as application and evaluation (through the online discussions and self-reflections) (Krathwohl, 2002).

A mixed-method design was employed for this study. Quantitative data were collected from the results of each participant’s demonstration lesson (as measured by the rubric, which along with its guide, is presented in Appendix E). Qualitative data, on the other hand, was collected during entry and exit interviews, which allowed participants, in turn, to reflect on their expectations and experiences. Put more concretely, this approach saw the use of semi-structured interviews comprised of guiding questions phrased to elicit genuine, forthright responses. These responses, at the outset, pertained to participants’ general background and experiences with blended learning and teacher professional development prior to their involvement with the present study and, at the conclusion, to their reactions to the same. Interviews were conducted face-to-face in an effort to capture the holistic nature of the interaction with each participant. The collected data were then analyzed using a systematic process of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Hays & Wood, 2011; Saldana, 2015).

The thematic analysis of collected data adhered to the interpretive philosophical tradition that directs all qualitative methodologies. As such, participants’ statements were organized, arranged, and categorized in such a way as to simultaneously recognize the subjectivity of individual experience and emphasize a fundamental understanding of the experience of interest while at the same time taking care to avoid the bias that comes from the researcher’s personal experiences and beliefs regarding teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Hays & Wood, 2011; Saldana, 2015).
Definition of Terms

The following terms are used throughout my study, and I have included the most relevant definition for the purposes of this dissertation:

**Asynchronous Learning**: Learning that does not occur in the same place or at the same time (Holmes, 2005). In online environments, this may include discussion boards (threaded discussion), journals, blogs, wikis, email and other written activities that are completed without strict time constraints.

**Blended Learning** or **Hybrid Learning**: The combination of face-to-face and online instruction when the face-to-face portion has been reduced but not eliminated, accounting for 30-79 percent of total course time (Garnham & Kaleta, 2002; Lorenzetti, 2004). For the purposes of this study, blended learning refers to a learning environment which combines the use of supervised face-to-face instruction with some online components where students have some control over place, time, and pace. Online components may substitute for some face-to-face sessions or may serve as an enhancement to face-to-face sessions. Hybrid learning is synonymous with blended learning, and for the purposes of this research, the term blended was used unless specified differently in the literature.

**Distance Education**: “The application of telecommunications and electronic devices which enable students and learners to receive instruction from some distant location” (Bruder, as cited in Casey, 2008, p. 45). For the purposes of this study, this is an educational experience when participants, including instructors and students, are separated by space and may be separated by time for some or all of the instruction.

**English as a Foreign Language (EFL)**: “Someone who learns English in a formal classroom setting, with limited or no opportunities for use outside the classroom, in a country in which English does not play an important role in internal communication ... is said to be learning...”
English as a foreign language” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 180). For example, English is taught in both South Korea and Mexico as a foreign language.

**English as a Second Language (ESL):** “In a loose sense, English is the second language of anyone who learns it after learning their first language in infancy in the home” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 180). For example, immigrant children who speak English at school use English as a second language in addition to the native language they speak at home.

**Mediated Learning Environment:** Internet-based software utilized in course preparation, delivery, and interaction which is designed to facilitate the learning process (Awidi, 2008; Morgan, 2003; Ragsdale 2009; Simonson 2007). For the purposes of this study, this is a technology platform in which students can access online course content, communication tools, and assessments; in this study it is referred to as a learning management system (LMS) but in other literature it is known as a course management system.

**Online Learning:** Instruction that occurs when the students and instructor are in different locations and “at least 80 percent of the course content is delivered online” (Allen & Seaman, 2010, p. 4). For the purposes of this study, the term may be used interchangeably with the terms virtual learning, cyber learning, and e-learning.

**Teacher Professional Development:** The “processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so they might, in turn, improve the learning of students” (Guskey, 2000, p. 16). For the purposes of this study, development activities may take the form of trainings, workshops, conferences, or curriculum development.

**Ethical Considerations**

Although there were some ethical considerations to contend with, these did not prove to be insurmountable. As the Academic Director at ILI, I was also the instructor of the proposed workshop but did not serve as the teacher-participants’ direct superior in the organization. In
order to prevent teachers from answering questions in inauthentic ways (i.e., because or in spite of my position), great pains were taken to explain this distinction. Moreover, it was made clear that the data would be protected during its collection and analysis and reported anonymously so that neither I nor anyone else at ILI could use this information gathered in the study to affect the professional development of the participants in the study. Finally, participants were informed that they were not in any way obligated to participate in the study (even if they were required to participate in the Induction Workshop).

**Potential Limitations**

Ethical concerns were not the only factors which had the potential to impact the present study. For example, the fact that each of the participants involved had unique formative experiences prior to joining ILI may have had an impact on their perceptions of the training they received during the workshop. This is, in fact, one of the areas the study seeks to explore. Similarly, any number of demographic factors (e.g., teaching experience, mastery of the language, etc.), may not only have influenced 1) their perceptions but also 2) how they reported those perceptions. Finally, it must be acknowledged that the scope of this study was limited to the unique context in which it was situated and thus is not be transferable to any other group.

**Significance**

At the same time, the potential significance of this study to my context cannot be understated. The successful creation and implementation of a teacher professional development program based on best practices for blended learning has the potential to enable my organization to more easily and effectively train new teachers without regard to their geographic location. This could result in increased standardization across and within the organization's centers, buy-in among teachers, and may also positively impact end-student learning. More generally, as the following review of literature will demonstrate, very little research to date has been conducted on
blended teacher professional development and almost none has been conducted in the context of English as a Foreign Language or Adult Education. Thus, the findings could be used to inform the design of teacher professional development programs in any combination of these areas. Accordingly, this study could help inform a new generation of teacher professional development that leverages technological advances to provide an efficient teacher training paradigm which positively impacts student learning.

Chapter 1 Summary

This chapter began describing the professional context and professional problems of practice that led to this investigation. It then provided an outline of the research questions and design used for the study as well as the methods of data collection and analysis that were employed. The chapter concluded by providing a theoretical framework and definition of terms, highlighting potential limitations, and explaining the significance of the study. These points will be covered in more detail in the chapters to come.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Given that the present study called for the development of a blended teacher professional development workshop targeted at adult learners, it necessitated a thorough investigation into the existing literature regarding teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design. The review of literature that follows was an effort to better come to terms with these disciplines, both individually and together, so as to create a meaningful framework that could inform the design of the intervention that formed the heart of the present study.

The search for relevant literature took a three-pronged approach, with one fork delving into contemporary principles of teacher professional development, a second examining theories of adult education, and a third looking into best practices for blended learning. At the same time, given the research question at the heart of this study (“What are novice and experienced teachers’ perceptions of blended teacher professional development?”), special attention was paid to research that addressed the intersection of these three topics.

Research Method

In order to establish a foundation in both fields and thereby orient the research that followed, the search for literature began by reviewing some of the more prominent meta-analyses available in both disciplines. Of particular use with regard to blended learning was McGee and Reis’ “Blended Course Design: A Synthesis of Best Practices” (2012). As a meta-analysis of more than 50 studies on the subject, this served as an excellent introduction to the blended design scholarship to date. Similarly, Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andee, Richardson, and Orphanos’ “Professional Learning in the Learning Profession: A Status Report on Teacher Development in the United States and Abroad” (2009) provided a broad overview of the literature on teacher professional development. Finally, Knowles’ (1999) research, The Modern Practice of Adult
Education: from Pedagogy to Andragogy, quickly assumed a guiding role in the search for information about theories of adult education.

With these three texts firmly in hand, a search of the online databases available through the Education Library of the University of Florida came next. Although many proved useful, far and away the most useful database quickly proved to be the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC). Table 2-1 lists the search terms that were used to locate articles of interest in that database and others:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Search Terms Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blended Learning</td>
<td>“blended learning,” “hybrid learning,” “flipped learning,” “blended learning best practices,” “effective teacher professional development,” and “blended learning meta-analysis”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Professional Development</td>
<td>“teacher training,” “teacher professional development,” “best practices teacher training,” and “effective teacher professional development”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andragogy</td>
<td>“adult education theory,” and “adult learning theory,” “andragogy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blended Teacher Professional Development</td>
<td>“blended teacher professional development,” “hybrid teacher professional development,” “flipped teacher professional development,” “online teacher professional development,” and “distance learning teacher professional development”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not all of the above terms returned useful material. For example, it soon became clear that “teacher development” was too general a term to satisfy the needs of the current study. Despite setbacks of this sort, these searches ultimately revealed no small number of useful journals, including, among others, EDUCause Review, Distance Learning, and Teaching and Teacher Development. Articles from those sources were, at times, reverse-engineered to provide more resources. Notable fruits of this reverse engineering included full-length books such as Stein and Graham’s Essentials for Blended Learning: A Standards-Based Guide (2014) and, again, Knowles’ The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy (1999). Both of these sources took on important roles in their respective sections of this review.
What follows, then, is a review of the literature which was explored during this search and thereby contributed to the design framework of the workshop at the heart of this study. This review covers the following points:

- Defining Teacher Professional Development
- The Elements of Effective Teacher Education Programs
- Andragogy, The Theory of Adult Education
- Defining Blended Learning
- The Advantages of Blended Learning
- Challenges to the Effectiveness of Blended Learning
- Principles of Effective Blended Learning Design
- Research on Online and Blended Teacher Professional Development Programs

In addition to reviewing the literature on teacher professional development, adult learning theory, and blended learning course design, this review also identifies gaps in the existing research on blended learning in teacher education in international contexts to justify the significance of this study.

**Defining Teacher Professional Development**

Teacher professional development (TPD) is a difficult concept to define in part because of its breadth. Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989), for example, note that there are numerous ways for teachers to engage in professional development in both traditional and non-traditional contexts. They identified five distinct models of staff development that appear in the literature: 1) Individually Guided Development, 2) Observation/Assessment 3) Involvement in a Development/Improvement Process, 4) Training, and 5) Inquiry (Sparks and Loucks-Horsley, 1989).

The fact that these models vary in format, duration, and context compounds the difficulty with defining the field. However, McKee, Johnson, Ritchie, and Tew (2013) offer a definition which encapsulates many of these differences when they say that TPD is “an intentional set of
educational activities designed to equip faculty to grow in their professionalism with the result of being partners in advancing all segments of the institution” (p.13).

Despite the breadth of the field, studies on TPD frequently focus on trainings in particular. The reason for this is clear: as Lieberman and Pointer-Mace (2008) point out, many educators themselves see TPD as synonymous with workshops and courses because it is exactly these examples of TPD which comprise the majority of the professional development opportunities offered to them. To wit, a 2009 report from the National Staff Development Council found that, while nine out of ten teachers reported participating in staff development trainings, such trainings typically took the form of workshops, conferences, and short-term courses (as cited in Darling-Hammond et al., 2009, p. 5). Because of its predominance and because of its applicability to the current context, we will focus our attention on trainings.

**Trainings and Workshops**

Training programs are intended to provide participants with new knowledge, facilitate the development of new skills, foster changes in attitude, and encourage the consistent delivery of the same in the classroom (Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989; Joyce & Showers, 1988). Also referred to in the literature as workshops, training programs are usually conducted by someone who is considered an expert in the instructional area and generally designed around objectives and learning outcomes (Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989).

Unfortunately, the predominance of training for TPD has historically overstated their perceived value by participants. In 1985, for example, teachers ranked in-service trainings as one of the least effective sources of professional learning opportunities available to them (Smylie, 1989). In part because of findings like this, efforts were undertaken to correct the disparity between the abundance of trainings to affect educational practice and their perceived ineffectiveness. In the years since, a significant body of literature has focused on teacher
professional development, teacher learning, teacher change, and the impact of these efforts on student outcomes (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Desimone, 2009; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Suk Yoon, 2001; Smeylie, 1989; Wilson & Berne, 1999). Although this literature has included evaluations on specific professional development efforts, responses from teachers focusing on the experiences and satisfaction of teachers regarding professional development, and definitions of best practices in teacher professional development, it has not significantly impacted teacher perception. As recently as 2009, a meta-analysis of 13,000 professional development studies by Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) revealed that only 59% of teachers found content-related professional development beneficial and less than half valued non-content-related professional development opportunities. As this study hopes to be the exception rather than the rule, it thus behooves us to examine in more detail those facets of TPD which the literature has shown to be effective.

**Elements of Effective Teacher Professional Development**

The results of the meta-analysis alluded to above (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009) suggest not a lack of will on the part of trainers but rather a fundamental misunderstanding about what makes TPD effective. In response to this failure, researchers have sought to identify specific traits of professional development that are associated with teacher learning and positive shifts in practice. As a result, a large number of researchers have begun to explore what makes effective teacher education programs and a core set of features of professional development has begun to emerge (Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; among others).

These models of effective teacher professional development focus on the need for certain criteria. It is important to note that this literature is not exactly prescriptive as it does not explicitly state which elements of professional development are more effective but instead notes
which factors are most strongly correlated with effectiveness. Nevertheless, the research in this area suggests that features of professional development such as the duration of training, emphasis on content knowledge, coherence with other initiatives, and the use of constructivist teaching principles may have a significant impact on practice.

**Duration**

Research asserts that the duration of TPD has an impact on its effectiveness (Guskey, 2000; Garet et al., 2001; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989). Traditional methods of professional development, more commonly known as one-shot or hit and run workshops, have not typically succeeded in increasing teacher learning and practice (Loucks-Horsley, Hewson, Love, & Stiles, 1998). Hawley and Valli echo this finding when they write that “conventional approaches to professional development, such as one-time workshops, typically do not lead to significant change in teaching methodologies” (Hawley & Valli, 1999, p. 129). Loucks-Horsley et al. (1998) maintain that this is because shorter trainings are usually conducted by outside experts and are unrelated to specific goals of the classrooms.

Several meta-analyses synthesized the results of empirically-based studies on the results of professional development and provide insight into this area. Garet et al. (2001) found that “longer activities are more likely to provide an opportunity for in-depth discussion of content, student conceptions and misconceptions, and pedagogical strategies” (p. 921-922). More concretely, Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, and Shapley (2007) found that programs which offered between 5 and 14 hours of professional development had no significant effect on student learning, but those that lasted between 30 and 100 hours had positive and significant impacts on student achievement. Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) likewise found that professional development which lasted less than 14 hours were correlated with no student achievement gains, while those lasting 30 hours or more “showed a positive and significant correlation with student
gains” (p. 9). From these studies, researchers conclude that teachers need to actively participate in more than 50 hours of effective professional development in order to affect change in their practices and their students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Guskey & Yoon, 2009).

The number of contact hours alone was not the only aspect of duration found to be relevant by these analyses. For example, Garet et al. (2001) also found that training activities which extended over a longer period of time (e.g., weeks and months rather than days) were also more likely to impact student achievement because they gave teachers the opportunity to try new instructional practices in their own classrooms in real-time, enabling group discussion and feedback. Similarly, Darling-Hammond et al.’s (2009) findings suggest that training which included activities that were spread over multiple months were correlated with student achievement gains when compared with those of shorter duration. They also maintain that activities with greater duration generally resulted in increased application of new skills in teachers’ classrooms (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009).

**Emphasis on Content**

Although we can conclude that professional development tends to be of higher quality when it involves a substantial number of contact hours and is sustained over time, this alone is not a silver bullet. Several studies have suggested that, in order to be effective, even extended TPD must focus on content knowledge related to instruction, such as professional standards, technology, and pedagogical content knowledge (Loewenberg-Ball & Cohen, 1999; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Corcoran, 1995; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009). For example, Corcoran (1995) maintained that professional development which focuses on subject matter knowledge and the ways in which students learn content were more effective in reshaping instructional practices.

The exact nature of this knowledge, however, falls into two camps. On the one hand, Whitney, Golez, Nagel, and Nieto (2002) interviewed a focus group of teachers to examine the
effectiveness of their teacher education programs and found theory was more important than practice. They concluded that pre-service teachers must have a firm understanding of education theories before they make adequate use of teacher methodology courses. By comparison, Korthagen and Kessels (1999) advocated the opposite with their ALACT model of reflection. With the ALACT model, which stands for action, looking back, awareness of essential aspects, creating alternative methods, and trial, they firmly argued that pre-service teachers should first gain adequate experiences in order to lay the foundation for an understanding of theory.

Although the debate continues, a number of studies have found that teachers must have a more holistic understanding of both the concepts within the subjects they teach and how those concepts connect with one another in order to effectively implement instructional strategies related to that content (Loewenberg-Ball & Cohen, 1999; Putnam & Borko, 2000). Moreover, Darling-Hammond et al.’s (2009) recent meta-analysis found that TPD activities which are more concrete and specific are more effective than those that focus on abstract theory which is devoid of context.

**Coherence with Other Initiatives**

Another element that many researchers point to is coherence. One reason it can be so challenging to draw a direct line between the trainings and their effectiveness is the fact that districts and schools often initiate multiple reforms at one time (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009). Not only does this muddy the waters for the teacher in the classroom (who is rarely allowed to focus on one instructional innovation at a time), but it also makes it difficult to separate confounding variables and identify a causal relationship between professional development and student outcomes. Frustrating though this may be from the bird’s-eye-view perspective of researchers, such dissonance is doubtless doubly so for instructors on the ground. To wit, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) found that TPD is more effective when it aligns with other
endeavors that are at work within a system, and is less effective when it is isolated or even contrary to other efforts at work within a system.

In a more general sense, however, Putnam and Borko (2000) take this idea of coherence one step further when they argue that TPD must be calibrated to fit a specific context. They contend that training which promotes ideas that contradict the context and goals of their school, local community, or legislation may be “too removed from the day-to-day work of teaching to have a meaningful impact” (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p. 6).

**Constructivism: Active Learning, Collaboration, and Learning Communities**

Several studies have found that constructivist-based instruction correlates with effective teacher professional development training (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Desimone, 2009; Wilson & Berne, 1999). There are two main schools of thought in constructivist domain. The first, psychological constructivism, maintains that knowledge is constructed within the learner’s mind while reorganizing information based on experiences and prior knowledge. Social constructivism, the second school of thought, maintains that knowledge is constructed through peer or group interaction (Duffy & Cunningham, 1996; Ertmer & Newby, 1993). In the context of teacher professional development activities, it is primarily the second (i.e., social interaction) that allows teachers to share a variety of educational perspectives and experiences and in the process to create new knowledge. Because individual learners can situate this new information in their own unique context they are able to more effectively acquire and implement new knowledge (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Desimone, 2009; Wilson & Berne, 1999).

The literature suggests that three related components of constructivism have been found to contribute to constructivist training: active learning, collaboration, and learning communities. The first, active learning, is generally defined as any instructional method that engages students
in the learning process. This can be seen in TPD when teachers are given autonomy within the
training program by, for example, promoting reflection, facilitating meaningful group
discussions, using new curriculum materials, observing expert teachers, and examining student
work in the topics being covered (Garet et al., 2001). Putnam and Borko (2000) found that active
learning encourages teachers to construct their own understanding of concepts and even went so
far as to include it as one of their four essential components of professional development
activities.

Several studies have also indicated that collaboration among teachers is highly correlated
with high-quality professional development activities (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al.,
2009; Desimone, 2009; Wilson & Berne, 1999). As some of the examples of active learning
reveal, the collaboration is closely related to constructivism in general and active learning in
particular.

Both active learning and collaboration contribute to the third element: learning
communities. Learning communities provide teachers in TPD with a socially-shared learning
experience that facilitates deeper understanding and stronger associations in order to promote the
acquisition of new information (Alexander & Murphy, 1998). Learning communities can
distinguish from active learning and collaboration because of their reliance on the creation of
strong relationships between and among teachers which, in the words of Loewenberg-Ball and
Cohen (1999):

> provide a means for teachers to represent and clarify their understandings, using
> their own and others’ experiences to develop ideas, learn about practices, and gain
> a more solid sense of themselves as contributing members of a profession, as
> participants in the improvement of teacher and learning and their profession, and
> as intellectuals (p. 17).

Learning communities work in TPD because teachers teach teachers. Those with more
experience can share it with those who have less, and even equal peers can work together
to reexamine their practice (Sandholtz, 2002). Several studies have demonstrated how learning communities promoted changes in teaching practices, suggesting that learning communities may be one of the most potent elements of effective TPD (Dunne, Nave, & Lewis, 2000; Englert & Tarrant, 1995).

**Andragogy, The Theory of Adult Education**

One of the reasons learning communities work so well in teacher professional development is the fact that teachers are, by default, adult learners and adult learning theory has a lot in common with many of the elements of effective teacher professional development, as mentioned previously. Andragogy is the third part of the theoretical framework that informed the design of the workshop under examination in this study and, as the following section will show, many of the elements of effective teacher training are explained by the andragogy theory of adult learning.

Put simply, andragogy is “the art and science of helping adults learn” (Knowles, 1999, p. 43) but more concretely, this theory centers on the idea that adults should be taught differently than children because their learning processes are drastically different (Knowles, 1984, 1999; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). While the dialogues of Plato show that the practice of andragogy is timeless, the word itself was not used in the literature until 1833 and little formal work was done in the field until the 20th century (Knowles, 1989). Eugen Rosenstockis was credited with reintroducing the term in 1921 but it was not until 1957 that Franz Poggeler, in his book *Introduction into Andragogy: Basic Issues in Adult Education*, used the concept that it reached wider renown (Knowles, 1989). Malcolm Knowles is generally recognized as the first prominent proponent of andragogy in the American tradition and he described six assumptions which he felt distinguished adult learners from their younger counterparts:
The Need to Know

Knowles' first assumption, The Need to Know, suggests that adults need to know the reason for learning something. This suggests that the first duty of an adult education instructor is to help the learner understand the relevancy/importance/value of the information being imparted. The natural corollary of this idea is that when adult learners consider something valuable they will invest more resources (e.g., time and energy) to its acquisition (Knowles, 1984, 1999; Knowles et al., 2005).

Foundation

Per Knowles, adult learners differ from children in that the former have experiences which provide the basis for learning activities. This suggests that adults enter an adult education situation with considerably more prior experience than children. There are two natural corollaries: 1) these prior experiences may not be positive but 2) if these experiences can be effectively harnessed then they can be used to promote learning (Knowles, 1984, 1999; Knowles et al., 2005).

Self-concept

Self-concept is the idea that adults need to be responsible for the decisions made in the education process or they will feel that their personal autonomy is being subverted. This suggests that adult learners should be included in the decision-making process, from planning to evaluation, as much as possible (Knowles, 1984, 1999; Knowles et al., 2005).

Readiness

For Knowles, Readiness relates to the idea that adults are predisposed to be most interested in learning about things which are clearly related to their personal and professional contexts. This suggests that instructors must be able to appreciate and express the relevancy of the learning objective to adult learners (Knowles, 1984, 1999; Knowles et al., 2005).
**Orientation**

Orientation is similar to Readiness but relates more to the idea that adults are interested in the immediate application of knowledge. This suggests that as people age, their perspectives change from acquiring information for later use to acquiring information to solve problems for immediate use. This can be seen as a corollary to Readiness in that adults are more motivated to learn about things which they perceive as helpful in solving a problem or completing a task that they are currently experiencing (Knowles, 1984, 1999; Knowles et al., 2005).

**Motivation**

Knowles’ final assumption relates to intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external) motivation and suggests that adults are driven more by intrinsic than extrinsic motivators. This assumption suggests that adult learners seek self-esteem and goal attainment (Knowles, 1984, 1999; Knowles et al., 2005).

**The Teacher as Facilitator**

Taken together, these six principles help us to better understand the unique context of adult learners and, per Knowles (1999), inform the specific actions that a teacher should perform in order to execute the role of facilitator. Among these are: 1) creating the right mood or climate; 2) helping participants clarify learning expectations; 3) organizing and making available a wide range of learning resources; and 4) responding to student inquiries by asking questions (inquiry method) rather than providing expert answers.

Postman and Weingartner (1969 as cited in Knowles, et al, 2005) explored the inquiry method by observing and recording the practice that inquiry method teachers employed. These include: 1) rarely expressing a clear opinion, 2) using Socratic questioning as the default method of investigation, 3) reserving judgment for ideas expressed, and 4) rarely summarizing positions taken. Instructors who used the inquiry method also developed lessons about student input and
were not guided by a static outline. Further, they emphasized that knowledge is a result of a process of questioning, observing, classifying, generalizing, verifying and applying. Finally, they observed that inquiry method teachers measure success differently, namely by:

- the frequency with which they ask questions; the increase in the relevance and cogency of their questions; the frequency and conviction of their challenges to assertions made by other students or teachers or textbooks; the relevance and clarity of the standards on which they base their challenges; their willingness to suspend judgments when they have insufficient data; their willingness to modify or otherwise change their position when data warrant such change; the increase in their skill in observing, classifying, generalizing; the increase in their tolerance for diverse answers; their ability to apply generalizations, attitudes and information to novel situations (Postman & Weingartner, 1969, p. 36 as quoted in Knowles, et al, 2005).

Vella (2000) also maintains that facilitated learning makes knowledge more meaningful. At the same time, she posits that facilitated learning promotes adult learner engagement when working with new content. This accomplishes the following objectives:

1. Structure learner-centered dialogue
2. Integrate theory and practice
3. Encourage personal accountability
4. Create a positive exchange between facilitators and adult learners
5. Allow each participant to use a different learning style (Vella, 2000).

The parallels with the best practices of TPD are clear: by emphasizing content and facilitating active, collaborative learning, andragogy anticipates and extends many of the precepts highlighted in the TPD literature. This suggests that andragogy can inform TPD best practices.

**Defining Blended Learning**

Much like teacher professional development, blended learning is difficult to define. Put simply, blended learning—which is also commonly, if contentiously, known as hybrid, flipped, or mixed mode learning—is “the thoughtful integration of classroom f2f [face-to-face] learning experiences with online learning” (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004, p. 96-97). However, it is important to note that even such a reductive definition of blended learning is not without its critics. For
example, Lewis (2002) sought to emphasize that “blended learning” is not just about combining technologies but instead about mixing “all other aspects of the learning environment” (p. 9). In a similar way, Oliver and Trigwell (2005) found scholars who used the term to describe efforts with definitions similar to that proposed by Garrison and Kanuka but also by others who used the term to describe courses which mixed media, contexts, or even learning theories.

In response to these criticisms, Graham offered more nuance in his 2006 definition, which defines blended learning in three ways: (1) the combination of instructional delivery media, (2) the combination of instructional methods, and (3) the combination of online and face-to-face instruction. While the first two definitions reflect the long-running debate between instructional media and instructional methods (Kozma, 1991), their inclusion addresses some of the criticisms aimed at simplistic definitions like that of Garrison and Kanuka. Moreover, Graham himself noted that his third definition (which closely mirrors that of Garrison & Kanuka) more accurately reflects “the historical emergence of blended learning systems” (Graham, 2006, p. 5).

Garrison and Kanuka's definition does address one important issue, however, which was not addressed by Graham and was instead explored by Garrison and Vaughan (2008). The use of “thoughtful” in the opening definition above suggests that blended learning calls upon instructors to consider “fundamentally rethinking the course design to optimize student engagement, and restructuring and replacing traditional class contact hours” (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008, p.3). That is to say, the use of online activities is necessary but not sufficient for a course to be considered blended; rather truly blended courses are created through the careful and deliberate combination of face-to-face and internet instruction. Thus, although Graham's definition has its merits, for the purposes of this study, blended learning will be defined as, “a restructuring of
class contact hours with the goal to enhance engagement and to extend access to Internet-based learning opportunities” (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008, p. 5).

While Garrison and Vaughn’s definition will serve as a suitable working definition for this study, it does not offer very specific guidelines on how, exactly, to be thoughtful in the use of blended learning. As Moore (2005) points out, when and how to provide which form of instruction to students in such programs is challenging. Graham (2006) suggests that there are three categories for blended learning systems: 1. “Enabling blends,” which focus on addressing issues of access and convenience. 2. “Enhancing blends,” which, as the name suggests, seek to supplement existing pedagogy by offering resources and other materials online to complement a traditional face-to-face course. 3. “Transforming blends,” which seek to leverage the pedagogic advantages of the two mediums. Of the three, enabling blends – with their focus on addressing issues of access and convenience – are most suitable for the present context and should be considered alongside the definition provided above.

Finally, it is worth noting that blended learning may occur at different instructional levels. For example, Graham (2006) noted that instruction can be blended within the following spheres: a) an activity, b) a course, c) a program of study, and d) an organization or institution (Graham, 2006). Despite the range of possibilities, Graham (2006) himself notes that instruction blended at the course level – where both computer-mediated and face-to-face activities are included within a single course – is the most common. At this level of blended instruction, online learning time serves as a substitute for in-class instruction so that more class time can be devoted to other activities and, indeed, this is the goal of the present study. Thus, as this is the level with which the current study will be occupied, this facet should be considered in conjunction with the
general definition of blended learning as well as Graham's concept of transforming blends in such a way as to provide a holistic understanding of the term as used in the current study.

The Advantages of Blended Learning

A growing body of literature argues for the unique advantages that can be afforded by blended learning. For example, Bonk and Graham (2006) cited pedagogical richness, increased access to knowledge, heightened social interaction, increased flexibility, and cost-effectiveness as some of the benefits of blended learning. Similarly, Vaughan (2007) wrote that “blended learning creates enhanced opportunities for teacher-student interaction, increased student engagement in learning, added flexibility in the teaching and learning environment, and opportunities for continuous improvement” (p.81). Meanwhile, Garrison and Vaughan (2008) added to these conclusions by suggesting that blended learning promotes the formation of a community of inquiry.

However, when considering the advantages of blended learning, it is important to contextualize the basis of these comparisons. After all, blended learning is the combination of traditional and online instruction and different researchers have sought to compare it to both domains. Sitzmann, Kraiger, Stewart, and Wisher (2006), for example, compared blended learning to wholly online learning when they reported that blended learning results in stronger learning outcomes than online learning alone. Another, more recent, study from the U.S. Department of Education (2010) stated that “[I]nstruction combining online and face-to-face elements had a larger advantage relative to purely face-to-face instruction than did purely online instruction” (p. xv). Another example, this one from Dziuban, Hartman and Moskal (2004), determined that blended courses have the ability to improve learner outcomes and lower attrition rates as compared to wholly online courses.
Nor are these the only advantages cited by researchers. Throughout the literature blended learning has been repeatedly compared to online learning with many arguing that it leads to higher levels of learner satisfaction and improved learning outcomes. For example, Lim, Morris, and Kupritz (2007) reported that students in blended delivery sections of a course not only felt a greater sense of collaboration and support but also rated the clarity of course instructions higher than their online-only peers. Likewise, Twigg (2003) suggested that blended learning enhances student learning outcomes (when compared to online classes) for three key reasons: 1) continuous assessment and feedback, 2) increased student interaction, and 3) student support through the Learning Management System (LMS).

Speaking of face-to-face classes, Brannan's (2005) qualitative comparison of the three methods determined that the use of technology favorably impacted student-instructor interaction, student-student interaction, and student-content interaction. These results are bolstered by a meta-analysis conducted by Zhao, Lei, Yan, and Tan (2005) which found that no significant difference exists between the outcomes of online and face-to-face learning. Moreover, their analysis indicated that courses which applied blended learning resulted in better learning outcomes than distance or face-to-face education alone (Zhao, et al., 2005). Similarly, Sitzmann, et al. (2006) did a meta-analysis of 96 experimental studies which was referenced above. The results of this meta-analysis suggested that blended learning is more effective than classroom instruction “for teaching declarative knowledge” but that “the two delivery [sic] media are equally effective for teaching procedural knowledge” (2006, p. 623).

Most recently, in 2013, another meta-analysis, this one conducted by Means, Toyama, Murphy, and Bakia, affirmed that “students in online learning conditions performed modestly better than those receiving face-to-face instruction” (2012, p. 2). Of course, cross-comparison in
this last case is difficult but when considered together the body of evidence argues for the superiority of blended over online learning and a meta-analysis that maintains the superiority of online over face-to-face learning itself contributes to the case for blended learning. Even if blended learning merely results in equivalent learning outcomes when compared to face-to-face instruction, this fact, combined with Graham's (2006) assertion that blended instruction leads to increased access, improved pedagogy, and higher cost-effectiveness as compared to traditional classroom instruction, makes it an attractive method of instruction in the present study.

In the end, it is Brunner (2007) who most clearly articulated one of blended learning's most salient competitive advantages: the ability to make a deliberate transition from fully face-to-face to fully online classes. Indeed, as Thor (2010) posits, the blended learning model offers a more practical way to bridge the divide between students who are clamoring for more technological components in their education and their instructors who are resistant to wholly online teaching.

**Challenges to the Effectiveness of Blended Learning**

**Design**

Even if we accept these advantages as a given, some concerns remain. Indeed, while there are many advocates of blended learning, those in favor of blended learning concede that it is vulnerable to some crucial drawbacks. One of the most important relates to design. Many advantages listed above rely on careful design, thereby putting a significant onus on designers/instructors. Garrison and Kanuka (2004) note that “[b]lended learning has enormous versatility and potential but concomitantly creates daunting challenges on the front end of the design process” (p. 100).

On the front end, in particular, as Garrison and Vaughan (2006) caution, the most successful blended classrooms are those which have been redesigned with the new format in
mind. This warning is borne out by the work of several researchers, who noted that blended learning is less effective when asynchronous online elements are grafted onto existing courses (Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, & Jones, 2010; McGee & Reis, 2012; Vu & Fadde, 2012). McGee & Reis (2012) in particular suggest that the best blended courses are created from the ground up, but they caution that this increases the workload significantly. It is hard not to hear ominous foreshadowing when Vu and Fadde (2012) specifically note that the most effective online educators distinguish themselves by the amount of time they spend on the design and delivery of their courses. After all, as Arniel and Orey (2007) explain, time commitments are among the foremost causes of faculty resistance to blended learning with the time-intensive nature of course development, course delivery, and training serving as significant barriers to entry.

Students

Of course, the use of a blended course design also impacts students. In addition to technological skills, McGee & Reis point out that many students in blended courses complain about “the course-and-a-half phenomenon” (2012, p.11). Indeed, according to Sitzmann et al. (2006), the question of time affects both sides of the educational equation. Their study indicates that learners react more favorably towards classroom instruction than blended learning because students assume that blended learning courses are more demanding and time consuming than online instruction due to the incorporation of both online and classroom components (Sitzmann et al., 2006).

Logistics

Logistics are another concern in a blended environment. For example, it can be difficult to keep track of or measure learners’ progress (Larsen, 2012). That is to say that learners may watch an online lecture but lack a deep understanding of the material. This suggests an added
strain for both parties, as assessments must be developed by instructors and completed by students, for both classroom and online components, in order to monitor learner progress in both mediums. Ginns and Ellis (2007), likewise, suggested that student evaluation was one of the thorniest aspects of blended learning because a mixed method necessitates the development of an instrument sensitive enough to adequately evaluate both components. For blended learning programs which utilize an asynchronous online component, Liu, Magjuka, Bonk, and Lee (2007) also noted that a lack of personal engagement resulted in student attrition in general and reduced participation in particular. Shackelford and Maxwell were more nuanced in their assessment of social presence in online learning by noting that there are “difficulties inherent in building a learning community in an online environment” (2012, p. 249).

According to the literature, even the smallest detail must be weighed with extreme caution. Osguthorpe and Graham (2003), for example, tackled one of the most immediate problems when they addressed the difficulty of balance. As they noted, effective blended courses must use exactly the right amount of online and face-to-face interaction, putting a significant burden on instructors (Osguthorpe & Graham, 2003). Christensen (2003) echoed this concern about striking a balance between online and face-to-face instruction but it was Graham (2006) who was more expansive when he noted that many more factors must be carefully weighed. He also discussed such issues as:

- when and why instructors should consider human interaction,
- how live interaction and asynchronous interaction affect learning experiences,
- how the medium impacts self-regulation, and
- how instructors can provide learners with technological skills necessary to succeed in both online and face-to-face environments.
Organization Support

Not that blended course (re)design is only challenging to those in the classroom; Garrison and Vaughan (2008) suggested that faculty need training and collaborative support in order to successfully complete a blended course redesign. Similarly, Garrison and Kanuka (2004) noted that administrators, policymakers, faculty, and other stakeholders must collaborate in order to create a formal approach that can support the blended learning design process. For example, one institutional issue is the lack of incentives. Wallace and Young (2010) posit that, despite the time commitments involved, little or no institutional incentives exist for faculty members to move to a blended learning format. More fundamentally, various stakeholders can also have different visions about the usefulness of the technique. Garrison and Vaughan (2008), for example, reported that most traditional colleges and universities have different applications in mind rather than instructors. While the former “see the potential of online learning in terms of access and serving more students “the latter are more interested in “serving current students better” (p.7).

Despite these obstacles, blended learning offers the potential to capitalize on the strengths of both the traditional and online learning environments. While some skeptics view online and blended learning as the agents of demise for traditional, lecture-based colleges and universities, Garrison and Vaughan (2008) suggested that blended learning has the potential to transform higher education. They posited that blended learning causes administrators and instructors to thoughtfully consider how to most effectively use both face-to-face and online learning. Moreover, with blended learning becoming more and more prevalent, it is vital for higher education and corporate training settings to create strategic plans and directions, focusing on pedagogical techniques in blended learning (Bonk & Graham, 2006).
Principles of Effective Blended Learning Design

Sharma stresses that blended learning should be a combination of “the best of the teacher with the best of technology” (2010, p. 457) and this presents a truly significant challenge for blended course designers. After all, an educational environment is, in the words of Entwistle, McCune, and Hounsell, a “complex composite of many interacting influences that need to be aligned towards supporting deep active learning” (2003, p. 104) and even extensive teaching experience in the face-to-face classroom does not fully prepare instructors for success in blended environments. In fact, Wunker (2010) posits that that the key to a success in a hybrid course is to teach differently from the way one would teach in the traditional face-to-face classroom. Arniel and Orey (2007) concur and suggest that instructors must be willing and able to use methods of teaching other than those with which they are accustomed. They caution, however, that most course designers will likely require instruction on how to begin the process of building a hybrid course.

Unfortunately, this is exactly what is currently missing in the field. At present there is very little in the way of literature describing the instructional design process model specific to hybrid course design (Adams, 2013; D’Agustino, 2012; Ginns & Ellis, 2007). To quote Seung-Won and Doo Hun on the matter, “Although blended learning is touted as widespread and effective, few theories and models exist to explain what blending is, determine an ideal mix of various delivery media, and guide the practice of blending” (2007, p. 475). Nor are they alone in this assessment. As recently as 2015 Wang, Han, and Yang said that the discipline is “fragmented and many important issues remain unexplored” (2015, p. 380-381). Although a few texts are specific in their prescriptions about how hybrids can be an effective blend of face-to-face and online deliveries, Wang et al. (2015) say the discipline “still seems to be a giant puzzle, consisting of intertwined disjointed parts, all trying to connect” (pp. 380-381).
Work to make sense of the discipline is ongoing, however, and in the past decade three main types of literature have come to the fore: university “policy manuals,” meta-analyses, and textbooks. What follows, then, is a brief overview of some of the most prominent and widely-used examples of each.

For example, while several universities have produced internal policy manuals for blended courses, two or three are cited most frequently in the literature. James Madison University's *Best Practices for Online and Hybrid Courses* (2013) is far and away the most frequently-cited by practitioners, even though it is (as its name suggests) actually targeted to online course developers with hybrid course instructors included primarily to guide them to the best use of digital teaching tools. However, the extensive best practices instructions only refer to online instruction, and it appears that the inclusion of hybrid courses is secondary.

Nor is this an isolated case; other popular policy manuals like Brandeis University's *Hybrid Course Design and Instruction Guidelines* (2015) and Academic Technology and Creative Services’ *Discussion Board: Online Discussions for Blended Learning* (2009, hereafter cited as ATCS) are far from comprehensive. Although they contain useful suggestions (and, in their way, have informed the design of the blended workshop outlined in Chapter 3), neither provides meaningful guidelines or a specific design scheme that would be meaningful to a first-time designer. Indeed, literature such as this, though often used by would-be designers, lacks a picture of what hybrid courses might look like, the instructional steps involved in developing them, and any form of explanation about what was required for them to be in that condition.

On the other end of the spectrum are studies which combine through meta-analysis the findings of other researchers in the field (McGee & Reis, 2012; Wang, et al, 2015; Halverson, Graham, Spring, Drysdale, & Henrie, 2014). One such example is that of Halverson, et al., who
analyzed “highly cited scholarship in the first decade of blended learning research” and listed the following as the top seven threads:

1. Instructional design – models, strategies, and best practices;
2. Disposition – perceptions, attitudes, preferences, student expectations and learning styles;
3. Exploration – benefits, challenges, trends, predictions, transformative potential;
4. Learner outcomes – performance, satisfaction, engagement, motivation, retention;
5. Comparison – blended/face-to-face/online;
6. Technology – uses, role, implementation;

Of note, however, are the conclusions from this study that “no cohesive theoretical conversations became apparent” and that “blended learning needs substantive conversations about theory.” To further quote the authors,

Still more attention should be devoted to…developing new theoretical work in blended learning in order to build our understanding and increase the effectiveness of blended learning designs…. Greater theoretical clarity can also improve research on learner engagement in blended settings. (Halverson et al., 2014, p. 29)

More helpfully for the current study was the work of McGee and Reis (2012), whose meta-analysis of more than 50 studies on hybrid course design does indeed report on the general trends contained within. Although it lacks prescriptive recommendations, it provides a general overview of the research to date and complements the third category of literature available to would-be designers.

While meta-analyses like those cited above are intended to be instruction manuals, the third type of literature does exactly that: create meaningful guides for would-be designers. A highly detailed example of one such instruction manual was recently written by Stein and
Graham (2014). Their text, *Essentials for Blended Learning: A Standards-Based Guide*, not only provides step-by-step instructions but also presents a series of illustrated outlines and multiple, divergent examples of blended courses for course designers to reference. At the conclusion of the text the authors offer a set of “Blended Course Standards “which are intended to guide instructors through the blended course design process. The authors divide what they refer to as “design goals” (2014, p. 195) into nine categories:

- Course goals and learning outcomes
- Ease of communication
- Pedagogical and organizational design
- Engaged learning
- Collaboration and community
- Assessments and feedback
- Grading
- Ease of access
- Preparation and revisions (2014, p. 195-200)

What follows then is a literature review that uses Stein and Graham’s “standards” (2014, p. 195) as a framework through which other literature (including that alluded to above as well as other studies on blended course design) can be organized in a meaningful and systematic way.

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

Stein and Graham are quick to point out that “there is no single best model for blended courses” (2014, p 28). They suggest instead that “[i]n the best blended learning design, the selection and organization of learning activities and assessments support desired learning outcomes while maximizing the strengths and minimizing the weakness-of both online and onsite environments” (2014, p 28). At the same time, there are some points on which the two will not equivocate. For example, for Stein and Graham, it is important that the cart follow the horse, and that “course goals” be determined before all other design tasks. This echoes McGee and Ries who say at the outset of their findings that “there is clear consensus that the best strategies for
design begins by clearly defining course objectives before coming up with course activities, assignments and assessments” (2012, p. 11). This coincides with Ward, Peters, and Shelley (2010), who also found that a blended course should not be used merely to give out information to students but rather that the design of resources, e-mail, discussions and online technologies must be deliberate.

Stein and Graham's “learner focus” (2014, p. 195) calls on designers to write course objectives from the student perspective in a way that promotes learner autonomy and is supported by McGee and Ries, who maintain that “when the course is designed from the learner’s perspective, it is perceived that acceptance, success, and retention are increased” (2012, p. 11). In fact, this position was first advocated as early as 2003 when Martyn, in her Hybrid Online Model (2003), specifically called for a student focus in a variety of ways in order to promote a sense of community in the classroom.

Finally, it is worth noting that Stein and Graham again are in alignment with McGee and Ries who reported that only once all objectives have been created should a course outline be constructed (2012). Such an outline will allocate time for course activities, indicate how assignments and assessments are aligned and measured, and lead naturally into syllabus development (2012).

**Ease of Communication**

The next major area discussed by Stein and Graham is “ease of communication” (2014), which emphasizes clarity by calling for instructors to use a “clear writing style,” “clear instructions and requirements,” “clearly written assignments” and more (p. 195-196). Nor are they alone in stressing this issue: as early as 1991 Moore notes that psychological and communication gaps may cause issues in computer-mediated learning if they are not overcome (Moore, 1991). More recently, Dennen (2005) stated that online learning is a unique environment
in which there are no verbal or communication cues and in which it is easy for the student to hide from the instructor. To avoid these communication gaps, several researchers (Martyn, 2003; Dennen, 2005) recommend that at the beginning phase of an online or blended course, managerial and technical elements take the forefront of the communication between instructor and student. Dennen (2005) also emphasizes that the content of these related communications should include course expectations and feedback, a view shared by Stein and Graham who specifically mention that “criteria for peer review [be] well defined” (2014, p. 196).

It is also worth noting that McGee and Reis found that “communication of the blended design, expectation, and process is key for student success” (2012, p. 16). One specific means of communicating expectations is to hold a face-to-face orientation at the outset of the course in order to anticipate and eliminate potential barriers for students. Martyn (2003) in particular had quite a bit to say on this subject, advocating as she did in her model that the first and last class of any blended course be given face-to-face as a way to facilitate various interactions. According to her, opening and closing the class in person gives the faculty an opportunity to provide an orientation to the course management system while simultaneously creating a sense of community among members of the class (2003). During the initial face-to-face session in particular expectations, both of the students and faculty, can be shared and discussed, in addition to an in-depth review of the syllabus, assignments, and schedule. A final face-to-face session also provides students and faculty a chance to submit course evaluations, complete unfinished business, and clear up and lingering concerns.

Pedagogical and Organizational Design

For Stein and Graham, good communication starts with good pedagogical and organizational design. Points of interest from their discussion of these topics echo many of the principles of good course design in general. For example, they suggest that “information [be]
divided into blocks of information” and that these blocks build “progressively” with “reference and connect” activities between units (2014, p. 196).

More relevant for the present study, however, are their insights about the special care required in blended courses. The consequences of failure in this realm are noted in the Brandeis policy manual, which points out that “in a hybrid course, expectations shift, and research indicates that students can lose track of the course when they are not in the face-to-face mode because of an “out of sight, out of mind” tendency (2015, p. 5). To avoid problems like this, the researchers provide concrete suggestions such as the following:

“Each lesson should begin with an introduction that explains the structure and flow. The introductory lesson page should:

– Get students’ attention with a story or case study that gives real-world meaning to desired learning outcomes.

– Prime students’ thinking by proposing a question or challenge.

– Outline required tasks for the lesson using numbers to indicate sequential order.

– Indicate which lesson tasks will be done onsite versus online.

– Link to the next activity in the lesson.

– Link back to the course home page.” (2014, p.164)

These suggestions serve as useful reminders to would-be designers. Another crucial reminder is their belief that the workload for the course should be the same in both online and face-to-face version of the class (Stein and Graham, 2014). This is an apt warning because, as the Brandeis policy manual has it,

[research also indicates that there is a tendency for hybrid instructors to keep the online component of the class relatively superficial. If not given equal attention by faculty, then there is a tendency for students to do the minimum work required for the online component as opposed to the face-to-face interactions. (2015, p. 5).]
To avoid this, the ATCS (2009) advocates that clear discussion requirements be posted online at the onset of the course as guidelines.

**Engaged learning**

Stein and Graham's next major area of concern is “engaged learning” (2014, p. 50). Learner engagement is defined as “the emotional and mental energy that students are willing to expend during a learning experience” (2014, p. 51). According to the authors, learner engagement is a commonly used criterion for evaluating the quality of a learning experience and learning experiences that are not engaging will not be effective in the long run. Other research supports this position: Wlodkowski, for example, noted in his guide to teaching adults that without engagement learning has no meaning (2010). Moreover, engagement plays an especially important role in the current context as it plays a crucial role in helping adult/mature learners make meaning of what they are learning (Gutierrez, Baralt, & Shuck, 2010). This point is reinforced by Quitadamo & Brown (2001), who found that student learning choices that stress personal interests and strengths as well as teaching approaches that demonstrate real-world contexts promote engagement. Similarly, Carini, Kuh, and Klein (2006) found that engagement is linked positively to learning outcomes, such as higher order thinking.

Stein and Graham (2014) also maintain that activities using more types of interactions – with the content, the instructor, and fellow learners – are more engaging than activities using only one type of interaction. Finally, it is worth noting that engaged learning has also been referred to in the literature as active learning, constructivism, and problem-based learning (Gold, 2001).

**Collaboration and Community**

Indeed, for Stein and Graham (2014), engaged learning and active learning go hand in hand as part of their next standard: collaboration and community. In the authors’ own words,
“community-driven activities encourage learners to explore, share, analyze, and refine their thinking and practice through social interaction” (p. 140). Importantly, “community-driven activities tend to target higher-level cognitive skills often enshrouded as ‘critical thinking’ (e.g. application, analysis, evaluation, and creation)” (p. 140).

Collaboration techniques were also covered in detail by McGee and Reis (2012). In fact, because of the meta-analytical nature of their study, they provide a detailed (if not comprehensive) list of options regarding collaboration techniques. For example, their findings suggest that face-to-face meetings can be either formal (instructor-led) or informal (student-led).

On the formal side of the equation they reference studies which utilized

- “Instructor-led classroom activities
- Workshop formats or hands-on labs
- Organized coaching and/or mentoring
- On the job training
- Modified lecture
- Coaching/Mentoring
- Debate
- Active learning”

(modified from McGee and Reis, 2012, p. 13)

McGee and Reis (2012) say that “active learning requires that students are aware of what they know and what they don’t know using metacognitive strategies to monitor their own learning” (p. 13). Several learning theorists, such as Dewey (1933), Bruner (1966), and Piaget (1975) discussed the expansion of active learning when the instructor takes on the role of facilitator. The idea of facilitation was also discussed above with the review of andragogy but is comes to bear again in blended learning. McGee and Reid (2012), for example, reported that “consistently, blended effective practices stress the need for active learning as an integral component of student engagement” (p. 13).
Active learning is singled out in many other models as well. For example, the TSOI Model of Learning, a multimedia learning design hybrid model created by Tsoi, Goh, & Chia (2005), includes four key stages: translating, sculpting, operationalizing, and integration. Of these, translating entails exploration, discovery, and articulation of expectations. Sculpting, as the name implies, relates to working with the information and gaining understanding. Finally, operationalizing is when the information is put to work, demonstrating meaningful functionality. Integrating occurs when the student applies the knowledge with depth and accuracy. McDonald and Mayes (2007) also listed several teaching principles to keep in mind when designing blended or online courses. Foremost among these was making sure every learner is as actively involved as possible. To do this they suggested that instructors challenge them to think more deeply and provide frequent formative assessments so that students can check their understanding of the material.

At the same time, McGee and Reis (2012) also report that “informal approaches are also valued in a blended course” (p. 13). They listed collegial connections, work teams, and role modeling as potential mechanisms for promoting informal, student-led learning. Smyth (2009) developed an online program to train higher education instructors on the design and delivery of blended or online courses. The author developed a 3E approach that followed these stages: enhance, extend and empower. In the enhanced stage the participants engaged in discussion, brought what they knew to the table about online or blended instruction, decided on what to focus on, and negotiated which projects to create for their students. During the extended phase, the blended and online experience supports were put into place, student-led seminars were set up, research was done, and individual projects were worked on. When the empowered stage started,
curriculum design and development occurred for the instructor’s courses, engagement in online communities started, groups redesigned some project ideas and more individual projects evolved.

Kelly (2012) also touched on this subject in his three-stage approach to blended learning design. Kelly's first stage is the absorb stage. This is where the student absorbs information in some way, possibly by reading or researching material. The second stage is called the do stage. This is where the students engage in the lesson. It is the online portion, which might consist of a discussion forum or online interactive activity. The last stage is the connect stage where the students connect material learned with the real world. They find meaning with what was learned and how it can be put to real use. In this model, finding meaning might be done as a reflection activity or a case study analysis (Kelly, 2012).

Case study analyses afford just one example of what McGee and Reis (2012) call metacognitive discussions. Discussions are highlighted by the researchers as one of the most valuable aspects of blended courses. They stress, however, that “a distinction is made between face-to-face and online discussions where the strengths of the face-to-face discussion environment differ within a blended course” (p. 13). Per their research, McGee and Reis (2012) found that face-to-face discussions tended to be employed to clarify points, apply knowledge, or critique findings, while “online discussions are most successful when they build on the affordances of the medium and are truly discursive, rather than completion-oriented” (p. 13).

Stein and Graham (2012) concur, saying that:

community-driven activities ... tend to gain significant advantages when done online. However, because they involve person-to-person interaction, some of the innate attributes of face-to-face interactions may provide additional benefits that may lead teachers to choose to lead some of these activities in class” (p. 140).

Martyn (2003) also recognized this in her model, placing as she did an emphasis on faculty-student and student-student interaction. However, regardless of the location, during these
sessions, the course should provide ample opportunities for the students to collaborate, interact, and learn from each other.

In the case of group discussions and activities, McGee and Reis (2012) note that meetings can occur in person or online and that online interactions themselves can take place synchronously or asynchronously. Martyn (2003) provides several ideas for how online interactions can take place in the blended classroom such as: asynchronous threaded discussions, synchronous chats, and email. Asynchronous threaded discussions could be graded or non-graded. She suggests that graded asynchronous threaded discussions are a useful tool to get students discussing a specific topic while their non-graded counterparts could be used to provide students with a location to post questions, ask for clarification, and build community.

Martyn (2003) also suggested synchronous chats as a means of enabling connection between and among students while outside the classroom. These scheduled sessions would require students and faculty to logon at a specified time, thereby providing “the missing link in online instruction” (p. 20). In a similar vein, other researchers suggest the use of online chat(with two-way audio and video feeds) to help add more richness to online conversations (McAnally-Salas, Lavigne, & de Vega, 2010). Ward et al., (2010) report that students rated these kinds of interactions as a useful part of an online course offering.

However, as McGee and Reis (2012) are quick to point out, considerably more attention has been paid to asynchronous online discussions and on this iteration the Sacramento State University's policy manual on the subject is of particular value. Their discussion board guidelines note that online discussions can improve student learning online by engaging learners and building community through social networking (The Academic Technology and Creative Services [ATCS], 2009). Per the researchers at ATCS, three areas in particular should be
reviewed when creating this experience with students: cognitive presence, social presence, and teaching presence. In creating the cognitive presence, meaningful topics relating to main objectives should be put forth. An instructor’s facilitation is important in this matter. The instructor should move the discussions along and deepen the conversations; however, the instructor must be careful not to contribute too much.

There is broad agreement among the policy manuals on this point. The ATCS (2009), for example, notes that instructors must remember to be a facilitator and not reply to every post, but allow discussion between class members. The Brandeis policy manual (2015) specifically warns that:

faculty who are used to being an active ('sage on the stage') presence in the face-to-face classroom can face challenges adapting to online discussions where they must maintain an engaged but more collaborative ('guide on the side') presence(p. 5).

Discussion for discussion's sake is not enough, however. While Hratskinski (2009) agrees that discussion is an important tool for distance learning, he warns that participation needs to be measured in a quantitative way in order to help drive the learning. To do exactly this, the ACTS advocates for the use of (and supply and example of) a discussion rubric to serve as a grading device. Assessment devices like this constitute Stein and Graham's next standard.

Assessments and Feedback

Stein and Graham (2014) define assessments as tools which “aim to evaluate student attainment of learning outcomes by examining student performance either directly (e.g., by observation) or indirectly (e.g., by an exam)” (p.92). They maintain that blended courses increase the power of assessments because they enable instructors to employ both onsite and online tools to measure student learning and thereby select the type of assessment which is most appropriate for their specific learning objectives (Stein & Graham, 2014). While Stein and Graham are quick
to point out that there are some advantages for in-person assessments – such as exam proctoring and direct observation of presentations – they and McGee and Reis (2012) both report that the general consensus is for assessment to be conducted online (Stein & Graham, 2014). Among the advantages cited by the Stein and Graham are

- student work can be recorded and reviewed digitally,
- performances can be recorded or live-streamed,
- knowledge can be objectively assessed through computer-based testing, and
- progress can be tracked over time through logs, blogs, and analytics

(modified from Stein & Graham, 2014, p. 92).

Unfortunately, as McGee and Reis (2012) note, online assessments “can be challenging in a blended course and recommendations are limited, possibly because assessment is related to learning outcomes, academic policy, level of course, and available assessment resources” (p. 15). They provide two general reasons for this: technological and administrative. With regard to the first, they note that many LMS have technical limitations regarding the type of assessment that can be offered and with regard to the second, they note that some institutions have policies about when and where assessments can be administered.

For this reason, McGee and Reis (2012) note that in the research to date, onsite assessments have been more traditional in nature, including mechanisms such as final exams, term papers, discussions, and projects. They pay particular attention to the last of these, however, noting that “assessing groups rather than individuals is required when the activity format requires projects or group presentations therefore demanding a comprehensive assessment rather than individual contributions” (p. 15).

Stein and Graham (2014) do not believe that assessing should be conducted for its own sake, however; for them it is important that assessments “provide students with useful feedback” (p. 92). Indeed, they make specific recommendations about how achievements should be
measured and how feedback should be provided. On this last point the researchers are quite clear: “Feedback should happen as soon as possible in order to help students apply it to improve learning” (2014, p.92). This is a point which McGee and Reis (2012) touch on as well when they say that “there is a consistent belief that both varied interactivity and prompt feedback are key to student engagement in blended courses” (p. 13).

Feedback is also an essential component of Martyn's (2003) model. For her, feedback must be prompt and on-going, because in the absence of face-to-face time, this feedback is what bridges the gap between faculty and student when not in the classroom. Dennen (2005) also offers useful insights, noting that students look for both qualitative and quantitative feedback after submitting assignments. The researcher says that not all assessments need to be graded and could instead be mere notes on progress. This is a point which Stein and Graham (2014) also encourage, adding simply that the differentiation between graded and ungraded assessments is clear from the outset.

**Grading**

Clarity and transparency are repeatedly emphasized in the literature when it comes to grading. Stein and Graham, for example, suggest that both “graded activities and criteria” should be pre-listed in the syllabus at the outset of the course so that students know in advance what is expected of them.

According to ATCS (2009) research, 40% of a student’s grade should be attributed to course discussion/participation. The instructor can draw students into participating by asking questions, assisting them in reaching a consensus of opinion or understanding, and then asking them to summarize a discussion. It is also important to provide clear requirements for participation, etiquette, and time parameters. On this point Bergstrom (2011) adds that “to maintain sanity, discussion and writing assignments must have scoring rubrics based on
expectations and instructions‖ (p. 42) This point is also raised by McGee and Reis who note in their discussion of evaluating group assessments that the distinction between collaborative projects (in which each member contributes a separate but complementary component) and cooperative ones (in which each member contributes a part of the whole where effort is based on their role rather than on content contribution) must be made clear from the outset.

At the same time, Stein and Graham (2014) encourage the use of multiple assessment types not only because of their suitability for certain tasks but also because some assessments are easier to grade than others. As they put it, an “automated assessment of objective questions” is faster to grade than “rubric-based teacher and peer assessment of papers and projects,” (p. 110). Many course management systems allow for self-grading quizzes, which provide immediate feedback about the accuracy of their responses.

Regardless of the type of assessment used, the relationship between graded elements and the final grade must be made clear and accessible to students (Stein & Graham, 2014). According to the authors, this relationship can be stated in the course syllabus or, more practically, expressed in an online gradebook. Not only is their use in alignment with the need for faster feedback but it also helps provide students with a sense of control over their progress through the course. Such a gradebook can even impact student performance by providing “a reliable, up-to-date, on-demand calculation of scores” (p 111). Indeed, when used in a proper manner, such a gradebook can integrate with email or social media to provide real-time notification and lead to further engagement.

In the words of the authors, “[o]nline gradebooks are probably the most often used feature of a LMS—they put the management in Learning Management System” (p. 111). This leads us naturally to their next point: ease of access.
Ease of Access

Despite the above comment, Stein and Graham are surprisingly agnostic about the use of an LMS, providing as they do design suggestions for both an LMS and a stand-alone course website. They do stress, however, that online course materials must be designed with usability in mind. They note that this can be more challenging than one would expect because the course designer inherently understands their own designs but that they may not be simple to others (Stein and Graham, 2014). To overcome this, they encourage designers to make everything as brief and simple as possible.

McGee and Reis (2012) are likewise open to both possibilities, saying at one point that the technology used in blended courses is “a means to a pedagogical end” (p. 15) and that “using technology for technology’s sake is distracting and does not motivate the learner” (p. 15). Because student motivation can decrease when the technology employed distracts from instructional outcomes, they recommend that the technology used should be simple and engaging to students. Indeed, although they concede that “technology is a core component of blended courses “they go on to reveal that “blended effective practices don’t promote any one tool exclusively except for discussions and wikis,” (p. 15) which they describe as low-threshold technologies. Low is the operative word here, as McGee and Reis maintain that students must have a sufficient understanding of the technology being used in the course in order to be successful. To ensure this, the researchers are quick to promote the use of pre-course communication about technology requirements as well as technology configurations. To ensure this, they advocate for the use of pre-course assessments about student skills (McGee & Reis, 2012).

This point is also raised in the James Madison University policy manual, which suggests that students should take a 10-question questionnaire to evaluate their readiness for the coming...
course. This survey includes the question “I learn best by: (a) reading the material, (b) listening to a lecture on the material, or (c) sharing my knowledge with others.” The online survey is immediately scored, and students are told either that “you are well prepared,” or “you may find an online course more challenging than an in-class course” or “an online course is not recommended at this time” (James Madison University, 2013, p. 10). McGee and Ries (2012), however, are quick to note that these efforts are important not only at the outset of but throughout a course. As they observe, “clear and accessible support for online technology increases participation and reduces frustration and attrition (p. 16).

Not that technology alone is at issue here. De George-Walker & Keeffe (2010) caution that some learners will be well-equipped to decipher and choose from selections of learning choices offered while others will be overwhelmed. They specifically suggest that the instructor can facilitate by assisting students to understand what the learning expectations are, to realize the choices available to them, and to assist in developing the necessary skills of reflection, self-direction and self-management (De George-Walker & Keeffe, 2010) while McGee and Reis (2012) encourage instructors to provide “links to student services, practice activities, and partnering” (p. 16) to enable students with less-developed skills.

**Preparation and Revisions**

Glazer (2012) maintains that the very strength and value of blending online and face-to-face learning components is its combination of synchronous and asynchronous methodologies, something wholly foreign to a purely face-to-face classroom. When designing courses, the educator must understand the assets of both in order to take full advantage of each. Smyth (2009) also touches on this subject, suggesting that managing the two effectively is of utmost concern, but faculty also need staff development to support them in creating progressive pedagogic approaches for blended and online education. As the foregoing discussion can amply illustrate,
though, this is no easy task. It is for this reason that Stein and Graham call for an “[i]terative” (2014: p.72) approach to course design which necessarily ends with “[e]xamining the results of and feedback on the design.”

This subject naturally dovetails with McGee and Reis (2012) who strongly advocate that would-be designers solicit “support and feedback from professional colleagues”(p. 12) as a way of testing out their ideas during the design process.

Not that changes should only take place during the design phase. Stein and Graham call for continuous course improvements, a point also raised by Bair and Bair (2011). The latter authors discovered that, although, the course structure had to be in place well before students accessed the online environment, once needs were made apparent through student engagement, then links to other articles, further explanations, or additional comments needed to be added to assist students.

Finally, Stein and Graham (2014) call on designers to “commit to regularly improving [their] blended course from the beginning.” They suggest that a three-step model based around the principles of Engage, Evaluate, and Design will simultaneously reduce pressure on the designer and positively affect learning for the students. In their opinion, small revisions – based, for example, on course evaluations – provide designers with the means to make meaningful changes that will impact learning.

Although this review of the existing literature provides many insights regarding the structural potential for designing and delivering a hybrid course, there is limited analysis available regarding the experiences instructors have within higher education environments incumbent to incorporating established best practices specifically for adult English Language
Teachers in their hybrid courses. While research did reveal numerous general insights, it also suggests that more meaningful research on this specific aspect of the discipline is in order.

**Research on Online and Blended Teacher Professional Development Programs**

Although the literature suggests that teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design are a potentially potent combination, little research has been done on online or blended learning in teacher education specifically (Young & Lewis, 2008). Of the two, considerably more research has been conducted on online teacher professional development than its blended counterpart (Dede, Breit, Ketelhut, McCloskey, & Whitehouse, 2005; Young & Lewis, 2008).

**Research on Online Teacher Professional Development**

For online teacher professional development, the question has turned, like so many media debates before it (Kozma, 1991), on the question of significant difference. Online TPD researchers, by and large, do not seek to exceed face-to-face results but rather to match it. Thus, the fact that many of these studies point to the same conclusion should come as no surprise: according to the literature, no significant difference exists between online and face-to-face learning in teacher education when it comes to both participants’ learning and performance (Caywood & Duckett, 2003; Skylar, Giggins, Boone, Jones, Pierce, & Gelfer, 2005; Steinweg, Davis, & Thomson, 2005).

In addition, several researchers found that online efforts increase access to teacher education in general and thus promotes teacher professional development when traditional instruction is not feasible or is otherwise unavailable (Simmons & Mebane, 2005; Roach, 2003; Stephen & Barford, 2005; Johnson & Briden, 2004). Individual studies yielded more particular findings which suggest that online TPD: 1) facilitates communication between a wider range of participants, 2) promotes collaborative learning and reflective thinking (Beard & Harper, 2002),

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and 3) provides access to an experience with online learning technology (Wilcox & Wojnar, 2000).

Of course, the research has also revealed some negative aspects of online learning for teacher education. These include: the lack of direct student-instructor and student-student interaction; an emphasis on technology over content; and problems of access and use (Steinweg et al., 2005; Stephen & Barford, 2005). Stephen and Barford (2005) also single out managerial issues such as the proper balance between course goals and technological components, education goals and technology inclusion, and intellectual property rights and course content, among other issues. Sales, Al-Barwani, and Miske's study (2008), which is particularly relevant to the present context because they conducted their study of an online teacher training program with an international cohort, noted problems with attrition due to connectivity issues, inexperience with online learning platforms, and general project design.

Young and Lewis (2008) also investigated participant satisfaction in their examination of the perceptions of teacher candidates in distance education programs at seven American universities. In addition to collecting information about overall enjoyment and satisfaction, the researchers also used surveys to ask participants about the effectiveness of course structure, adequacy of student-teacher interaction, and adequacy of peer-to-peer interaction. Their results also support the idea that online learning promotes diversity: participants in distance education programs tended to be older and were more likely to be female than equivalent, in-person programs. At the same time, their research suggests that, while satisfied about the program overall, participants desired more personal interaction than was afforded in their online programs (Young & Lewis, 2008).
Research on Blended Teacher Professional Development

This personal interaction is exactly what blended learning, as the thoughtful combination of online and face-to-face learning, has the potential to provide. Fortunately for our purposes, several important studies have also been conducted to further investigate the potential of blended learning in teacher education. A review of the literature on the subject by Dede, Breit, Ketelhut, McCloskey, and Whitehouse (2005), for example, suggests that teacher professional development which uses online tools offers teachers many of the same benefits that such learning environments provide to K-12 and post-secondary students. These include flexibility, increased access, and participation in constructivist learner-centered environments. They found that since district and school workshops are frequently offered during the school day and require teachers to ask for a substitute, teachers, their students, and the budgets of their districts are all adversely affected. As a result, the researchers suggested teachers who would otherwise be forced to miss instructional time with their students would benefit from the flexibility inherent in blended courses (Dede, et al., 2005).

Rovai and Jordan (2004) also highlighted the unique benefits of blended learning when they quoted one participant in their study as saying, “‘as a teacher, I would never have made it through this semester without the practical guidance of this course along with the freedom of the online component’” (p. 10). The researchers also found that participants were able to process new information better because content learned online could be contextualized before engaging in in-person peer discussion (Rovai& Jordan, 2004). This suggests that blended learning promotes dialogue and reflection and therefore aligns with best practices in teacher professional development as discussed above.

King’s (2002) case study, meanwhile, found more than just convenience at stake. He found that in the blended training environment the instructor’s role expanded to include not only
facilitating the discussion of relevant topics and encouraging student discussion, but also monitoring class progress and overseeing technological components. His conclusion is particularly apt for our purposes and echoes some of the best practices of blended learning in general: by overcoming the limitations of online instruction while simultaneously minimizing the inconvenience of traditional instruction, blended learning presents educators with the ability to develop robust collaborative learning communities among the teachers (King, 2002).

Mouzakis’ (2008) study demonstrates this as well. The study used a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and a focus group discussion to examine the perceived effectiveness and satisfaction of primary and secondary teachers participating in a blended teacher training program. While he found that the teachers were satisfied about the training in general, the participants put a premium on the face-to-face components of the blended training and would have preferred more such sessions in order to foster a feeling of class community.

Not that the comparisons have only been made between blended and traditional trainings. In his comparison of online learning communities for teacher professional development, Matzat (2010) found that blended communities more actively engaged members than those in purely online communities. Thus, blended courses may be more effective in promoting communication and discussion among participants.

Motteram (2006) found results which echoed another aspect of the best practices for teacher professional development: orientation. His case study, which sought to better understand the perception of graduate students in teacher education towards blended learning in general and to provide guidelines on the use of online discussion forums in conjunction with face-to-face classes in particular, indicate that when tasks in a blended learning environment are relevant to learners, these tasks will help learners to develop their knowledge and skills.
Belland, Burdo, and Gu (2015), in turn, focused on skill acquisition. Their study on blended professional development examined the ability to help teachers learn to provide one-to-one scaffolding during a problem-based learning unit. Their intervention incorporated three components: three 90-minute seminars, eight 1-hour workshops, and four weeks of online education activities. Although they did not examine effectiveness in real classrooms, the results indicated that the teacher provided one-to-one scaffolding as well as inquiry-oriented teachers described in the literature.

**Blended Teacher Professional Development in International Contexts**

Having discussed both online and blended TPD in general, it would be appropriate to focus on blended EFL TPD, but research on this area is almost nonexistent. Aside from a smattering of online studies (like Sales, Al-Barwani, and Miske's, above) there is very little relevant research available. That having been said, three studies which took place in international contexts may inform the present study.

The first (Owston, Wideman, Murphy, & Lupshenyuk, 2008), examined three blended teacher professional development initiatives that were implemented for middle school science and math teachers in Canada. It was notable not only for its context but also for the depth of its data collection. The goals of the professional development were to improve 1) teacher knowledge, 2) teacher attitudes, and 3) teacher classroom practice, along with efforts to improve 1) student engagement, 2) student attitudes, and 3) student achievement in math and science. In order to assess this, teachers were given questionnaires designed to measure changes in knowledge, beliefs, and instructional practices following participation in the professional development. They were interviewed about the impact of the training on their practice, and observed both before and after the training. Students were surveyed and principals were
interviewed in order to determine whether the participants exhibited more reflection of their teaching practices and increased collaboration with colleagues following training.

Participants in each blended section indicated satisfaction with the course and increased levels of confidence and preparedness in teaching their subject. An analysis of responses indicated that teachers emphasized the value of the face-to-face session, but had mixed satisfaction with the online portions of the course, citing a lack of community when online. The researchers believe that this means it is difficult to organize and maintain a virtual community through online TPD programs.

While the researchers’ conclusions may be strongly against online TPD, their other results do little to bolster their claim that a blended approach in a teacher professional program fits best the design of effective teacher professional development. It is hard to agree with them when they say that “this study supports the contention that blended learning is a viable model for teacher professional development” (Owston et al., 2008, p 201) when student surveys and teacher interviews suggest that the blended learning initiatives seemed to only impact student attitudes and engagement only marginally. At the same time, while teacher survey results suggested that each blended learning environment was correlated with changes in classroom practice, classroom observations indicated that only half of the participating teachers designed and implemented stronger lessons. Worse still, some employed lessons that used new strategies inappropriately. This suggests that more research must be conducted in order to examine how different designs of blended programs impact both the participant and, ultimately, student learning.

The second of the three studies to be examined more closely is Boitshwarelo’s 2009 evaluation of the use of blended learning for teacher professional development in Botswana. It is
notable less because of its method but because of its context: little research on the subject has
been conducted in developing countries and Boitshwarelo’s study suggests that these lessons
cannot be implemented without considering the context. His implementation revealed
deficiencies at the policy, school, and training level, prompting the author to offer the following
three recommendations to future researchers: 1) Schools should support on-going teacher
learning in the workplace; 2) Institutions should support participatory and localized learning as
well as promote access and use; and 3) Training providers should use blended methods and
model best practices. Of particular interest to the current study is the researcher’s conclusion that
in developing countries change is needed in the culture of teaching and learning so that
collaborative approaches are more accepted. This suggests that more research must be conducted
on the use of blended learning TPD in developing countries.

At first blush, the third study, Razak, Kaur, Halili and Ramlan’s (2015) study on the
implementation of a “flipped professional development program” (p. 85) for ESL teachers in
Malaysia does exactly that. In reality, though, although this study does discuss blended teacher
professional development, it does little to address the issues raised by Boitshwarelo. It is instead
of interest to us because it is the only study heretofore uncovered which specifically addresses
the question of blended teacher professional development for teachers of English as a Second
Language. Given the context of the current study, this gives Razak et al.’s study significant
weight. Citing the many shortcomings of both traditional and online professional development
programs, the researchers implemented a four-stage blended training program which alternated
face-to-face training (stages 1 and 3) with online stages (2 and 4). In the end, the researchers
recommended an implementation framework of flipped teacher professional development. The
recommendations assist educational policymakers to strategize better planning and organize flipped professional teacher professional development for EFL teachers.

**Implications for Design**

This review of literature provides a meaningful context through which we can understand the design framework which will guide the design of the intervention at the heart of this study. The framework is as follows and is intended to reflect how the workshop considers and consolidates the available literature:

![Design Framework](image)

**Figure 2-1. Design Framework**

As Figure 2-1 suggests, the Design Framework that informs the workshop at the heart of this study sought to incorporate the best practices of Blended Learning, Teacher Professional Development, and Andragogy provided in their respective bodies of literature. A discussion of these contributions follows.
Applying the Lessons of Effective Teacher Professional Development

As explored above, the literature suggests that there are four elements which most directly promote effective teacher professional development: duration, emphasis on content, coherence with other initiatives, and constructivist pedagogy. A discussion of how these lessons were included in the ILI ABW follows:

- **Duration** – While the literature shows that longer TPD workshops are more effective (Guskey, 2000; Garet et al., 2001; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989), it is important to recognize that the number of contact hours alone was not the only aspect of duration of import revealed in the literature. For example, Garet et al. (2001) also found that training activities which extend over a longer period of time (e.g., weeks and months rather than days) are more likely to impact participant achievement. Within the confines of ILI ABW itself, a modular design is intended to give participants exactly the kind of reflection time that Garet et al. (2001) recommended. At the same time, the ILI ABW should be seen not as a stand-alone intervention but rather as the first part of a longer training program, which would provide participants with support over a period of months and even years. In this light, it can be seen as an opportunity for teachers to try new instructional practices among peers before incorporating them into their own classrooms as well as the beginning of a longer period of growth and exploration.

- **Emphasis on Content** – In light of the general suggestion that effective TPD must focus on content knowledge related to instruction (e.g., professional standards, technology, and pedagogical content knowledge) in order to be effective (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Corcoran, 1995; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009), the ABW’s objectives (enumerated in Appendix B) are directly tied to the ILI Approach in order to be as practically relevant to participants as possible. This is in alignment with Darling-Hammond et al.’s (2009) observation that TPD activities which are more concrete and specific are more effective than those that focus on abstract theory. It is for this reason that the demonstration lesson, itself a demonstration of the principles of the ILI Approach, was selected as the capstone for the workshop.

- **Coherence with Other Initiatives** – Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) found that TPD is more effective when it aligns with other endeavors that are at work within a system and is less effective when it is isolated or even contrary to other efforts at work within a system. So it is with this initiative: the workshop, like the ILI Approach itself, was developed to address administrative as well as academic concerns raised by the ILI AAC. For example, Objective 1.2.1, which works to reinforce the four key elements of professionalism, was congruent with and indeed helped promote other efforts at administrative compliance already at work at ILI and introduced via the parallel Administrative Training. Other objectives, like the pacing guidelines in Objective 3.1, were similarly in alignment with broader efforts already underway in the organization. At the same time the suggestion by Putnam and Borko (2000) that TPD be calibrated to fit to a specific context (in this case
that of the 48-hour ILI semester) were heeded. Finally, it must be noted that in these cases, as well as others, great pains were taken to never present information that would be in contradiction to any other information endorsed by ILI.

- **Constructivism:** Given that several studies have found that constructivist-based instruction (i.e., active learning, collaboration, and learning communities) correlates with effective teacher professional development training (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Desimone, 2009; Wilson & Berne, 1999), constructivist pedagogy was used to redevelop the entire workshop as it made the transition to a blended format. Where previously this element was only evident in the social interaction element of the demonstration lesson, in the ABW preliminary discussion and concluding reflection, activities were added to Modules 1 and 2. The former (the demonstration lesson) was meant to promote active learning by promoting the observation of other teachers and their unique approaches. The online activities were meant to facilitate meaningful group discussions and encourage self-reflection. The goal was for individual learners to situate this new information in their own unique context and thereby more effectively acquire and implement new knowledge.

Finally, to expand on the discussion of constructivism above, it is worth noting that the decision to have the first and final session of the workshop face-to-face was an effort to promote positive interaction among and between participants. As a decentralized company, ILI teachers rarely have the opportunity to interact with one another. Putting all the teachers together at the beginning and end of the course was, in part, an effort to correct this and to instead enable the development of strong relationships between and among teachers. To further encourage this, discussions about background (in the first and last modules) and appropriacy (in the last module only) enabled teachers to contribute their unique experiences and insights to the course in general and to other participants in particular. It is hoped that these relationships would, to repeat the words of Ball and Cohen (1999):

> provide a means for teachers to represent and clarify their understandings, using their own and others’ experiences to develop ideas, learn about practices, and gain a more solid sense of themselves as contributing members of a profession, as participants in the improvement of teacher and learning and their profession, and as intellectuals (p. 17).
Applying the Lessons of Andragogy

Although distinct from the principles of teacher professional development discussed above, andragogy is inherently related to teacher professional development (as teachers in the current context are by definition adult learners) and proved crucial in designing the ILI ABW. Indeed, each of the six assumptions Knowles (1984, 1989) described were addressed in the design of the course:

- **The need to know**, or the idea that adults need to know the reason for learning something, was addressed through the preliminary module (Module 0), which worked to emphasize the unique context within which ILI operates and the high standards to which it holds its teachers. The need to know was, essentially, provoked by situating ILI teachers in a rarefied context while holding up the ILI ABW as a means to meet these heightened expectations.

- **Foundation**, or the idea that experience provides the basis for learning activities, was addressed through the acceptance and encouragement of diverse perspectives from both novice and experienced teachers during the preliminary discussions in Module 0, in the online discussions in Modules 1 and 2, the demonstration lessons in Module 4, and the discussions that followed each.

- **Self-concept**, or the idea that adults need to be responsible for the decisions made in the education process, was addressed in a general sense through the self-directed pacing of the online component and more specifically through the freedom of choice participants were given when selecting the manner of presentation for their demonstration lessons.

- **Readiness**, or the idea that adults are most interested in learning about things which are clearly related to their personal and professional contexts, was practically within the name of the workshop itself. The ILI Approach Blended Workshop was, by its very nature, not a generic TEFL course but rather one which was specifically designed to address the unique challenges of teaching within the ILI context (i.e., small group, adult English as a Foreign Language classes).

- **Orientation**, or the idea that adults are interested in the immediate application of knowledge, was addressed in the immediate applicability of the material covered in the workshop as well as the emphasis placed within the workshop on the practical nature of the skills discussed and demonstrated therein.

- **Motivation**, or the idea that adults are driven more by intrinsic than extrinsic motivators was addressed by the constant emphasis that the ultimate goal of the workshop was a carrot, not a stick. In other words, it was intended not to punish but rather to help teachers make a more meaningful impact on their students. (Knowles, 1984, 1989; Knowles et al., 2005).
At the same time, it should also be noted that the fundamental orientation of the workshop was not to impart knowledge but instead to facilitate learning. Indeed, the very structure of the demonstration lesson which served as the capstone for the workshop took into account Knowles’ (1980) advice about facilitating learning in that it: 1) created the right mood by providing welcoming input; 2) helped participants clarify learning expectations by seeing principles in action; 3) made available a wide range of learning resources by highlighting the use of external resources; and 4) responded to student inquiries by asking questions (inquiry method) rather than merely providing expert answers. Additionally, by facilitating learning it also worked to make learning more meaningful and therefore more effective. Per the suggestions of Vella, the demonstration lesson:

1. Structured a learner-centered dialogue,
2. Integrated theory and practice,
3. Encouraged personal accountability,
4. Created a positive exchange between facilitators and adult learners, and
5. Allowed each participant to use a different learning style (adapted from Vella, 2000).

Applying the Best Practices on Blended Learning Course Design

Of course, given the decision to explore the effectiveness of a blended design for the new ILI workshop, the ILI ABW also needed to reflect the best practices in blended learning course design. What follows is an overview of how this research impacted the transition of the ILI AW to a blended format:

- **Course Goals and Learning Outcomes** – A considerable body of literature suggests that course goals and objectives should be determined before all other design tasks (Stein & Graham, 2014; McGee & Ries, 2012; Ward, Peters, & Shelley, 2010). Moreover, the literature (Stein & Graham, 2014; McGee & Ries, 2012; Martyn, 2003) suggests that these goals and objectives should be “designed from the learner’s perspective” (2012, p. 11). Accordingly, when designing the ILI ABW, its objectives were decided upon first and always framed in a way in which they would be most meaningful to learners. Only once the course objectives were identified was a course outline constructed and other factors (e.g., time allocations, alignment, and metrics for assignments and assessments) determined.
• **Ease of Communication** – The preliminary research also informed the use of language in the resulting workshop. In an effort to foster what Stein and Graham call “ease of communication” (2014, p. 195), a conversational, practical style was used throughout the course. That is to say that technical terminology was used as sparingly as possible and instructions were given using direct language with an emphasis on clarity. At the same time, in alignment with Martyn’s (2003) recommendation, the first and last sessions of the workshop were held in person so as to provide an opportunity to introduce the course management system and address the unique concerns of each participant.

• **Pedagogical and Organizational Design** – Similarly, the best practices for pedagogical and organizational design informed the structure of the workshop. In accordance with their suggestion that “information [be] divided into blocks of information” and that these blocks build “progressively” with “reference and connect” activities between units (Stein & Graham, 2014, p. 196), even in its blended form the workshop was subdivided into five distinct modules which build from the relatively general to the quite specific. As outlined above, the opening module focuses on professionalism in general and in the classroom in particular. The final module was concerned with the finer points of specific instructional tasks. Similarly, the activities built from multiple choice and short answer (in the online component of the course) to a more demanding demonstration class in the final module.

• **Engaged Learning** – Stein and Graham (2014) maintain that activities which use multiple types of interactions – with the content, the instructor, and fellow learners – are more engaging than activities using only one type of interaction. This point and its concordance with active learning and constructivist pedagogy had a major impact on the (re)design of the workshop. Where previously Socratic lectures and multiple-choice quizzes dominated the first three modules, in the redesign, group discussions and self-reflection activities were added to Modules 1 and 2. This format, which was partially inspired by McGee and Reis’ (2012) suggestion that interactions can take place synchronously or asynchronously, provided no less than three forms of interaction (with the group through discussion, with the content through the quizzes, and with themselves through self-reflection) in many of the modules.

• **Collaboration and Community** – The fact that, as Stein and Graham say “community-driven activities encourage learners to explore, share, analyze, and refine their thinking and practice through social interaction” (2014, p. 140) also informed the interaction patterns used in the workshop. Importantly, “community-driven activities tend to target higher-level cognitive skills often enshrouded as ‘critical thinking’ (e.g. application, analysis, evaluation, and creation)” (2014, p. 140). Community formation of this type was encouraged through face-to-face group discussion at the outset of the course, fostered during the online discussions in Modules 1 and 2, and brought to bear in Module 4, which not only required critical thinking in its application but also required group discussion in its evaluation. By affording these opportunities, participants were able to collaborate, interact, and learn from each other.

• **Assessments and Feedback** – One of the important points discussed in the literature is that blended courses increase the power of assessments because they enable instructors to
employ both onsite and online tools to measure student learning and thereby select the type of assessment which is most appropriate for their specific learning objectives (Stein & Graham, 2014). In transitioning to a blended format this idea was instrumental in redeveloping the sequence of activities – online-discussion; online lecture; online quiz and self-reflection – that was used in Modules 1 and 2. By leveraging the permanence of the written form, it was hoped that the discussions conducted online would be more meaningful in the moment and also upon reflection at the conclusion of each module. At the same time, the fact that online assessments could generate results immediately meant that these results could be communicated more quickly and easily than before and, per McGee and Reis (2012), promote participant engagement.

- **Grading** – Dennen (2005) suggests that students in blended courses look for both qualitative and quantitative feedback after submitting assignments. This, combined with his idea (2005) that not all assessments need to be graded, informed the decision to focus on feedback instead of formal grades. At the same time, prior iterations of the workshop have suggested that participants are often confused by ungraded class assignments, so clarity and transparency (which are repeatedly emphasized in the literature on this subject) had to be provided from the beginning. This advice influenced what information was provided during the preliminary synchronous session and how it was presented. This information, as well as access to the demonstration lesson rubric from the outset of the course, was also meant to provide participants with a sense of control over their progress through the course.

- **Ease of Access** – The literature on blended learning course design suggests that usability is one of the most important points in LMS design and, in the case of ILI ABW, no formal LMS as such was used. Most researchers were rather agnostic on the type of LMS to use (Stein & Graham, 2014; McGee & Reis, 2012), so the use of low-threshold, mass-market technologies which participants were familiar with (e.g., YouTube and Google Sites) was adopted in lieu of a less familiar course management system. At the same time, per Martyn’s (2003) suggestion, the first class of the workshop was conducted synchronously in order to provide participants with an orientation to the course management system and thereby anticipated any technical questions they may have had.

- **Preparation and Revisions** – The literature on blended learning course design in general and Glazer (2012) in particular, suggests that the very strength and value of blending online and face-to-face learning components is its combination of synchronous and asynchronous methodologies, something wholly foreign to a purely face-to-face classroom. Thus, when designing courses, the educator must understand the assets of both in order to take full advantage of each. By conducting the foregoing review of literature, questioning my own assumptions, and implementing many of the suggestions garnered from the investigation, I worked to leverage the unique advantages and disadvantages of both modalities.

On the subject of preparation and revision, I took the advice of McGee and Reis (2012), who strongly advocate that would-be designers solicit “support and feedback from professional
“colleagues” as a way of testing their ideas during the design process (p. 12), by beta-testing the online course with colleagues and SMEs. Then, too, this study at its very heart was an attempt to assess the merits of the ILI ABW so that the effectiveness of the workshop could be assessed and ultimately improved upon.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, the existing literature on teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design were discussed. Definitions of each were presented, as well as discussion of their fundamental principles and relevant research singularly and, where possible, in combination. While this literature review demonstrated that there is considerable literature on these subjects individually and, indeed, this information was used to inform the design of the ILI ABW, it also revealed that there was little available on the intersection of the three areas. Moreover, little or no research exists that speaks specifically to the present study, which examines the phenomenon of a blended teacher professional development workshop for teachers of English as a Foreign Language in a developing country. If this literature review and the design framework, above, illustrate anything, it is that significant gaps in the literature exist at the intersection of blended learning and teacher professional development in general, and how the two disciplines relate to English as a Second Language teacher training in particular. It is exactly this gap in knowledge that the present study hopes to address. This research overall would contribute to the existing knowledge on teacher training and allow practitioners to understand what the teachers experience. In so doing, a method is created to provide students with meaningful opportunities to develop their skills.

**Chapter 2 Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of the search for literature and then examined that literature in depth. Special attention was paid to teacher professional development, andragogy,
and blended learning course design individually and then in combination. The chapter also provided an overview of literature, such as it exists, which relates the researcher questions at the heart of this study. The chapter concluded by explaining how the existing literature on teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design were used to inform the design of the ILI ABW.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines in specific detail how the blended learning teacher professional development workshop was designed and implemented. To do this, it first provides the context and content of the workshop and then explains how the workshop was designed to be in alignment with the existing literature on teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design. The second part of the chapter then provides a detailed overview of the research methodology that was used for this study by describing the methodological framework, the research questions, data collection and data analysis. The chapter then concludes with a discussion of those methods and addresses some limitations of the research design.

Context

The International Language Institute, S.A. (ILI) was a Mexico City-based language solutions provider which served its clients by offering a wide range of language services. On any given morning in 2017, more than 70 teachers, many of whom were often hired for their linguistic ability rather than their pedagogic experience, gave unsupervised classes simultaneously in four cities in Mexico. In 2013, in response to the first of what would become several waves of hiring, it became clear to ILI’s managing partners that protocols needed to be created and implemented to ensure that new staff, no matter their location, would be able to deliver EFL courses in a manner consistent with the school’s vision and values. In other words, new staff needed to be trained to impart what came to be called the ILI Approach, an overview of which can be found in Appendix A.

The ILI Approach did not begin as a teacher professional development workshop. It began instead as a set of principles which ILI’s managing partners felt that all members of the teacher staff needed to internalize in order to effectively impart courses for ILI. Since the
creation of these principles in 2013, various efforts were undertaken to create a formalized teacher professional development program which covered these points. The first, the ILI Teacher's Manual (2013), provided new hires with a written guide covering company policies and procedures but, ultimately, proved unwieldy. Although it garnered positive survey feedback from staff members, this indirect approach lacked reinforcement and ultimately failed to solve the problem of imparting the information teachers needed to deliver courses for ILI. The Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) at ILI therefore asked the Academic Director to develop a more hands-on skills workshop that could provide new hires with the information necessary to consistently deliver the ILI curriculum. The result of these efforts was two-fold, resulting as it did in the formalization of the ILI Approach as well as the first iteration of the ILI Approach Workshop.

The ILI Approach

At its core, the ILI Approach is a consolidation of the principles laid out in the original ILI Teachers’ Manual (2013, introduced above). Where the original ILI Teachers’ Manual was presented as 15 disparate “best practices,” the ILI Approach restructured and reorganized these principles into three broad components: 1) The Roles and Responsibilities of an ILI Instructor, 2) The Elements of Effective Instruction, and 3) Using the ILI Approach with The ILI Curriculum. In this way the ILI Approach served as an introduction and overview of the expectations asked of all ILI instructors. A more detailed explanation of each of these components follows. But while the following components are presented individually here, they are necessarily presented as being interdependent and self-reinforcing (e.g., structuring lessons) play a major role in each component) in official ILI materials.

• The Roles and Responsibilities of an ILI instructor – This component outlines the six different roles of a teacher – Organizer, Manager/Controller, Assessor, Observer/Monitor, Tutor/Coach, Participant – that ILI endorses. As such, these are the
roles that teachers are expected to fill, at varying times and to varying degrees, in the classroom. It also draws a distinction between being friendly with students and being their friend. This point relates to the idea of professional distance, which along with timeliness, preparedness, and expertise, comprise the four elements of professionalism endorsed by ILI.

- **Elements of Effective Instruction** – this component outlines the six elements of effective instructive endorsed by ILI. These are:
  
  o Providing Comprehensible Input, which incorporates the lesson of showing, not telling for the benefit of both lower-level and visual learners
  
  o Linking New Information to Existing Knowledge, which demands that teachers carefully select examples in advance
  
  o Lesson Planning as well as the related value of communicating that plan to the student(s)
  
  o Determining Key Concepts and structuring the learning cycle
  
  o Preteaching Vocabulary and other difficult concepts
  
  o Promoting Student Talk Time

- **Using the ILI Approach with The ILI Curriculum** – This component outlines the ILI recommended pacing for a typical 90-minute classes (i.e., the 15, 30, 45 Model) and explains how this pacing keeps classes on track during a semester and across the ILI system. It then provides propriety suggestions for teaching with the Market Leader textbook series, including special tips for teaching each of five major sections of each Market Leader unit (i.e., Vocabulary, Listening, Reading, Grammar, and Useful Language).

**Needs Analysis**

Given that these principles were drawn from the already existing ILI Teachers’ Manual, a formal needs assessment was conducted to better come to terms with the mismatch between expectations and reality (if any). This needs analysis proceeded through a process of consultation (informal interviews), observation, and self-reflection with teachers who had worked with ILI for some time and had been provided with the ILI Teachers’ Manual when hired. Five junior teachers were interviewed. I then worked with the then-serving Academic Director to use on-site observations and personal insights to refine their suggestions. The Academic Director and I
could both be considered subject matter experts (SMEs) and this two-source design was employed to offset some of the disadvantages of serving as one’s own SME (per Morrison, Ross, Kalman, and Kemp, 2011). All interviews were conducted separately, in single sittings, using open-ended questions that centered on the three central tenants of the ILI Approach (i.e., “What are the roles of a teacher?”“What are the qualities of effective instruction?” and, “How do you structure your classes?”). Where necessary, follow-up questions such as, “Can you explain that in detail?” and, “How much time precisely?” were used to clarify questions and encourage meaningful responses.

The results of the five teacher interviews were compared against the existing standards established as part of the ILI Approach in the ILI Teacher’s Manual. Areas which lacked certainty and clarity were shortlisted for inclusion in the ILI Approach Workshop (AW).

This process identified three important areas of concern:

1) **Teacher Roles** – teachers were, on average able to successfully identify only four (4) of the nine (9) teacher roles highlighted in the ILI Teacher's Manual.

2) **The Elements of Effective Instruction** – teachers were unable to provide specific details concerning the best practices of the reading, listening, and useful language sections of the ILI curriculum.

3) **Balancing the ILI Approach and Unique Student Needs** – teachers expressed a lack of clarity with regard to the ILI curriculum in light of the unique needs (and situations) presented in each classroom.

**New Hire ILI Approach Workshop (ILI AW)**

Based on these findings, it was decided that the ILI AW needed to address these concerns in order to correct the mismatch between the tenets of the ILI Approach and teacher understanding. Given the specialized nature of the ILI Approach, a mandatory new hire workshop (the ILI AW) was created in order to address these shortcomings. Although research revealed that other EFL training workshop models exist, the AAC at ILI found that the ILI
Approach was sufficiently distinct to warrant the development of its own customized training program.

Based on the findings from the aforementioned needs analysis, the AAC at ILI decided that the AW needed to address all three areas of the ILI Approach. By focusing on these three areas the workshop was able to begin with fundamentals (noted in Figure 3-1, below, as general principles) and slowly build on that base to equip participants with specific strategies that would enable them to fulfill those roles effectively and in accordance with ILI’s academic philosophy. To put it another way, the instruction started with broad parameters and then added dimension to these parameters by providing the tools necessary to achieve the goals suggested by the same. As illustrated in Figure 3-1, this sequence is in accordance with Posner and Strike’s concept-related sequencing scheme (Morrison, Ross, Kalman, & Kemp, 2011, pg. 127) because each objective served as a logical prerequisite for those that followed.

Figure 3-1. Concept-Related Sequencing Scheme of the ILI AW.

Additionally, it was decided that the ILI AW should be delivered as a live lecture conducted in a Socratic style which allowed for discussion and the unique perspectives of experienced teachers to be heard. This same discussion format was revisited in the concluding
teaching demonstration lesson—essentially a teaching demonstration presented to a simulated class rather than a real one— that would enable participants to demonstrate (and discuss) what they had learned.

First launched in 2015, the ILI AW was able to effectively address many of the concerns it was designed to remedy. More than 50 teachers were trained using the approach between 2015 and 2017. However, as the company continued to expand geographically, this solution proved unworkable beyond the confines of Mexico City and the company's performance in its newer, more distant centers was suffering. In order to meet this challenge, the AAC at ILI decided to investigate the feasibility of using a blended learning model to provide the ILI AW in a way that combined the effectiveness of face-to-face interaction with the efficiency of online instruction.

With this in mind, the current study was undertaken and with it an investigation into teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design. The result of these efforts was the ILI Approach Blended Workshop.

**The ILI Approach Blended Workshop**

The ILI Approach Blended Workshop (ABW) was intended to serve simultaneously as a teacher professional development workshop for novice teachers and an introduction to the unique expectations ILI had for even the most experienced of instructors. It had three main objectives divided over five modules. The first and last modules were conducted face-to-face while the three online modules in between were scaffolded in such a way as to build knowledge gradually in much the same way as the face-to-face ILI AW (outlined above). As before, participants were taught ILI’s perspective on what a teacher does (Objective 1) before they could be instructed on how ILI suggests those tasks be done effectively (Objective 2), within the confines of the ILI Approach (Objective 3). These objectives are provided in full in Appendix B.
Given that the blended version of the workshop maintained the telescoping design of the original workshop (described above), a two-phase integration process remained crucial to the instructional strategy. However, where the face-to-face AW used a Socratic lecture approach, the generative strategy for individual skills in the ABW follows an online discussion-video lecture-online reflection asynchronously in the case of Modules 1-3 and face-to-face in Module 4. Module 0 was also conducted face to face but contained no instructional material. Also new to the blended format were practice opportunities for factual knowledge provided by the use of end-of-module quizzes (i.e., each of the three modules had its own assessment quiz that was designed to enable participants to integrate this information before consolidating it through use in the demonstration lesson). Finally, as with the face-to-face ILI AW, the demonstration continued to be an opportunity for demonstration and discussion. While handouts, PowerPoints, and other presentation materials were used, there was no assigned reading. Table 3-1 illustrates the sequencing of the ILI ABW.

Table 3-1. Sequencing of the ILI ABW.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Modality</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 0      | Face-to-face | Introduction         | 1) Pre-Intervention Interviews  
|        |              |                      | 2) Workshop Overview                        |
| 1      | Online       | Roles and Responsibilities | 1) Preliminary Discussion  
|        |              |                      | 2) Video lecture                           |
|        |              |                      | 3) Online Quiz with Self-Reflection           |
| 2      | Online       | Effective Teaching   | 4) Preliminary Discussion  
|        |              |                      | 5) Video lecture                           |
|        |              |                      | 1) Online Quiz with Self-Reflection           |
| 3      | Online       | The ILI Approach     | 1) Video lecture                           |
|        |              |                      | 2) Online Quiz                            |
| 4      | Face-to-face | Demonstration Lesson | 1) Demonstration Lessons and Discussion Sessions  
|        |              |                      | 2) Post-Intervention Interviews              |
What follows, then, is an overview of how the objectives of the ILI AAC were fulfilled in the ABW and, more saliently, how these parts work together in order to provide a clearer picture of what was accomplished (and measured) over the course of the training workshop.

**Module 0: Introduction and Integration**

In the preliminary synchronous module, participants had the opportunity to meet the other members of the cohort, share relevant personal experiences, and were provided with a general introduction to the structure and themes of the workshop before being given access to the mediated learning environment.

**Module 1: The Roles and Responsibilities of an ILI instructor.**

The central theme of Module 1, as the name suggests, was to detail the variety of roles and responsibilities that an ILI teacher is expected to fulfill (or avoid) in the classroom. The module proceeded in three phases. The first phase, which corresponded to Objective 1.1, took place before the video component and consisted of online discussion on the following question: “Please describe a situation where a teacher was more than a teacher? What did he/she do that was ‘above and beyond?’” After submitting your own result, please comment on at least two other posts. Do these stories expand your view of what it means to be a teacher?”

After the initial discussion, participants watched a video lecture that outlined the nine different roles of a teacher. The module touched on Objective 1.2, distinguishing between being friendly and being friends with a student. Finally, to conclude this unit and address Objective 1.2.1, the video lecture discussed the concept of “professional distance” as the first of the four elements of professionalism endorsed as part of the ILI Approach. The other three are timeliness, preparedness, and expertise.

At the conclusion of the video lecture component, participants were given an online assessment to ensure their recall of the rote information presented in the module. That quiz
included multiple choice (matching) questions that correspond to Objectives 1.1 and 1.2. The last component of Module 1 took the form of a free response self-reflection question which invited participants to reflect on the meaning of the module as a whole and Objective 1.2.1 in particular: “Please reflect in writing on what we have discussed in this module. Which of the roles of a teacher do you think is the most important? Which do you think is the most overlooked? Which do you think is hardest to implement? Why?”

Module 2: (In)Effective Instruction

The goal of Module 2 was to outline and elaborate on the six elements of effective instruction as defined by ILI. As with Module 1, prior to the video lecture component of this module participants were asked (in accordance with Objective 2.1) to reflect on the following question in the discussion forum: “Please describe a situation where you experienced ‘ineffective instruction’ – what made it ineffective? After submitting your own result, please comment on at least two other posts. What do these experiences have in common?”

This set the stage for the video lecture, which outlined the six elements of effective instruction (Objective 2.2) and provided examples of them from the Market Leader textbook series.(This series, published by Pearson ELT in association with the Financial Times, is for students who want to learn English and learn about business. It forms the academic core of the ILI curriculum.)

As with the previous module, at the conclusion of the video lecture component, participants were given a short quiz to ensure their recall of the rote information presented in the module. That quiz also consisted of multiple choice and matching questions that work to address Objective 2.2 (elements of effective instruction). After the quiz, participants were again invited to reflect on the theme of the module using the following prompt: “Please reflect in writing on what
we have discussed in this module. Which elements of effective instruction do you think is the most important? Which do you think is hardest to implement?”

**Module 3: The ILI Curriculum and ILI Approach**

The goal of Module 3 was to present participants with the fundamentals of the ILI curriculum and to demonstrate how this curriculum can be maximized through the ILI Approach. Unlike the others, the module began without a discussion activity and instead commenced with a video lecture which provided participants with an overview of ILI’s English program levels – 12 levels – and their pacing – 48 instructional hours – as corresponds to Objectives 3.2. As part of this explanation, and in order to accomplish Objective 3.2.1, participants were then shown a chart which aligns the 12 ILI levels to their short form names (i.e., pre-intermediate), the Common European Frame of Reference scale, and the Market Leader textbook series.

Following this overview, and having mentioned the Market Leader textbook series, participants were then shown example copies of a textbook in order to introduce its form and style. In accordance with Objective 3.2.2, particular attention was paid to the textbook series’ a) consistency across levels, b) overall structure per level, and c) appendices.

Having established what the Market Leader is, participants were then instructed in what the program is not. That is to say, and in accordance with Objective 3.3, participants were informed about what ILI sees as the strengths and weaknesses of the Market Leader textbooks, given suggestions on possible supplementary materials, and encouraged to bring their unique strengths to the classroom. Finally, by way of conclusion to the third module, participants were provided with specific details of the ILI Approach to using the Market Leader (Objective 3.3). These elements are instructional techniques that are unique to ILI and developed with the five major Market Leader sections (those sections are vocabulary, listening, reading, grammar, and useful language [i.e., idiomatic expression]).
As with previous modules, an assessment quiz immediately followed the video lecture component. This was meant to enable participants to review the principles before applying them in practice through their demonstration lesson. At the completion of the final online quiz, there was no self-reflection activity. Instead, each participant was assigned a section of a sample Market Leader unit for their demonstration lesson based on their background (e.g., participants with more teaching experience were assigned topics, such as grammar, which would leverage their existing knowledge).

**Module 4: The Demonstration Lesson**

The fourth module took place face-to-face and was comprised entirely of the demonstration lessons and the discussions which followed them. This module was intended to fulfill the overarching application objectives (Objectives 1, 2, and 3). In the contexts of the original ILI AW and again in the ILI ABW, the demonstration lesson can be defined as a demonstration class that participants deliver to the workshop instructor and other workshop participants on the final day of the workshop. The demonstration lesson is evaluated through the use of a rubric (Appendix E). This evaluation was completed not only by the instructor, but also to facilitate note-taking for discussions by the other workshop attendees that followed each demonstration lesson. For their demonstration lessons, participants were asked to present a section of the Market Leader textbook – vocabulary, listening, grammar, etc. – to the workshop audience, which itself served as a mock class of approximately intermediate level. The purpose of this demonstration lesson was to provide a platform through which teachers can 1) demonstrate their consolidated mastery of the skills involved in the ILI Approach, 2) demonstrate their own personal strengths, and 3) promote meaningful discussion among the participants about the appropriacy and applicability of each demonstration lesson.
During the fourth module, the instructor of the workshop yielded the floor to the participants who were now alternately instructors themselves or, when not teaching, fulfilling the role of Intermediate-level EFL students. Presentations followed the sequence laid out by the Market Leader. Then all participants were provided with private, written feedback (in the form of the demonstration lesson) from the instructor. A group discussion, informed by the written comments of both the workshop instruction and its participants followed each presentation and focused on how the demonstration lesson in question could be modified in meaningful ways to address populations with different ages, abilities, and contexts. After all the demonstration lessons and their corresponding discussions were conducted, a concluding (and congratulatory) lecture formally ended the workshop.

Connections with the Literature

As explained in detail in Chapter 2, the ILI ABW was designed to leverage the best practices of teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design. The exact relationship between this preliminary research and the resulting workshop was outlined in said chapter but is briefly summarized in the following charts:

Tables 3-2, 3-3, and 3-4 are meant illustrate the relationship between the principles discussed in Chapter 2 and the resulting ILI ABW.

Implementation of the ILI ABW

The ILI ABW took one week to complete, with a synchronous information session on Monday and the face-to-face demonstration on Friday. In between, participants (whose selection is outlined in more detail below) completed the online components of the course at their own pace, bearing in mind the participation requirement necessary for the preliminary discussions in Modules 1 and 2 (e.g., only once participants had submitted at least one response could they
access the video lecture and therefore the rest of each module's content). The exact implementation of the workshop is provided as part of Chapter 4.

Table 3-2. Correspondence of Features of the ILI ABW with Best Practices in Teacher Professional Development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best Practices</th>
<th>Application in ILI ABW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the use of a modular design that unfolds over 1 week, which itself serves as the first step in a cycle of comprehensive training workshops at ILI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on Content</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the focus of concrete content knowledge related to teaching for ILI and as measured by a sample lesson which demonstrates mastery of these principles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coherence with Other Initiatives</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the inclusion of teaching points which touches on Administrative issues such as professionalism, course duration, and more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructivism: Active Learning, Collaboration, and Learning Communities</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the inclusion of face-to-face synchronous discussions at the beginning and end of the course (Modules 0 and 4) and asynchronous discussions and self-reflection activities in Modules 1 and 2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-3. Correspondence of Features of the ILI ABW with Knowles’ Principles of Andragogy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best Practices</th>
<th>Application in ILI ABW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Need to Know</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the emphasis at the beginning (and throughout) course on how the material presented in the ILI ABW will help participants succeed as instructors at ILI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>• Incorporated by welcoming diverse viewpoints during the preliminary module (Module 0) and leveraging these perspectives for the remainder of the workshop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Concept</td>
<td>• Incorporated in two ways: first by allowing participants to complete the online portions of the course at their own pace, and second by allowing them to self-select the topics of their demonstration lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the unique nature of the workshop; rather than a generic TEFL training course, this is one specifically designed for their unique context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the selection of course content which would be applied almost immediately and then continually (first through the use of a demonstration lesson and then, at length, in the classroom).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>• Incorporated by encouraging intrinsic motivators like personal development and self-actualization.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3-4. Correspondence of Features of the ILI ABW with Best Practices in Blended Learning Course Design.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best Practices</th>
<th>Application in ILI ABW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course goals and learning outcomes</td>
<td>• Incorporated by reimagining the workshop and identifying its objectives, independently of prior iterations, before constructing a course outline or other course materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of communication</td>
<td>• Incorporated by adopting a conversational (non-technical) tone throughout the course in general and, in particular, by holding the first session of the workshop in person as a means of introducing students to the course management system and facilitating its access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical and organizational design</td>
<td>• Incorporated by subdividing the course into five distinct modules which build from the relatively general (i.e., Module 0: Introduction) to the quite specific (i.e., Module 4: The Demonstration Lesson). The course activities follow a similar approach, as less demanding activities (e.g., assessment quizzes) precede more demanding ones (e.g., the demonstration lessons).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged learning</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the use of multiple types of interaction during the workshop. For example, participants interact with the instructor in the first and last modules (0 and 4), with the content during self-reflection activities in the online modules (1-3), and with fellow learners throughout the workshop (0 and 4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration and community</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the use of face-to-face group discussion in Module 1, online discussions in Modules 1 and 2, and group critical analysis in Module 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments and feedback</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the use of varied assessment types (e.g., online assessment, asynchronous discussion, and demonstration lesson).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading</td>
<td>• Incorporated by clearly indicating which activities are graded and which are not, while at the same time including both qualitative and quantitative feedback after submitting assignments (e.g., the demonstration lesson provides for feedback from a formal rubric as well as from peers).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of access</td>
<td>• Incorporated through the use of mass-market, low-threshold technologies (e.g., YouTube, Google Sites) in lieu of a formal learning management system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation and revisions</td>
<td>• Incorporated by conducting the foregoing review of literature, questioning assumptions, implementing suggestions, and soliciting feedback from colleagues during the design process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Having outlined the design and implementation of the intervention, what follows is an overview of the methodological framework that was used to study participant perceptions and initial application of the blended learning approach.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of novice and experienced teachers towards a blended learning teacher professional development workshop to better situate it in the context of the learners. Analyzing their self-reported experiences was intended to provide me with a better understanding of their backgrounds as well as the impact (if any) of the workshop on their perceptions and practices. At the same time, the results of the study were intended to inform reconsiderations, revisions, and refinements to the ILI ABW and contribute to more effective instructional practices in general and in a more culturally appropriate and effective way in particular. As stated previously, the research questions covered in this research were:

**Research Questions**

- **RQ1:** What are novice and experienced teachers’ perceptions of blended teacher professional development?
  - **SQ1:** What are teachers’ perceptions of their own learning as a result of blended teacher professional development?
  - **SQ2:** What are teachers’ perceptions of their behavioral changes as a result of blended teacher professional development?

**Research Design**

My research design used Kirkpatrick’s (1996) Training Evaluation Model and thematic analysis to study teachers’ application of the ILI approach as well as their reaction to the workshop.
Kirkpatrick’s Training Evaluation Model

Given that this study is designed to measure the perceptions of both novice and experienced EFL teachers to a blended teacher professional development program, research suggests that Kirkpatrick’s (1996) Training Evaluation Model would offer a useful lens through which to view this research. To wit, not only is it one of the most widely referenced models of training evaluation available (Kirkpatrick, 1956, 1996; Roszkowski & Soven, 2010; Liebermann & Hoffman, 2008; Owston, 2008) but its robustness also makes it ideal for qualitative data collection (Moldovan, 2016; Sovann & Chomdokmai, 2012; Rossett, 2009).

The four levels of Kirkpatrick’s evaluation model include, (a) reaction, (b) learning, (c) behavior, and (d) results (Steensma & Groeneveld, 2010; Owston, 2008). In the current study, these elements will be addressed as follows:

- **Level 1: Reaction**, or the immediate response to the course, is addressed in RQ1 and was assessed using qualitative data gathered from participants during exit interviews at the conclusion of the workshop. Specific interview questions, detailed in Appendix C, were crafted to gather data about participants’ perceptions so that it could later be analyzed thematically. Particular attention was paid to cross-cultural dynamics and the cultural “fit” of the information provided in the workshop.

- **Level 2: Learning**, in this case the extent to which participants perceived that they retained the specific content of the online portion of the course, was addressed in SQ1 and was recorded using qualitative data. To wit, specific exit interview questions (which are also provided in Appendix C) were used to measure participants’ self-perceived learning.

- **Level 3: Behavior**, in this case how participants perceived how their actions have changed as a result of the course, was addressed in SQ2 and was addressed using qualitative data collection. To wit, the entry interview provided insight on the existing practices of each participant while the exit interview responses helped gauge how participants perceived the extent (if any) that their teaching styles may have been affected by the workshop as a whole and the teaching demonstration in particular.

- **Level 4: Results**, or the ultimate outcomes that occurred because of the workshop, remain outside the purview of the present study. This may be pursued further in future studies, where possible areas of inquiry include long term participant
reaction, end-student perception of teacher performance, or third-party assessment of their alignment with the ILI Approach.

Sampling Procedures

My target sample was recent TEFL hires at ILI who were required to complete an unpaid, academic induction training within the first month of their hire. This sample necessarily included at least some teachers who do and do not have teaching experience, as these two perspectives are both evident at ILI. So, too, were the perspectives of both native and non-native speakers of English as both populations are evident at ILI.

Because the research was qualitative, random sampling was not appropriate (Madill & Gough, 2008; Polkinghorne, 2005). Instead, purposeful sampling of a small number of participants with extensive experience or knowledge about the phenomenon under investigation was employed. Purposeful sampling techniques are often used when the characteristics of a specific group of individuals matches the attributes of the phenomenon being studied (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006) and so it was in this case. Careful selection of the participants enabled me to ensure an approximate match between participants and the population at ILI as a whole and so, ultimately, nine participants were invited to join the study.

Sample size is a topic of much debate in qualitative research because the methodologies of differing studies require samples of different sizes to reach data saturation, a situation which occurs when the researcher is no longer hearing or seeing new information (Curry, Nembhard, & Bradley, 2009). There are uncertainties about whether saturation is actually possible due to the variability of answers possible in interview research (Curry, Nembhard, & Bradley, 2009). But the fact that the ILI ABW was intended to be delivered to cohorts of no more than 7 participants, combined with the fact that a reduced number of participants allows for a richer depth of analysis
This means that the use of a small sample can help reach data saturation.

To inform my sampling, I applied a survey to a large training cohort (of approximately 20 individuals). From this larger cohort participants were selected whose demographic characteristics varied along the spectrum of teacher experience (e.g., novice v. experienced) and language background (native vs. non-native). This is in line with two of the major points of distinction found among ILI teachers, but it is important to note that non-native teachers without experience will not be present in the study as this particular combination of these variables has historically not been present in the ILI teaching population. At the same time, the industry standard of at least two years’ experience served as the dividing line for “experienced” teachers.

At the outset, nine recent hires agreed to participate in the study. Of these, two (a native speaker without experience and a non-native speaker with experience who lived and worked outside Mexico City) withdrew from the study before its completion. Instead of continuing with the blended cohort (i.e., the ILI ABW) they were provided with the standard ILI AW (i.e., non-blended) and their data were not included in this study.

**Survey**

As noted above, to select the participants, a survey was applied to the larger induction population of new hires in order to collect demographic data on potential participants and thereby select a purposeful sample. These surveys, which were intended to collect general background information about the participants and are provided in their entirety in Appendix F, were administered using Google Forms and collected using the same mechanism.

After receiving the results of the larger training cohort, a total of nine participants were identified for potential inclusion in the study but ultimately only seven agreed to participate. Those that agreed to participate formed a separate training cohort (which, like all training cohorts
in the existing non-blended workshop, was comprised of 6-7 participants) and were invited to sit for their preliminary interviews before attending the first synchronous module (Module 0: Introduction and Integration, above). As ILI does not pay its teachers for induction training (seeing it instead as a condition of their employment), no participants were compensated for their involvement in the study and those that dropped out of the study were simply added to another training cohort which reviewed the standard (i.e., face-to-face) ILI AW.

**Data Collection**

**Pre-Intervention Interview**

Data collection primarily took place through two in-depth, semi-structured interviews with participants before and after the intervention. Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty, and Hendry (2011) in particular argue for semi-structured interviews, suggesting that a rigid set of questions may result in participants being less willing to be expansive, honest and reflective in their accounts. By contrast, they maintain that semi-structured interviews facilitate flexibility in the order of questions and afford the interviewer the opportunity of following-up on any unanticipated idea or issue raised by the participants.

Prior to the start of the workshop, all participants were interviewed using a total of 10 questions and 13 follow-up/probing questions. All interviews were semi-structured, conducted face-to-face, and focused on participants’ experiences prior to joining ILI. The pre-interview guide, with its five questions can be found in its entirety in Appendix C.

**Demonstration Lessons**

Data was also collected during the workshop itself through observations of the demonstration lessons and the rubrics that were used to evaluate them. Although the workshop contained numerous activities (e.g., online discussion, self-reflection, etc.), because the demonstration lesson is seen as the capstone of the entire workshop, it was the only activity from
the workshop whose data were included in this study. The demonstration lesson took place during Module 4 and was measured using the rubric reproduced in Appendix E. The rubric was made available to participants at the outset of the workshop (during Module 0: Introduction and Integration) and applied during the face-to-face session (Module 4).

During Module 4, I used the rubric to evaluate each participant’s demonstration lesson while the other participants were provided with a copy in order to frame their feedback for the discussions that followed each demonstration lesson. These guided discussions were used to assess how the demonstration lesson in question could be modified in meaningful ways to address populations with different ages, abilities, and contexts, but did not influence the participants’ marks. The final results came only from the investigators’ marks and were presented to all trainees confidentially after the post-intervention interviews were conducted. The marks, and the notes that accompany them, were used to inform the narrative descriptive of participant performance as provided in Chapter 4.

**Post-Intervention Interview**

Immediately following the demonstration lessons, participants were interviewed again. With the post-intervention interview questions the data were, like the pre-intervention interviews, qualitative but this time the questions were more specifically targeted at their experience vis-a-vis the workshop in particular. The interviews were again semi-structured, but this time included more targeted questions about different aspects of the workshop. The nature of these questions helped me achieve a high level of completeness, thoroughness, and, ultimately helped to facilitate my goal of reaching saturation with each participant. The interview guide, with its five questions and six follow-up/probing questions used for these interviews can be found in their entirety in Appendix C.
Table 3-5, below, addresses the specific alignment between the research questions, data collection, and data analysis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research/Sub Question</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Form of Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1: What are novice and experienced teachers’ perceptions of blended teacher professional development?</td>
<td>1) Pre-Intervention Interviews 2) Post-Intervention Interviews</td>
<td>1) Thematic Analysis 2) Thematic Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1 SQ1: What are teachers’ perceptions of their own learning as a result of blended teacher professional development?</td>
<td>1) Pre-Intervention Interviews 2) Post-Intervention Interviews</td>
<td>1) Thematic Analysis 2) Thematic Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1 SQ2: What are teachers’ perceptions of their behavioral changes as a result of blended teacher professional development?</td>
<td>1) Pre-Intervention Interviews 2) Observation Data from Demonstration Lesson Rubrics 3) Post-Intervention Interviews</td>
<td>1) Thematic Analysis 2) Statistical and thematic analyses 3) Thematic Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Analysis**

Following the completion of data collection, thematic analysis was employed to organize, arrange, and categorize the qualitative data (i.e., participants’ statements and observations about their demonstration lessons) into a summary reflective of their individual experiences. Given the nature of the present study, the emphasis was placed on their formative backgrounds, teaching experiences, and perceptions of the intervention, but great care was taken in considering the data sets in both isolation and conjunction. The thematic analysis was conducted in a manner consistent with that outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006):

**Thematic Analysis**

**Phase One:** “Familiarizing yourself with your data, is focused on reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). To do this, I transcribed and
read each interview to ensure that I immersed myself in the data and began to identify patterns and meaning.

**Phase Two:** “Generating initial codes: coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). In this phase, I reread and reviewed the raw interview data in order to begin forming broad, initial codes. By so doing I was able to reduce the content of each interview into a compilation of meaningful statements, which, in turn, were inductively explored in order to develop preliminary theories to guide subsequent phases of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2013; Saldana, 2015).

**Phase Three:** “Searching for themes, collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). In this phase, and using the highlight feature of Microsoft Word, I color-coded the meaningful statements identified in Phase Two (above) to identify a working model of the themes present in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

**Phase Four:** “Reviewing themes, checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic ‘map’ of the analysis” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). In this phase, I focused on refining the working model of the themes identified in Phase Three by using a two-level analysis of the codes. For the first level, I performed an in-depth review of the codes for each theme and decided if a coherent pattern had, indeed, been developed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). When such patterns developed, I grouped statements thematically and began sorting to ensure that they fit in relation to the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
Phase Five: “Defining and naming themes, ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definition and names for each theme” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). The goal of this phase was to “…clearly define what your themes are and what they are not” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 92). To meet this goal, I defined each theme by identifying the essence of the theme and determining under what aspect of the data and research questions the theme fit (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Two examples of this can be found in the tables of codes reproduced in Tables 3-6 and 3-7:

Table 3-6. Excerpts from Table of Codes on Pace of Workshop, with Time Stamps from Interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pace of Workshop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zelda [00:48] Um…the only thing that I didn’t like was, er, ya know we all have lives as, umm, taking a lot of time, like you wouldn’t think it would take that long but yeah it took a long time and, and it’s just… Yeah it’s hard because ya know I-we need to do more stuff, other stuff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryson -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diem [01:44] Um the pace of the workshop…yes! Erm I think it was paced fairly well, erm, yes! I don’t think I have too many comments about that actually…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isadora [0:15] I think the online thing was too long and I… the live thing was too short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santi [1:43] I think the pace was really good I mean I felt like it was relaxed but still focused that we got a lot done without feeling too rushed or that it was going to take too long either so yeah I think it was really good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy [2:45] It was not easy for me right now. I’m working a lot so it's not easy in the way that I didn’t have that much time to complete it er as requested. Mm probably I would like to I would…be happy would have been- or more happy if I had the chance of doing it until Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cali [1:21] I think it’s pretty good I think it’s nice it’s just you can customize it, because you have time to organize your agenda you can do the-the online part whenever you want to kind of and you just have to schedule the other two appointments and that’s it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3-7: Excerpts from Table of Codes on Length of Videos, with Time Stamps from Interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Videos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zelda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isadora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cali</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase Six: “Producing the report: the final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, completing extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research questions and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). In this, the final phase, I rendered the analyzed data into narrative form so that said narrative “…goes beyond description of the data, and makes an argument in relation to your research questions” while at the same time “…provides a concise, coherent, logical,
nonrepetitive [sic] and interesting account of the story the data tell – within and across themes” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 93). In this narrative I frequently quoted each participant and, because I felt it was important to keep true to the participants’ style and not take away meaning from their stories, maintained the grammatical and sentence structure errors present in the original quotes.

**Research Design Limitations**

Several factors may have impacted the utility of the study. Foremost among these is the fact that the study was designed to evaluate the ILI ABW but was not conducted as an experiment. Thus the study is impossible to replicate and, since there was no baseline example of participants’ teaching prior to the demonstration lessons which concluded the workshop, it was impossible to ascertain exactly how the behavior of participants changed as a result of their involvement. Instead, this study sought to identify participants’ perceptions of the workshop and their perceptions of their own changes (if any). As a study which focuses on self-reported perceptions, the unique backgrounds and formative experiences, not to mention demographic factors (e.g., teaching experience, mastery of the language, etc.), may have had an outsized impact on or otherwise skewed the results and/or limited their general applicability of this study.

At the same time, since this study relied so heavily on self-reported affective data (e.g., the attitudes or opinions of respondents), the possibility exists that participants may not have shared their true opinions or that their opinions were influenced by outside events. Then, too, the possibility exists that external factors not considered in this study may have impacted participants’ perceptions of the workshop. For example, several participants reported high workloads during the week of the intervention and these outside pressures may have impacted either their performance or perception of the workshop, if not both. The same could also be said of the fact that participants, like all other ILI new hires, were not compensated for the time taken to complete the workshop. Moreover, although the study was conducted entirely in English
among a population who by definition have a solid mastery of the language, linguistic and cultural factors may have limited the effectiveness of their feedback.

Finally, as this is a qualitative study which relied heavily on interview data, the question of (even inadvertent) researcher bias must be addressed. As all of the participants experiences were recorded, transcribed, and reported by me, they were necessarily refracted through my own interpretation. As a result, my professional and academic experience could have influenced my interpretation of their perspectives.

**Statement of Bias**

The prospect of researcher bias makes awareness of potential biases all that much more important. In this sense, I must therefore acknowledge that I had worked as a teacher at ILI and, at the time of the study, served as its Academic Director. During my time there, I worked in conjunction with other members of the AAC to develop first the ILI Approach and then the ILI Teacher’s Manual and ILI Approach Workshop. To minimize any bias on my part, I worked to intentionally ignore the fact that I had advanced knowledge of the academic and administrative procedures at ILI as well as the opinions and views of previous ILI AW participants.

At the same time, I had ongoing contact with all members of the teaching staff at ILI. While I did not have a hand in hiring them and did not serve as their supervisor, as Academic Director my interest in their academic performance must be acknowledged. To counter this possibility, I worked to make sure that the participants were able to tell their own stories without “begging the question” or otherwise influencing the results.

Finally, in order to monitor my own bias, I used a researcher journal to keep track of my thoughts and impressions after both interview phases, during the demonstration lesson, while coding the results, and analyzing the resulting themes.
Chapter 3 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the content and design of the blended learning teacher professional development workshop, ILI ABW, and revisited the rationale for these decisions. Next, the research methodology and a rationale for its use for this study were presented. Finally, specific details regarding data collection and analysis, as well as a brief review of the limitations posed by the research design, concluded the chapter.
CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of novice and experienced teachers towards a blended learning teacher professional development workshop so as to better situate it in the context of the learners. Chapter Four begins by providing a restatement of the central and sub-research questions. The chapter then turns its focus to the participants involved in the study by providing background information for each participant, using several narrative descriptions which compare and contrast the backgrounds of each one. These descriptions are based on each participant’s preliminary interview and are intended to illustrate where the participants’ experiences coincide and where they do not. Following this overview, the perceptions (as reported in their exit interviews) of each participant to various parts of the ILI ABW are reported. The participants’ post-intervention interviews were analyzed and organized chronologically (with respect to the sequence of the ILI ABW) and then thematically. Given that the demonstration lessons proved to be the most significant aspect of the workshop to both ILI (per the ILI AAC) and participants (per their exit interviews), the discussion of participant reflections on the demonstration lesson is bolstered by an analysis of the observations garnered from the rubrics used to evaluate each participant’s performance in it. The chapter then ends with an overall summary of the findings that sets the groundwork for Chapter Five, which provides a discussion of the results and conclusion of this investigation.

The central and sub research questions of this study were as follows:

- **RQ1:** What are novice and experienced teachers’ perceptions of blended teacher professional development?
  - **SQ1:** What are teachers’ perceptions of their own learning as a result of blended teacher professional development?
  - **SQ2:** What are teachers’ perceptions of their behavioral changes as a result of blended teacher professional development?
The Participants, an Overview

Table 4-1 briefly outlines some of the points of commonalities between and among participants at the outset of the study as reported in the initial demographic surveys:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commonalities</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Andy, Diem, Santi, Zelda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bryson, Cali, Isadora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Speakers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bryson, Diem, Santi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Native Speakers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Andy, Cali, Isadora, Zelda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possesses Teaching Credentials</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Andy, Diem, Isadora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possesses Prior English Teaching Experience</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Andy, Isadora, Santi, Zelda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacks Prior English Teaching Experience</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bryson, Cali, Diem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Participants, In Depth

The above data were drawn from the demographic survey used to select participants (each of whom selected their own pseudonym) for inclusion in the study but this information offers only a limited understanding of the participants and their unique backgrounds. To better understand the unique backgrounds of each participant, I conducted an entry interview with each of the participants on the first day of the workshop (Monday of that week). This interview was semi-structured in nature and was conducted immediately prior to the Module 0 activities outlined below. These one-on-one interviews provided participants an opportunity to elaborate on the information provided in that survey and helped to construct an overview of each participant’s background.

Native vs. Non-Native

As noted in Table 4-1, above, three of the seven participants were native English speakers and four were not but points of difference emerged even within these subsets. For example, while Bryson and Diem were British nationals, Santi was born and raised in the American West.
Among the non-native speakers, the situation was more complicated still. Of the four, only Isadora and Andy were natives of the Mexico City Metropolitan Area. While neither of them would claim native-level proficiency, Zelda who was born and raised in Puebla, studied extensively in Canada and would claim near-native proficiency. So too, would Cali, a native of Bogota, Colombia who studied English for more than 10 years as a child and claimed to be more comfortable in English than in her native Spanish. Such self-assessments reinforce the point that the term "native speaker," like other demographic factors, can be considered a subjective one which participants may assign themselves, regardless of their background.

**Education**

Educational backgrounds served as another important lens. Although the chart above lists three teachers as possessing teaching credentials (i.e., Andy, Diem, and Isadora) the caliber of these credentials varies considerably. Not one of them, for example, has a degree in Education or even in English. Isadora comes closest, possessing a Postgraduate Degree in Technical Translation from English to Spanish from a private school in Mexico to complement her, later, successful completion of a Teacher's Diploma Course at the same institution. Diem, for his part, had an Undergraduate Degree in Fine Arts but completed a short, blended-learning TEFL course in the UK before moving to Mexico. Finally, Andy possessed a Music Composition degree but completed a Spanish Teacher’s Certification Course at one of Mexico's most prestigious educational institutions.

The educational backgrounds of the remaining participants were as follows: Bryson completed an Undergraduate Degree in International Relations in the UK; Cali possessed both an Undergraduate Degree in Business Law and a Master’s degree in Private Law that she earned in Colombia; Santi possessed dual degrees in Business Administration and Communications from a
private university in the U.S.; and Zelda was still in the process of finishing his degree in International Relations at one of Mexico's best public education providers.

**English Teaching Experience**

Of note is the fact that the three participants with teaching credentials were not the same ones who had English teaching experience. Of the three singled out above, Diem came to ILI without formal English teaching experience because he had only weeks before earned his TEFL certification. At the same time, Santi and Zelda had taught elsewhere without credentials for several years. Differences like these were not the only things that distinguished the experiences of Andy, Isadora, Santi and Zelda from one another and from those of the other participants.

Andy, for example, had the longest and most comprehensive experience of the group but had only limited experience teaching English. Prior to joining ILI, he had primarily taught Music and Spanish (the disciplines he studied) over his 8 years in education. Over that time, he taught children as young as two and adults as old as 65 in private schools and private classes with groups of students ranging from just one to as large as 32 around the city and in the surrounding metropolitan area. At the other extreme was Zelda, who had just two years of teaching experience but significant experience with English instruction – he taught English to 7th through 12th graders at a private school in his native Puebla.

In between these extremes fell Isadora and Santi, who both had wholly unique paths to ILI. The oldest of the seven participants, Isadora’s work history was indicative of a significant subset of ILI teachers in that she studied and worked in a completely different field – in the case of Isadora, those fields were transport, technology, and marketing – before turning to English education by way of translation later in life. What made Isadora’s situation a little out of the ordinary for the typical member of this subset were the efforts she had made – like the Teacher's Diploma Course mentioned above – to become formally certified in the field. By the time she
joined ILI she had been teaching for six years and in that time had taught elementary school students as well as business professionals and other adult learners in group sizes from one to 25.

Santi, for his part, was an example of an important subset of English teachers present at ILI in particular and in Mexico City in general: although he lacked experience in teaching when he came to Mexico City three years ago, he had taught in two other private language schools in Mexico City and thus came to ILI with three years of teaching experience. At those schools he taught business English to adult students in classes that ranged in size from one to six students.

Finally, although Bryson, Cali, and Diem had no formal English teaching experience before joining MLC, during their interviews each was quick to cite examples of their knowledge of the field: Bryson, for example, was a lifelong student of French; Cali, as noted above, was a lifelong student of English and taught two sections of law classes while a TA in university; and Diem had volunteered briefly as an English Teacher in the U.K. before relocating to Mexico.

Knowledgeable about Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Given the diversity of experiences contained within the population that is ILI teachers, another way of approaching the questions about teaching certifications and English teaching experience was to ask participants if they felt “knowledgeable” about Teaching English as a Foreign Language. This question was meant as a catch-all for participants who, for various reasons (e.g., education, experience, or status as a native speaker), might feel knowledgeable about the subject for their own reason(s). Though participants were invited to interpret this question in the widest possible sense, answers here varied little. Only Bryson answered in the negative, while the remaining six participants fell into one of two camps: a decisive yes or a hesitant one.

Despite the diversity of their experiences, Cali, Isadora, and Zelda all answered in the affirmative to this interview question. Isadora, who had by far the most experience teaching
English, went so far as to say that her “training and experience guarantee” that she was a “qualified and knowledgeable teacher” (Interview 4, March 12, 2018) while Cali, who had the least, said her experience as a life-long student of English made her a fair “judge of effective or ineffective methods” (Interview 7, March 12, 2018). Her answer was similar to that of Zelda, who had some experience in the classroom and attributed his answer to his “love and understanding” of the language (Interview 1, March 12, 2018).

More nuanced answers came from Andy, Diem, and Santi, who did not say yes or no but instead explained their answers in various ways. Andy seemed to echo Cali, above, when he explained that he felt “experienced, maybe not knowledgeable” because he “understand[s] how students feel when learning the new language” (Interview 6, March 12, 2018). Diem, on the other hand, credits his TEFL course with giving him knowledge but not enough opportunity to practice with it. Santi, without formal training, felt the opposite of Diem: though he had considerable experience teaching he was quick to point out that “it seems like however much I know, there is still a great deal I do not” (Interview 5, March 12, 2018).

**Experience and Perceptions of Teacher Professional Development**

Given the nature of the current study, it was important to ask participants if they had experience with and/or strong feelings about teacher professional development. After all, their experiences with and perceptions of such training efforts might well have impacted their involvement with this particular intervention. Of the seven participants, only Andy, Isadora, and Santi said that they had experience with teacher professional development. While the first two cited their teaching certificates, Santi (who had no such certification) cited training efforts at his previous employers.

Despite the fact that only three of the seven participants had experience with teacher professional development, all but one said they felt favorably towards teacher professional
development, although some cited different reasons for this stance. [Here, too, Bryson stood alone, citing as she did no experience with teacher professional development and a general distaste for the practice, saying it “[i]t's not for me” (Interview 2, March 12, 2018).]

Four participants were in broad agreement about teacher professional development. Andy, Cali, Isadora, and Zelda, for example, all cited a general belief for self-improvement and increased effectiveness when asked about their perceptions of teacher professional development, differing only in the motivations they ascribed to such efforts. For Andy, one of the major results of teacher professional development, in addition to those cited above, was increased confidence. Isadora, on the other hand, was more concerned about career development. Cali, meanwhile, was the only participant to cite exposure to new tools and technology, while Zelda was the only one to cite new methods.

The remaining two participants had more nuanced views of teacher professional development. Diem, for example, said he liked teacher professional development because, while you can learn some things through independent study, he felt there was a lot to be gained by having someone else help guide him through the process. His basic rationale was that their perspective, being different from his own, would enable him to see things differently. Santi's feelings were similar in this regard. He emphasized in his answer how an instructor can help clarify ideas and help put them into practice. At the same time, given his experience with teacher professional development at his previous employers, he was quick to point out that, despite the importance of such efforts, “it can be difficult to find the time for such training” (Interview 5, March 12, 2018)

Experience with, and Perception of, Online Learning

Taking into consideration the nature of the present study (i.e., that this blended course would involve a significant online portion), it seemed important to ask participants about their
experiences with, and perceptions of, online learning. Of the seven participants, three had no experience with online learning and four had at least some experience with it.

Bryson, Cali, and Santi had no experience with online learning but did have strong opinions on the subject. While none of them were wholly opposed to the practice, they did have different reactions. Santi, for example, considers online learning "the way of the future" and described a world where access to education is no longer limited by geography, saying at one point, "now we are at a time where I don’t have to go to somebody or they don’t have to come to me, so that gives a lot of opportunity not just locally but internationally" (Interview 5, March 12, 2018). Bryson was largely of a similar opinion here, saying, "It's a really good option for those who can't attend classes" (Interview 2, March 12, 2018). Cali, meanwhile, was more cautiously optimistic about online classes. On the one hand, she embraced the ability to "customize" different aspects of online courses (e.g., schedule, duration, frequency) but was quick to cite concerns about the amount of self-discipline (and "strong will") such courses require (Interview 7, March 12, 2018).

The remaining four participants fell into two distinct subgroups: those who had taken but never given online classes and their inverses (those who had given but never taken them). In the first group fall Diem, who completed part of his TEFL certification online and Zelda, who studied some of his university coursework online. Both pointed out that online learning requires different skills than its face-to-face counterpart and (unintentionally echoing Cali, above) noted that it required learners to take more responsibility for their own learning. Diem explained this point in more detail, saying that he had often used outside resources (also online) to help him clarify his understanding and complete his tasks during the online portion of his TEFL training.
Finally, Andy and Isadora represent a distinct viewpoint as they both had experience
giving online courses but had never taken them. While both had many positive things to say
about online learning, both also had nuanced views on the subject. For Andy, online learning is
"a great chance to learn wherever" (Interview 5, March 12, 2018) while Isadora said "online
learning is a great tool” (Interview 4, March 12, 2018). Isadora, for her part, thinks it is most
effective when you have a tight schedule, geographic limitations, or other concerns, but she was
quick to point out that "it is not as effective and accurate as classroom learning" (Interview 4,
March 12, 2018). While Andy was never as negative as Isadora, he did caution that online
classes "need to be really well structured" to be successful (Interview 6, March 12, 2018). Taken
together, parsing the three subgroups suggests that, broadly speaking, learners and teachers who
have experience with online learning are less enthusiastic about it than their counterparts.

Experience with, and Perception of, Blended Learning

Opinions were similarly divergent when it came to blended learning (which was defined
as part of the interview question, per the interview guide provided in Appendix C although the
breakdown of participants was identical. That is to say, the same three participants had no
experience with the blended learning and four had some. Here, as with online learning, Bryson,
Cali, and Santi had no experience with blended learning but did have strong opinions on the
subject. Santi was the most enthusiastic of the three. Although he had not heard of the concept
before, he was in favor of the practice because it would combine the flexibility of online learning
("because the training can be done at any time") with the personal contact with which he was
accustomed (Interview 5, March 12, 2018). For Bryson, blended learning was appealing because
she saw it as an opportunity to "increase practice time" (Interview 2, March 12, 2018). Her
argument was that students "don’t have time to go to class everyday but they do have some time
every day to do an activity online, to watch a video," meaning that blended learning could enable learners to "practice more often [and] more regularly" (Interview 2, March 12, 2018).

Finally, Cali responded favorably to blended learning because, as she pointed out, the face-to-face sessions would allow students to "engage socially" with someone knowledgeable about the subject at hand (Interview 7, March 12, 2018). At the same time, she said, it would add a "face-to-face component" to online learning so that students would have a forum in which they could clarify, in person, any doubts they might have about the online materials (Interview 7, March 12, 2018).

Diem and Zelda also emphasized this perspective in their responses. Despite this commonality, and the fact that both had had experience with blended courses before, their reactions to the idea were quite distinct. While Zelda explained that the face-to-face components of the blended courses had been limited to "just, like, the [sic] 5% percent of the learning experience" he did note that these interactions allowed the facilitator to, initially, inspire curiosity and, later, guide students through the learning process (Interview 1, March 12, 2018). For Diem, however, the fact that his one prior experience with blended learning had been starkly divided into an "in person half and an online half" he sorely missed the face-to-face contact when it came time to complete the online tasks (Interview 3, March 12, 2018). To explain it directly, he complained of being "on [his] own" when it came time to complete the second, online half of his blended course because, once that section began, there was no more face-time with the instructor (Interview 3, March 12, 2018).

The two participants who had been instructors of blended courses, for their part, had their own views. While Andy and Isadora both had experience teaching blended courses, their experiences and reactions were quite different. Andy's experience, for example was much less
structured. For him, blended learning was a way to serve students who were traveling on business and not part of an intentional learning strategy. His perception of it was quite favorable ("You don't lose your class time and it could be as effective as a face to face class") (Interview 6, March 12, 2018). He was also quick to point out an economic advantage: classes can continue (along with their remuneration) even when the teacher or the student was out of town. Isadora, for her part, had given blended courses at her previous place of employment and considered it "an innovative way of teaching" that offers participants the opportunity to adjust the time, schedule, and approach for each student (Interview 4, March 12, 2018). At the same time, she did note that the time lag between the online and face-to-face sessions could create problems ("Explanations can be, er, confused"), and that careful attention to detail was required by the instructor (Interview 4, March 12, 2018).

An Overview of The Preliminary Information Session

Following the entry interviews which contributed to the participant outlines provided above, the first module (The Preliminary Information Session) commenced. In this module three goals were accomplished: participants were provided with a general introduction to the structure and themes of the workshop, given access to the mediated learning environment, and encouraged to begin group interaction (i.e., icebreaking) activities. In total, this meeting lasted about one hour. During this session the three goals outlined above were accomplished in the following ways: a welcome lecture of about fifteen minutes provided an overview of the schedule of the week as well as the activities that needed to be completed before the culminating session on that Friday. Among these were the online components of the course (i.e., online discussions, video lectures, online assessments, and self-reflection activities) that comprised Modules 1, 2, and 3. In addition to detailed instructions for each component (e.g., that the online discussions required
each person to contribute their own submission and respond to those of at least two of their peers), participants were also provided with the outline reproduced in Table 4-2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Online Discussion, Video Lecture, Online Assessment, Self-Reflection Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Online Discussion, Video Lecture, Online Assessment and Self-Reflection Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Video Lecture and Online Assessment (with demonstration lesson reminder)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following this, all of the participants were given details about the demonstration lessons that would close the workshop, as well as the rubric and rubric guide that would be used to evaluate it.

With the introductory lecture concluded, all of the participants were then given slips of paper with their randomly generated ID numbers and given two tasks: 1) play the game “two truths and a lie” and 2) decide, democratically, on a time for the Friday session that was mutually convenient for all. These two tasks were chosen to give the participants two distinct tasks, one structured and the other unstructured, through which to interact and meet the other members of the cohort. The structured activity, the game “two truths and a lie,” was selected for several reasons, not the least of these being its popularity as an icebreaker in Mexico. Additionally, it has simple rules, does not require any special equipment, and can be played with any number of participants. To play, participants tell the group two things about themselves that are true and one thing that is untrue in the order of their choosing. Everyone in the group, in turn, then has an opportunity to try to guess which statement was the lie. Once everyone has guessed, the person reveals what was true and what was false. The attention then shifts to the next participant and the game continues along the same lines until each participant has had at least one turn. Although gameplay can continue indefinitely, in this situation only one round was completed.
Because the preliminary session was the first element of the workshop that the participants encountered, the themes that stem from it serve as a natural starting point through which to anchor the data collected in the post-intervention interviews.

**Perceptions of the Preliminary Information Session**

According to the exit interviews, the preliminary information session (i.e., Module 0) was also the first place where opinions among the participants began to diverge. Participants fell into two distinct camps: on the one hand, all four of the male participants (Andy, Diem, Santi, and Zelda) reacted positively to the preliminary session and the way in which it was carried out. Among these four participants, two responded favorably to the instructional side of it, with Zelda commenting, “We understood the instructions [and] we, like, knew what we were going to do” (Interview 1, March 16, 2018). Andy remarked, “I said [to myself] ‘OK, I think I understand what I need to do precisely.’ I didn’t have any more questions, and I could go through everything without a problem” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). These participants primarily highlighted how the face-to-face time gave them the chance to understand the expectations of the workshop (Zelda) and orient themselves at its start (Diem).

Despite these similarities, their reactions were not uniform, however. Santi and Zelda, for example, came away inspired by the interaction with more experienced teachers. Santi said, “I think that was useful because it gave me some ideas” (Interview 5, March 16, 2018) and Zelda noted that it was “a great experience to just hear from really good teachers how they teach their classes and how –th-their world views” (Interview 1, March 16, 2018). Diem, on the other hand, emphasized how nice it was to be able to meet his new co-workers, saying “it was nice to meet new people... it’s always interesting meeting new people” (Interview 3, March 16, 2018). More meaningful here is his assertion that the opportunity to meet the other participants face-to-face at
the outset of the course made it easier for him to feel "comfortable" later on in the course (Interview 3, March 16, 2018).

Not all the comments about the preliminary session were positive, however. Despite the preceding, for example, Diem found fault with the specific activity used to foster interaction during the preliminary session, suggesting at one point, “Maybe another activity that would, erm, get us integrating with each other so we knew each other” (Interview 3, March 16, 2018).

His comments are indicative of an entire category of concerns raised by all three of the female participants in the study. To a woman, each of the female participants (Bryson, Cali, and Isadora) felt that the preliminary session lacked sufficient interactivity. Bryson, for example, said, “It’s good to have an introduction rather than being thrown into things,” but quickly added that “it could be maybe slightly more structured in terms of time” (Interview 4, March 16, 2018). Isadora (who, as noted elsewhere, found all the face-to-face components short) also felt that the preliminary session lacked structure. So, she would later say, “there are teachers that, er, they don’t know my name, or I don’t know their name, ya know? Mhm, you know that they were here, but you don’t know them” (Interview 4, March 16, 2018).

Cali shared this view and expanded on it, not only by suggesting that the preliminary session was short but also by going so far as to suggest that some of the instructive elements (e.g., lecture, reading) begin at that stage instead of being wholly online. More than that, however, and quite damning for the design of the current study, was her opinion that the relative brevity of the preliminary session undermined the efficiency of the workshop as a whole. While she understood the importance of meeting other members of the cohort face to face (and, like Diem, Bryson, and Isadora, wished there had been more of it), as she put it:

because of course when you have the online resources you feel that going somewhere is already a big effort so now that you are making that big effort let’s,
...and just have a meeting where that you feel that you really got something out of that and that it was worth going there (Interview 7, March 16, 2018).

The differences of opinion are also examined in the section on positive interaction, below, but for the purposes of the preliminary session itself, participant feedback does suggest that certain aspects of the preliminary session need to be reconsidered.

**The Online Discussion**

Following the preliminary information session, participants were at liberty to complete the online components of the workshop at their own pace but in prescribed order. Thus, the first aspect of the online course that participants encountered was the online discussion. The online discussions were hosted on the Google Sites page for Module 1 and 2, respectively, and asked participants to respond in writing to a discussion question and then respond to the responses of at least two of their peers. Only then would they complete any other components of the module. For Module 1 the discussion question was, “Please describe a situation where a teacher was more than a teacher? What did he/she do that was “above and beyond?” After submitting your own result, please comment on at least two other posts. Do these stories expand your view of what it means to be a teacher?” For Module 2 the question was, “Please describe a situation where you experienced ‘ineffective instruction’ – what made it ineffective? After submitting your own result, please comment on at least two other posts. What do these experiences have in common?”

Despite the fact that each participant engaged in the online discussions in both modules with at least the minimum number of responses (i.e., 2) and the prominent position these discussions held in the online course (serving as the opening the first activity in two of the three modules), the participants had little to say on the subject. Themes that did come from the exit interviews included accessibility, interactivity, and time.
Accessibility

In terms of accessibility, during the exit interviews participants reported no issues in accessing and completing the online portion. However, it is worth noting that two participants (Cali and Zelda) required technical assistance owing to confusion stemming from their randomly generated IDs. As this was an element introduced as part of the study and is not standard to the workshop, this is a complication that should be mentioned for the sake of full disclosure but not considered further. Aside from this, and even though this workshop was the first time that several participants (i.e., Zelda, Santi, Isadora) had engaged in asynchronous discussion of this sort, their reactions were largely positive. Zelda, for example, said of the online discussions, “everything was online, but it was easy to do” (Interview 1, March 16, 2018). Moreover, although he had not had prior experience with online courses, he did admit that he was excited at the prospect, saying at one point, “I love technology and I really looked forward to working online” (Interview 1, March 16, 2018).

Others, like Diem and Bryson, who had had prior experience with online courses, reported that the online discussions helped them to learn new information or otherwise clarify their understanding of existing concepts. Said Diem:

It [the online discussions] did help me learn. Er, like I said before, there were some things I already had knowledge of but there were other things I was surprised to learn and discover erm and I think that it was really helpful” (Interview 3, March 16, 2018).

Positive Interaction through the Online Discussions

A much larger theme that emerged was that of positive interaction. Almost all of the participants had a positive response to the online discussion, but the comments of Diem and Santi are particularly illustrative of these remarks. Diem, on the one hand, emphasized how the online discussion served as a logical extension of the interaction activities that began during the
preliminary session, increasing his ability to feel comfortable and listened to. He said, “it was interesting to feel at least listened to, that your – that your input had value” (Interview 3, March 16, 2018). Bryson, too, expressed similar sentiments, saying, “I really enjoyed having my input.”

Santi, meanwhile, was indicative of a subset of participants who emphasized how the online discussion gave them the opportunity to engage with people from a variety of backgrounds. Santi said,

I think the discussion was really good. It was good to, you know, get feedback. I mean, because we have a wide range of people. I’m a native speaker, we had some people from Mexico, we had some people from other places, so it was, you know, good in that way (Interview 5, March 16, 2018).

The idea of positive interaction (and how the online discussion did or did not contribute to it) was a major goal of the workshop and recurring theme brought up by its participants. As such this is a theme to which we will return in more detail below.

In the meantime, however, it is important to emphasize that two participants did not react favorably to the online discussions. Isadora, for her part, thought the online discussion “could [have been] more dynamic” (Interview 4, March 16, 2018). While Andy more or less agreed with Santi and other members of the cohort mentioned above by acknowledging the value of the interaction, he did feel that “it was… a little too long” because the online discussion required a minimum of three contributions from each participant for each of the two online discussion activities (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). Both are related to theme of design, which will be discussed in detail below.

**The Video Lectures**

Following the online discussion in Modules 1 and 2 but opening Module 3, the video lectures were the instructional heart of each of the three online modules and set the stage for the assessment and self-reflection activities which followed. Accordingly, comments about them
were plentiful. The videos were recordings of a lecture (which itself was delivered exclusively for the purpose of being recorded for use in the workshop) that was cut into three distinct parts. The first and second videos were approximately 20 minutes long while the third was about 40 minutes in length. All were supported by a PowerPoint presentation which was always shown in the background of the presentation (example on the left in Figure 4-1, below, and taken by author) and occasionally took the foreground used as a transition device between topics and slides (example on the right in Figure 4-1, below, and taken by author). Thus, each slide was shown in its entirety and remained on the screen (in the background) while its topics were being discussed. Moreover, because the videos were hosted on YouTube and embedded on a Google Site, participants could easily start, stop, replay, and pause any of the videos at any time.

Figure 4-1. Example Frames Drawn From Video 1. (Photo courtesy of author.)

**Time: Too Long or Long Enough?**

Time dominated the discussion of the videos with participants falling into two camps: those that praised the video lectures for their efficiency and those that complained of their length. Cali offered an interesting insight into the minds of the first group, saying “everybody’s used to watch videos that last between 30 seconds and 7 minutes-minutes tops.... however, I think that these videos just reflect the way a lecture goes” (Interview 7, March 16, 2018). Andy, on the other hand, thought more of YouTube than a classroom, saying, “When you go to YouTube or to
a video service on the internet everything is quick – if it lasts more than 8, 8 to 5 minutes it’s like ‘Oh please don’t’” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018).

In other words, for some participants the frame of reference for the video lectures was that of other video lectures or in-class lecture, and participants’ reactions varied accordingly. Santi, for example, generally had the same opinion as Cali and felt that “there was a lot of great information ... packed in a small amount of time” (Interview 7, March 16, 2018). Although elsewhere he suggested that shorter videos are preferable, his point of reference was clearly that of a lecture, not a web video. As he explained, “When I was first watching these videos I imagined it would be 3 or 4 hours long and I was surprised that all –all that information that I think that we needed was packed into about an hour” (Interview 5, March 16, 2018). For other participants, time proved quite relative: Cali for example, noted quite-matter-of-factly, “You usually take a look at what’s the length of the video to see if you have enough time to watch it or if you don’t” (Interview 7, March 16, 2018).

Two other members of the group, specifically Zelda and Diem, had no specific comments about the lengths of the videos. Neither of them praised their concision nor decried their length, expressing instead general neutrality with regard to the lengths of the videos.

Andy, Bryson, and Isadora, however, all felt that the videos were too long. Isadora, for her part, thought all of the online components were too long and that the videos were no exception. Andy, for his part, conceded that “it’s a great amount of information… So, it’s not easy to put it together in, er, a simple video that only lasts five minutes as we all like” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). He, Bryson, and even Diem, however, all cited the third video’s disproportionate length – it was nearly twice as long as the other videos, a fact justified during the design process by the elimination of the online discussion – as an unwelcome surprise.
Bryson’s comments on the subject are particularly indicative of the group as a whole: “You get slightly disheartened as you – as you see the longer video at the end when you think you’re almost done” (Interview 2, March 16, 2018).

It is also worth mentioning that video length may have been interpreted differently by different participants. Santi, Cali, and Zelda, for example, reported no problems handling so much information. Santi found the videos “very well structured and organized and – and clear. I mean [they] presented a lot of great ideas but I felt comfortable with that” (Interview 5, March 16, 2018), Cali thought it was “nice to have so much information really, really, ya know, wrapped in those videos” (Interview 7, March 16, 2018), and Zelda said he “didn’t even feel the time passing by” (Interview 1, March 16, 2018).

Others, however, found them to be too much or too little. Andy, for example, acknowledged a sense of information overload when he said of the videos, “probably they [sic] have a little more information that – than any person would be able to remember” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). On the other end of the spectrum, inexperienced teachers like Bryson found the videos insufficient:

I think it might not be enough as – as general training for teachers who haven’t had experience before but it’s a good introduction to the company and to learn the expectations (Interview 2, March 16, 2018).

Learning Styles

A related theme emerged from the participants about the manner of presentation used in the videos. While this was not specifically asked during the interview, four participants volunteered their own perspectives about how the information was presented and how it could be presented more effectively.

Two of the inexperienced instructors had differing opinions about when the training was offered. Bryson, for her part, found it “interesting to find out about ‘MLC’ and ‘MLC’s’
expectations before going in and working in the classroom” but this idea must be weighed against the input, immediately above, about the insufficiency of the videos as a proper training system (Interview 2, March 16, 2018). Cali, another inexperienced teacher, also found it hard to relate to the material without going into the classroom first. She said at one point, "When you don’t have any information beforehand it’s very hard to relate personally to the content that is being explained" (Interview 7, March 16, 2018).

Two of the experienced instructors also had different views. Santi, for example, had worked at other language schools in Mexico prior to joining MLC. He was more receptive to the videos and had no problem with the way the information was presented:

I think having worked at other places, you kinda just get thrown in. Like they say, ‘OK here’s a book, here you go, good luck!’ and I think with this you see the philosophy. ‘Market Leader’ is explained and so it helps you know, I think, a great deal so that you’re not quite so, I don’t know, maybe, uncertain or afraid about what’s going on” (Interview 5, March 16, 2018).

Andy, meanwhile, was not nearly as positive about the style in which the videos conveyed the information. Instead of a lecture he (unsolicited) proposed videos that show “a class in the video but ... stopping in the sections [to] explain what’s happening, you know, with the ‘MLC’ approach” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). To make the sections of the sample class easier to understand, he envisioned a video series where “the teacher explains the video with a real class and then stops, and then we could have a little square or something that is a guide explaining what’s happening” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018).

Cali, in her critique of the videos, also found exception with their lecture format. She, too, advocated for a style which enabled a more “show and tell” approach, explaining: “It would be nice to relate somehow, maybe just have examples of how a real class would go, maybe. ‘This is the way to teach reading’ – Not only explain how to do it but actually show how to do it really” (Interview 7, March 16, 2018).
In both proposals, Cali and Andy seem to be saying that the video lectures did not address the varying learning styles of potential learners. For example, both found that the videos lacked what Cali called “visual aids” (Interview 7, March 16, 2018) and Andy called “visual reference[s]” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). Also, both found that the videos were not dynamic enough, saying at various points that the lectures should be “more interactive” (Andy, Interview 6, March 16, 2018) and less “passive” (Cali, Interview 7, March 16, 2018). In essence, she would doubtless agree with Andy’s observation that “you could use another way to – to – to give all this information” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018).

**Online Assessment**

The online assessments followed the video lectures in all three of the online modules. The questions used in the assessment are provided in Appendix D and included a mixture of multiple choice, matching, and short answer questions. None of these exercises received much attention during the exit interviews. What comments they did receive related primarily to their relative difficulty or, notably, the possibility they provided for cheating.

The only major exception to this was the refrain from almost all of the participants that the questions were “tricky” (Santi, Interview 5, March 16, 2018), or “difficult” (Diem, Interview 3, March 16, 2018). Bryson put it best, saying:

I thought ... the questions were good because they meant you had to watch at least most of the video to get a good understanding. You know, you, [chuckles], couldn’t just guess the answers so it did make you spend time learning about ILI which is – is necessary before you become a teacher for the company (Interview 2, March 16, 2018).

Although this comment and others like it suggest, combined with the overall high accuracy of the assessment results, that the level of difficulty of the questions was adequately calibrated to encourage critical thinking, one participant in particular came at things from a
different angle. Isadora, one of the most experienced of the teachers involved in the training, found fault with the design of the assessment. To use her exact words:

OK… So, erm, well, I think, um, I don’t know, but many people can stop the video and check the answers so they don’t really learn. In my case I try to use my own words, because I am an experienced teacher, I have a degree but, er I think we should mhm, er, watch the video and then have no video to answer the questions so then you realize mhm then if people mhm then understood mhm what you taught us in [the] video (Interview 4, March 16, 2018).

What Isadora is suggesting here is that the design enabled what may alternately be considered laziness or cheating. Put another way, she suggests that because the design of the module allowed participants to access the videos and the questions that pertain to them in any order and even at the same time, participants could successfully complete the assessments without fully absorbing the material presented in the videos. Although Isadora was the only participant to raise this point, it remains an important perspective and will be considered when planning future iterations of the ILI ABW.

Self-Reflection

A self-reflection activity concluded each of the first two online modules and invited all of the participants to reflect on the meaning of each module as a whole. Consisting of an essay-response Google Form embedded at the bottom of the Google Sites pages for Modules 1 and 2, the prompt for Module 1 was, “Please reflect in writing on what we have discussed in this module. Which of the roles of a teacher do you think is the most important? Which do you think is the most overlooked? Which do you think is hardest to implement?” and the prompt for Module 2 was, “Please reflect in writing on what we have discussed in this module. Which of the elements of effective instruction do you think is the most important? Which do you think is hardest to implement?”
Although all participants completed the two self-reflection activities, their responses varied in length and quality. This may have been the result of the time necessary to complete each exercise, as this point was raised by two participants during the exit interviews. When specifically asked about the self-reflection activities, Isadora and Andy, here as elsewhere, decried the amount of time it took to complete online activities like this. To quote Andy, the self-reflection “felt like it was never-ending” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). In Isadora’s words, “The online thing was too long! Too long, too long, too long” (Interview 4, March 16, 2018).

Several participants, however, did ultimately report that the self-reflection activities were rewarding. Two distinct but overlapping perspectives emerged.

**The Self-Reflection Activities as an Opportunity to Reassess**

Two of the inexperienced teachers, Bryson and Cali, saw the self-reflection activities as a way of engaging with the material presented in the videos in a more critical way than the assessments afforded. Bryson, for example, noted how “it [a self-reflection activity] just makes the other information become real” (Interview 2, March 16, 2018). Cali, for her part, said “When you watch the video, [it] is just a concept, you know, an abstract concept that you are trying to relate to in real life. But then you start putting it together in real life and you can relate to it” (Interview 7, March 16, 2018).

One of the experienced teachers also saw the self-reflection activities the same way. Despite his complaints about their length, above, Andy noted that “they helped me learn,” because they forced him to think critically about the information presented elsewhere in the online modules (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). By engaging in them, he was able to clarify his existing knowledge, saying at one point, “Oh! Now I can see the light!” He was able to reevaluate his performance as a teacher, explaining, “The questions, er, make you think how the
teacher gives more options, more opportunities to be a better teacher” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018).

**The Self-Reflection Activities as an Opportunity Self-Assessment**

It was this last point that two other participants, Zelda and Diem, raised most directly. For them the self-reflection activities were exactly that: opportunities to examine their own practices in light of the ideas presented in the online modules and see how they measured up. Of the two, Diem put it best when he said:

The reflections were interesting and made me be able to look at myself, erm, and think where I need to improve in a kind of safe environment which I think is one of the most important things for somebody that is learning not just as a teacher but as a student as well (Interview 3, March 16, 2018).

This suggests that the self-reflection activities may have meaningfully impacted the changes in beliefs and behavior that several of the same participants reported during their exit interviews. This theme will be examined in more detail below.

**Demonstration Lesson Observations**

There was no self-reflection activity at the end of the third online module. Instead, the demonstration lessons and the discussions that accompanied them were intended to further foster self-reflection and critical (self) analysis by another means.

As outlined elsewhere, during the first face-to-face session one of the two interaction activities was to select a mutually convenient time for the demonstration lessons. At the conclusion of that first session the participants were provided with the access information for the online modules and the rubric that would be used to evaluate the demonstration lesson. On Wednesday of that week all of the participants were e-mailed with detailed instructions for the demonstration lesson. These instructions included two chapters from the Market Leader textbook and the specific section assignments for each of the participants. These assignments were made
with the backgrounds of the participants in mind (i.e., participants with more experience were given topics of more difficult (e.g., grammar). These details, as well as the space, time, and sequence of the presentations were recorded in the researcher’s field notebook. To wit, at 1:30 p.m. on Friday March 16, 2018, the cohort gathered together again at The ILI Academic Training Area to present their 15-minute demonstration lessons. The presentations proceeded in the order outlined by the chapter and were as follows:

Table 4-3. Demonstration Lesson Sequence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Useful Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zelda</td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Santi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bryson</td>
<td>Cali</td>
<td>Isadora</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the day in question all presentations proceeded in the order outlined above. All of the presentations were limited to 15 minutes (enforced using a timer with a three-minute warning) and each of the discussions that followed were less strictly limited in time, but almost all lasted roughly 10 minutes after each presentation.

The performance of each participant during the demonstration lesson was recorded using the ILI ABW Demonstration Rubric (a copy of which is provided in Appendix E). This data, which measured participant performance across five metrics on a scale of 1 to 4, offers a unique, outside perspective into participant performance during the demonstration lessons. To best make sense of this data, the results of each parameter measured during each participant's demonstration lesson is provided alongside those of the same type from other participants. Additional data

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1 Listening (which is taught between the Vocabulary and Reading sections) was not assigned, and withdrawal of one participant after the Wednesday e-mail explains why grammar was only presented once.
recorded along with the rubric, like the explanation for the rating and the post-hoc reflection, were used to build the descriptions below.

The ILI Approach Module 1 is intended to teach the principles of a) Professional Distance, b) Timeliness, c) Preparedness, and d) Expertise but on the ILI ABW Demonstration Lesson Rubric and Guide these elements are divided into two parameters: professionalism and preparedness.

**Professionalism**

Professionalism includes the elements of professional distance and timeliness but, given that, a) the relative brevity of the presentations make inappropriate relationships all but impossible to form, and b) the staggered nature of the same makes timeliness less relevant for the demonstration lesson, only the dress code element of professional distance was recorded. Although this may seem outside the scope of academics, the ILI AAC maintains that this metric is important because first impressions (informed by appearance) have historically had a major impact on the tone for a class. More to the point, ILI clientele tend to weigh such matters highly and teachers who do not dress as professionals are not perceived as such by their students. As a result, they have historically had more academic problems in the long term.

Table 4-4. Participant Performance on Professionalism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zelda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santi</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bryson</td>
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<td>Cali</td>
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<td>Isadora</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diem</td>
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</table>
With this standard in mind, it is easier to contextualize the three distinct groups that emerged from the demonstration lessons: those that dressed in formal business attire, those that opted for business casual attire, and those that violated at least one element of the dress code.

Three participants, Andy, Cali, Zelda, dressed quite formally. Andy, for example, wore a suit and tie and Cali, for her part, wore a pantsuit of equal formality. Zelda did not wear a suit but he did wear a blazer and tie, so he, too, exceeded the minimum standards set by ILI.

Those who dressed in business casual (what ILI considers the absolute minimum acceptable standard for its dress code) also received full points for this metric. Diem and Isadora fell solidly into this category, with the former wearing a button-down shirt and slacks but no tie or jacket and Isadora erring more on the side of comfort than professionalism with her wardrobe.

Santi and Bryson, on the other hand, were clearly in contravention of at least one element: Santi, for example, wore a polo shirt and Bryson wore a top with spaghetti straps and no jacket or camisole. Again, while these may seem like small points of difference, the ILI AAC has received negative feedback about such relatively informality from many current and former students, and as such they are points to be considered when evaluating a teacher's (perceived) professionalism.

**Preparedness/Structure**

Preparedness, as defined by the ILI AAC and measured on the ILI ABW Demonstration Lesson Rubric, includes the namesake element of preparedness but also incorporates the related elements of expertise and structure. Here, as with professionalism, current and prior student feedback has led the ILI to encourage its instructors not only to have prepared lesson plans (preparedness) but also to communicate these plans to students at the outset of the lesson (structure). A teacher who is able to deliver a class according to their plan, while still addressing,
if not necessarily completely satisfying, student demands (expertise) is eligible for the highest marks in the category.

Table 4-5. Participant Performance on Preparedness/Structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category: Preparedness/Structure</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Zelda</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Santi</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bryson</td>
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<td>Cali</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isadora</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Diem</td>
<td>X</td>
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Measured by this definition, and taking into account the results provided above, three distinct subsets are again revealed. Only Andy and Isadora were able to accomplish all three tasks, delivering as they did well-prepared lessons which were effectively outlined at the start of their lessons. More than this, though, they were also able to demonstrate expertise through their ability to address student confusion (Isadora) or questions (Andy) while still effectively accomplishing the "stated" goals of their lesson.

It is this word "stated" which makes the second subset of participants distinct from the first. While participants like Bryson, Cali, Santi, and Zelda clearly evidenced the use of a formal lesson plan in preparing for and delivering their lessons and managed student queries with relative ease, the simple fact that they did not make clear (i.e., did not clearly state) their outlines for their lessons at the outset of each made it difficult to ascertain whether they were accomplishing the goals they set out to achieve. Because of the lack of a stated plan for the lesson, evidence of planning primarily for this group comes from the use of outside materials which were brought in to bolster the standard textbook material. In the case of Santi and Cali, these pre-prepared materials were handouts, for Zelda they were props, and for Bryson they were
visuals. Thus, while it can be said that they gave satisfactory (Bryson, Cali) and even strong (Zelda, Santi) lessons, they did not satisfy the expectations set out for them in the ILI Approach.

Where the lack of a stated outline did not detract from the preceding participants’ effectiveness because the use of a lesson plan was evident through the use of outside materials, this was not the case for our last subset. This subset contains only Diem, whose lesson evinced no sign of preparation or structure whatsoever. His lesson was based almost wholly on the book with no outside materials and utilized spontaneously-generated examples which left many participants confused. Although other aspects of Diem's lesson were stronger, this was an area where he performed inadequately.

**Effectiveness**

Effectiveness was the next element recorded on the ILI ABW Demonstration Lesson Rubric. Corresponding most closely to Module 2 and its discussion of the Elements of Effective Instruction (which were outlined in Chapter 3, above), this metric called upon participants to demonstrate these elements in their demonstration lessons.

Full marks were awarded for participants who demonstrated all or all but one of these elements in their demonstration lesson and partial points when fewer elements were present. Based on these criteria, participants were able to demonstrate these skills to differing degrees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Category: Effectiveness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zelda</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santi</td>
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<td>Bryson</td>
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<td>Cali</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isadora</td>
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<td>Diem</td>
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As this chart shows, the largest subset of candidates received 3 of 4 marks on this metric. There appears to be no clear pattern of inclusion in this subset, as it includes the participants with significant (Andy) as well as no (Bryson, Cali) teaching experience. The reasons for the inclusion of participants in this subset vary but some general trends exist. For example, the fact that all three clearly evinced the use of a lesson plan during their demonstration lessons, not a one of them provided the mandated outline at the outset of his or her lesson. Nor did any of the three adequately focus on the necessary key concepts during their presentations, although the reasons for this did vary (e.g., in her reading lesson Cali did not correct pronunciation errors).

Indeed, although this material was the primary focus of an entire module (2), only two teachers, Isadora and Andy, received full marks on this metric. This may not seem surprising given the fact that they were the two teachers with the most experience, but it bears noting that even they were missing one of the six elements in their demonstration lessons. Andy, for example, also did not adequately focus on the necessary key concepts (i.e., eliciting student understand using context clues) during his reading lesson and Isadora, for her part did not adequately promote student talk time during her grammar lesson on the Passive Voice.

Despite these problems, all five of the aforementioned participants were able to adequate demonstrate mastery of three of the Elements of Effective Instruction (Providing Comprehensible Input, Linking New Information to Existing Knowledge, and Preteaching Vocabulary) in their lessons. On the other hand, the same cannot be said for Diem and Zelda, whose presentations were each missing at least three of the six Elements of Effective Instruction. Diem, for his part, was able to Provide Comprehensible Input (by working to make the lesson visual), Link New Information to Existing Knowledge (by connecting the language in question to the students' life experiences), and Promote Student Talk Time (by encouraging students to read
aloud). At the same time, like so many of his peers (Zelda included), he did not Communicate a Lesson Plan to his students. Nor did he adequately Determine Key Concepts of Preteach Vocabulary.

Zelda, on the other hand, was able to do both of these things in his demonstration lesson but did not effectively Link New Information to Existing Knowledge or Promote Student Talk Time. The mixed nature of these results suggests that more can be done to communicate these principles (and/or the expectations ILI has about them) in future iterations of the workshop.

**Dynamism**

Dynamism was the fourth metric recorded on the ILI ABW Demonstration Lesson Rubric. Per the Rubric Guide, Dynamism is an integral part of the ILI Approach in that it asks teachers to lead the class with enthusiasm while still promoting student talk time. In other words, teachers are asked to structure their lessons in such a way as to encourage student talk time while still serving as a presence in the classroom. As the following results show, participants fell into three camps:

**Table 4-7. Participant Performance on Dynamism.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category: Dynamism</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zelda</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Santi</td>
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<td>Bryson</td>
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<td>Cali</td>
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<td>Isadora</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diem</td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first camp are Andy, Cali, and Santi, all of whom were able to walk the fine line between leading and dominating their lessons. In the second camp are teachers who either did not provide enough of themselves in the classroom or, on the contrary, provided too much.
Bryson exemplifies this category: although she was capable of promoting positive interaction among students, her relatively low energy meant she was not a strong presence in the classroom. At the other extreme were Isadora and Zelda, two teachers who offered high-energy lessons that grabbed the attention of students but which left little room for them to provide their own meaningful input.

Finally, there was Diem, whose lack of planning compromised his enthusiastic demonstration because he was often preoccupied with writing on the board. Nor did he use this down time (or any other opportunities in his lesson) to promote student interaction. Here, as elsewhere, the mixed results of this metric suggest that more attention should be paid to this principle in future iterations of the workshop.

Knowledge of the ILI Approach

The fifth and final metric was "Knowledge of the ILI Approach," a measure which is intended to capture the ability of each participant to demonstrate their mastery of the best practices for each section of the Market Leader (as outlined in Module 3). Full marks, then, were award to participants who effectively incorporated and/or demonstrated each of these principles in their demonstration lesson. As the results below show, of the seven participants, three did exactly that.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Category: Knowledge of the ILI Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zélida</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santi</td>
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<td>Bryson</td>
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<td>Cali</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isadora</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Diem</td>
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</table>

Table 4-8. Participant Performance on Knowledge of the ILI Approach.
Bryson, in her lesson on word-building, was able deliver a lesson which promoted student talk time as well as many other aspects of the ILI Approach best practices for this vocabulary. For example, in order to accomplish the goal of the lesson of forming adjectives from nouns she first asked if all students knew the relevant words and, since they did not volunteer questions about them, asked them to explain a few of the more difficult words to her. Though there were some problems with her lesson, she nevertheless demonstrated an understanding of the ILI Approach by building on the activities presented in the book and by introducing props as a visual aid to grab attention and demonstrate complex ideas.

Cali, too, in her reading lesson, was able to incorporate examples of almost all the best practices for reading laid out by the ILI Approach. Among these were the use of vocal reading to promote student talk time and, like Bryson, the pre-selection of certain vocabulary words that may be unfamiliar to some students (evinced by the use of a handout of her own design to facilitate student practice). Her only failing of note with regard to the ILI Approach was the lack of pronunciation feedback throughout her presentation.

While Bryson and Cali were novice teachers who nevertheless ably implemented the ILI Approach in their lessons, in the case of Isadora we can see that even participants with considerable teaching experience could incorporate these specialized techniques into their demonstration lessons. Indeed, although Isadora's experience was evident in her command of the classroom, she was nevertheless able to incorporate many of the best practices introduced in Module 3 (e.g., incorporated outside materials, catered to multiple learning styles, etc.). Though her lesson was perhaps too explanatory and thereby limited student talk time, this may have been because of the complexity of the topic (passive voice) and the limited time she had to present it.
Three other teachers earned three out of four marks expressly because they omitted too many of the principles outlined by the ILI Approach. In fact, it may be informative to compare the performance of these participants to those who earned full points, because in many cases they delivered lessons on similar topics. Zelda, like Bryson, presented a vocabulary lesson (his on negative prefixes) but did not earn full marks precisely because he was missing the elements Bryson included (described above: use of outside materials and preteaching). Andy, like Cali, gave a lesson on reading and though he, also like Cali, did not use the reading passage to practice pronunciation, he earned fewer points because he also neglected to encourage students to use context clues and inference to determine the meanings of unknown words.

Although no participants earned full marks on a Useful Language lesson, Santi’s marks on this metric can be explained primarily due to issues about the ways to best correct student errors. Although his lesson was otherwise quite good, immediate correction is one of the core principles put forth in the ILI Approach in general and with regard to Useful Language in particular. Indeed, it is precisely because Useful Language is concerned with idiomatic expressions and other fixed phrases that correcting students is so crucial; failure to do so can result in the fossilization of incorrect structure. Although all of this and more is made clear in Module 3, Santi nevertheless neglected to correct students who made errors during his exercise, either in the moment (the optimal approach), or at the end of the lesson (the gentler, if less preferred, strategy). As a result, he was awarded less than full marks.

Finally, there was Diem, who also presented on Useful Language. Diem earned the lowest marks of the group despite being the last to present and the fact that Santi had previously provided a perfectly serviceable example that was discussed at length only an hour before his own presentation. Although there were many problems with Diem’s lesson, as regards this
particular metric, Diem failed to deliver an effective lesson precisely because he did not evince an understanding of the ILI Approach's best practices as presented in Module 3. For example, he incorporated no outside materials and lost valuable time (and student attention) while compensating for this by writing inconsistent and confusing examples of his own creation on the board. Worse still, he failed to understand the relationship between the two aspects of Useful Language (which, again, was explained at length in Module 3) and as such did not get to the heart of the teaching point for this section.

**Overall Marks, Broad and Deep**

Taken together, the rubric results suggest that the online course was not enough to enable participants to deliver lessons that demonstrated a complete mastery of the concepts presented in it. Although the sample is small and at least one outlier (i.e., Diem) was present, the mean performance of the participants suggests that significant areas of concern exist in each metric.

Table 4-9. Mean Participant Performance Across All Metrics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Mean, out of 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td>3.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparedness/Structure</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamism</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the ILI Approach</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In terms of *Professionalism*, for example, the mean for the group was 3.43 because two participants were in direct contravention to the dress code;
- In terms of *Preparedness*, the mean for the group was 3.00 because the majority of participants neglected to outline their lessons as suggested by the ILI Approach;
- In terms of *Effectiveness*, too, the mean for the group was 3.00 – this time because of significant deviations from the Elements of Effective Instruction which were observed in almost all of the participants;
In terms of *Dynamism*, the mean for the group was 3.29 because several participants, dominated the discussions in their demonstration lessons and failed to adequately promote student talk time; and

In terms of *Knowledge of the ILI Approach*, the mean for the group was 3.14 because more than half of the participants had difficulty applying all of the section-specific suggestions in their demonstration lessons.

Averages, however, can be a bit misleading. One interesting result of the demonstration lessons was the fact that those who performed the best on the demonstration lessons were about equally likely to have been novice or experienced teachers. This suggests that the online components may have been equally well-suited for both populations (that is, they were neither above the level of novice teachers or below the level their more experienced peers). However, more research must be done to test this hypothesis. Also, it bears mentioning that the discussions that followed each demonstration lesson were considered an instructional element in and of themselves, used as they were not only to highlight each participant's strengths, but also their areas of opportunity with regard to the ILI Approach.

**Feedback from Participants about the Demonstration Lesson**

What was observed and what participants felt during the demonstration lessons are two different things, however. For this reason, it is important to also come to terms with what participants reported about the demonstration lessons during their exit interviews. From this data several themes emerged.

**Challenging and Nerve-wracking**

The first thing that the participants reported was how challenging it was for them to present in front of their peers. Participants reacted to this challenge in different ways, however. Three participants (Diem, Santi, and Zelda) specifically commented on their level of discomfort during their demonstration lessons, saying in each case that the experience made them "nervous"
(Interview 1, 3, and 5, March 16, 2018). This was not true for everyone, however, and a discussion of the (self-reported) degree of anxiety participants reported by participants follows.

As noted above, Diem, Santi, and Zelda all reported that they were "nervous" (a direct quote from all three) during their presentations, but it is important to note that their levels of anxiety differed. For example, Diem (a novice teacher despite his TEFL certification) said he felt "a little bit nervous" (Interview 3, March 16, 2018) while Zelda (with more than two years in the classroom) reported a physical response to the experience, saying at one point "I was just sweating a lot and er I felt very nervous" (Interview 1, March 16, 2018). The reason for this distinction was not immediately clear but it is worth highlighting because, subjectively, Diem's performance on the demonstration lesson was far inferior to Zelda's and, more objectively, Diem's level of experience was significantly the lesser of the two. While the native versus non-native speaker dichotomy might explain some of this, it is worth noting that Zelda said nothing about this, emphasizing instead that "it was challenging to be in front of really good teachers" (Interview 1, March 16, 2018).

Santi, with his three years of experience, said essentially the same thing as Zelda, but also made it clear that whatever nervousness he felt at the outset of his presentation evaporated once he got going, explaining that "I mean, I felt good once I was going. I mean, I think beforehand I was a little nervous" (Interview 5, March 16, 2018). He also suggested that this pressure served as a motivating factor for him, saying at different points "I think also that when you’re doing the work in front of other teachers you feel maybe more pressure to do a good job" and "I always think that before, you’re always – especially with people that have been doing this for a long time – you always think 'OK what am I not doing right?' but I think once I got going I felt comfortable" (Interview 5, March 16, 2018).
Interestingly, it was a novice teacher, Cali, who most unequivocally felt "challenged" by the demonstration lesson (Interview 7, March 16, 2018). Unlike the others highlighted above, she did not report a negative response to this pressure. To quote her exact words:

I also liked very much the demonstration lessons because, first of all, it challenged you as a teacher because you know you are gonna be judged. So, usually your students, they don’t have a choice, they just have you and you’re gonna teach them anyway you want to because that’s your style, but when you have peers that maybe are doing a better job than you that pushes you to be better and pushes you out of the box to think in different ways, to engage your students in different ways (Interview 7, March 16, 2018)

On the other end of the spectrum were Andy, Bryson, and Isadora, who had the most unequivocally positive emotional responses to the demonstration lessons. To quote Andy exactly, "I felt OK, I felt fine, I felt, er, comfortable" (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). For him it was not a stressful experience but one which allowed him to "get to know [his] co-workers" in a "really nice environment [with] a really nice atmosphere" (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). Bryson, on the other hand, called it “a necessary task" for reasons that will be explored more below (Interview 2, March 16, 2018). Finally, Isadora did not report it to be a negative experience for her, either, given that she said she "was doing a great job ... and, er, we can give feedback to each other that’s ... a great thing" (Interview 4, March 16, 2018).

Taken together, then, no clear pattern emerges from the demonstration lesson. Yes, the teachers with the most experience also performed the best and had the most positive emotional reaction to it but so too did some of their most inexperienced peers. The same can be said when comparing native and non-native speakers, as both groups were represented across the spectrum of reactions. In this sense, then, it might be fair to say that since each of the participants entered into the demonstration lessons with differing points of view, they had equally different reactions to them.
Experiential Learning: Learning by Watching or Learning by Delivering?

Another area where opinions differed was with regard to the role of experiential learning in the learning process. In fact, many participants themselves could not decide which was more meaningful for them.

Bryson for example, said that she thought “it was interesting to see different teaching styles and get to know different people, both native and non-native speakers, teaching in English using outside sources and supplementary [materials]” (Interview 2, March 16, 2018). At the same time, she also said:

having not been into the classroom with “MLC” I think it’s kind of important to get feedback from your peers, people that maybe had experience or haven’t but just kind of the positives and negatives of your personal teaching style (Interview 2, March 16, 2018).

Cali also agreed with both positions, saying at various points that "when you have a teacher that blows your mind, it makes you think about how good of a teacher you are and you wanna be like that person," and, "there’s a load of experience from other teachers that you can take, er, for yourself and for your students and it definitely, definitely makes you a better teacher." At other times she added “I think the most important part was, erm, the practice" (Interview 7, March 16, 2018). Indeed, at some points Cali even echoes Bryson when she says, "It’s like the moment that you realize that you have learned or that you didn’t learn and also it gives you other people’s perspective so that’s when you kinda get your reward and I love that very much" (Interview 7, March 16, 2018).

In the comments of both novice teachers we can see the value they took from having to apply what they learned as well as observing the performance of others. This was also true for Santi, who noted in his interview how "it’s nice to see just how people do things and to learn"
(Interview 5, March 16, 2018) as well as how giving his own lessons provided him with opportunities to grow.

Other teachers, though, were more clearly in one camp or the other. Diem, another novice teacher despite his TEFL certification, said he got more from giving a demonstration lesson than he did from watching those of others, "Learning something is one thing but experiencing it is another. It’s really important especially just before you get out in the field that you feel as comfortable and as experienced as you can be" (Interview 3, March 16, 2018). Zelda and Isadora had less to say about this issue, but both nevertheless emphasized how important it was to give a presentation, saying at one point, "It was an important thing to do" (Zelda, Interview 1, March 16, 2018) and, "It was a nice experience" (Isadora, Interview 4, March 16, 2018).

Finally, although Andy agreed with Diem, Isadora, and Zelda by citing the act of doing the demonstration lessons to be of utmost value, it bears noting that his perspective does differ from anyone else's in one important regard. To quote him exactly, "I also felt that I – I can share some of my experience. Maybe I’m not the best teacher but I think I can suggest things that could help my co-workers" (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). This suggests that Andy, the most experienced teacher in the sample, may not have learned anything from his presentation or the feedback he personally received but felt that the opportunity the demonstration lessons and their discussions afforded was of immense value for the other members of the cohort.

**Constructive and Meaningful Feedback**

The data suggest that the feedback Andy provided did not go unnoticed by other members of the group. Once everything was said and done in terms of the demonstration lessons themselves, it was almost universally agreed that the opportunity to give and receive feedback was one of the most valuable parts of the workshop.
Different people did receive this feedback in different ways, however. Isadora, for example, welcomed it, saying, "I love when people or other teachers tell me what can I, what I can improve" (Interview 4, March 16, 2018) while Bryson merely noted that it was “kind of important to get feedback from your peers” (Interview 2, March 16, 2018). Between these two extremes are participants like Cali and Santi. Cali, for her part, found the demonstration lessons rewarding" expressly “because it lets you know, no, it allows to first of all have a feedback on what you are doing" (Interview 7, March 16, 2018). Santi, meanwhile, focused on the kind of feedback he received, saying, "I mean the positive feedback is – is good, but I think opportunities to grow I think are the most important ... this gives some great insight into what to do" (Interview 5, March 16, 2018).

The only exception to this rule was Zelda, who, as noted above, specifically said that "it was challenging to be in front of really good teachers and to hear their feedbacks" (Interview 1, March 16, 2018). Zelda is decidedly in the minority in this regard, however, as the level of discourse remained professional throughout the final face-to-face session. Santi, for example, specifically said that "he had good interaction with the teachers" during the demonstration and discussion (Interview 5, March 16, 2018). Andy, too, mentioned this, noting that experience made him “feel that my voice is important. I feel like my opinion counts and they consider what I have to say” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018).

There is perhaps no better illustration of this than Diem, who despite his nerves and his poor performance (discussed above), nevertheless said “it was good to get feedback afterwards about the lesson and knowing where I could, er, knowing where I could improve” (Interview 3, March 16, 2018). Indeed, if Diem can walk away from the experience with his head held high,
then the goal of establishing a constructive medium through which participants could objectively discuss their performance and that of their peers was decidedly achieved.

**Inequitable**

One participant, however, felt that the post-demonstration discussions were unfair and her particular perspective is important to consider. To wit, Isadora expressed frustration that she had put so much effort into her presentation while others, namely Diem, did not. To quote her exactly, "I think that, erm, all teachers should prepare – not should must – prepare a class. Some people, mhm, came and they were very well prepared and others like ‘Ah whatever!’ or they didn’t prepare anything at all" (Interview 4, March 16, 2018). In her view this is inequitable for two distinct reasons. For one, and again to use her words, she "prepared a good class and [her], er, co-workers didn’t prepare anything" (Interview 4, March 16, 2018). At the same time, she "expected to see something amazing, you know, like something amazing like you 'oh I’m going to learn something new!' Because as I said a teacher is learning all the time" (Interview 4, March 16, 2018). Isadora's statement indicates not only a reaction to the injustice inherent in the unequal effort participants put into their presentations but, and perhaps more saliently, that participants who do not fully engage with the exercise not only deny themselves the means to improve but prevent others from learning from their lesson. Situations like Diem's and reactions like Isadora's should both be taken into consideration when considering the effectiveness of future iterations of the workshop.

**Change as a Result of the Workshop**

One of the final questions posed to each participant during the exit interviews was if (and then how) they felt they and their teaching had changed as a result of the workshop. These changes took three forms: stylistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.
Stylistic Changes

While not every participant reported a change in their teaching style as a result of the workshop, it is interesting to note the consistency between and among these participants’ self-reported changes. Indeed, all five teachers who reported such changes highlighted one particular aspect of the ILI Approach when framing their responses: the 15-30-45 model. The 15-30-45 model is a wholly original aspect of the ILI Approach that was discussed at length in Module 3 because it is considered the core of the ILI Approach in that it marries the unique context of MLC’s classes to a formal lesson planning strategy. Put simply, because MLC’s classes are almost 90 minutes in length, it advocates that lessons be structured in three parts, 15, 30, and 45 minutes in length. The opening 15-minute section is devoted to warming up students and introducing the topics of discussion, the middle 30-minute section is devoted to subject areas which meet the unique needs of the students in the classroom, and the final 45-minute section is devoted entirely to accomplishing one section of the Market Leader textbook per class. The 15-30-45 model is a suggestion, not a mandate, but has been found (anecdotally) to help teachers as they plan their lessons. It is provided to trainee teachers as a useful way to organize their classes in a meaningful and efficient way.

The comments made by the five participants in their exit interview would seem to reinforce the importance of the 15-30-45 model but, interestingly, each focused on a different component in the model. Diem, for example, noted that, "Well, there’s a lot of things that I have to take into account now," but he really took away with him the idea of using a fixed structure in a future lesson because, to use his words, “I have a lot of ideas but structure is one of those things that sometimes evades me" (Interview 3, March 16, 2018). Interestingly, this was one of the few points Andy specifically mentioned in this vein, saying of the 15-30-45 structure, "I
think I’m going to take this to my teaching style and I’m going to be better prepared in the future” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018).

While both Diem and Andy reflected on structure in general, others commented on particular aspects of the 15-30-45 model. Santi, for example, commented most directly on the First 15. When directly asked what would change as a result of the workshop, he said, "I think the big thing was that it really made me focus on the opening in that I think it made me look at what am I teaching, how am I going to introduce this subject?" (Interview 5, March 16, 2018). In this response we can understand that while he felt comfortable enough in the classroom prior to the workshop, the workshop in general and the idea of the First 15 in particular challenged him to improve an area of his teaching he had not otherwise examined, saying at one point, “I thought in the past, ‘Oh how was your weekend? OK, open to page 17’ [was effective teaching] and this really got me to start looking at it as far as what else can I do to make something interesting" (Interview 5, March 16, 2018).

Bryson, on the other hand, responded most strongly to the middle 30 and its call for supplementary materials. To quote her at length

I think it’s definitely important to bring in supplementary material because relying on the book may suggest that you are slightly unprepared you’re not – you’re not giving them extra examples for particularly the grammar section where it kind of lacks in the book at times you need more examples of more practices for them to really understand the topic. Erm also the book isn’t very interactive or visual whereas using a video or a game could help them learn in a different way (Interview 2, March 16, 2018).

Parsing this a bit, we can see several overlapping themes that are all related to the Middle 30 and its call to use supplementary materials. This is an integral part of the Middle 30 in particular and the ILI Approach in general, because it accomplishes two goals echoed, above, by Bryson: supplementary materials not only incorporate the unique interests of students into their lessons, but also simultaneously demonstrate to them that teachers have prepared these materials well in
advance. Finally, she combines this idea with another aspect of the ILI Approach (to wit, one of the elements of effective instruction) by noting that adding to the existing curriculum in order to better meet the needs of learners also allows instructors to cater to learners with a variety of learning styles.

Zelda, meanwhile, focused primarily on the Final 45 in his response to this question, noting:

the last forty-five minutes that we have to focus on the book and not on, um… And that’s the – the main thing or the… The most important part of the, of the course is like the Market Leader book. That’s why we use it and that’s how we measure the learning of the students so it’s important to – to pay close attention to it (Interview 1, March 16, 2018).

This suggests that Zelda's biggest takeaway from the workshop was the idea of accountability. In his response, we can see his recognition that one of the central themes of Module 3, how to pace and measure student progress, really hit home. Though his self-described change is different from the others, we can nevertheless see in his response and those of the other participants that meaningful change occurred for some participants during the workshop.

Interpersonal Changes

Another major result of the workshop was a sense of positive interaction between and among teachers. This was one of the major goals of the workshop and another of the important subthemes that emerged from data. Five participants made specific comments about how the workshop helped foster positive interactions with their new coworkers. To make the most of these remarks, it is important to consider the context from which they came. Diem, who was new to Mexico and had been out of work prior to joining MLC, specifically noted how it "was nice to see some people for once" when he went to the preliminary session (Interview 3, March 16, 2018). Also, during the demonstration lesson, he said "it was interesting to feel at least listened
to, that your – that your input mattered" (Interview 3, March 16, 2018). Comments like these suggest that Diem saw the workshop as a way to build a new community in Mexico.

Santi, on the other hand, had been in Mexico for three years by the time he joined ILI and compared his overall training experience with ILI to those he had with his other employers in Mexico, saying that "it’s nice to see just how people do things and to learn" because:

I think that is one thing as a [Business English] teacher usually we’re kinda on our own a lot of times because ya know you’re going into a different place you don’t interact with teachers as much (Interview 5, March 16, 2018).

It is perhaps for this reason that Santi welcomed the workshop, given that it provided an opportunity to “kinda get to know other people" (Interview 5, March 16, 2018). He certainly took advantage of the opportunity. During his exit interview he went so far as to say, “In the future I’ll be able – and not only have some ideas but also know people to talk to about some advice as well" (Interview 5, March 16, 2018). He specifically mentioned this because, during the workshop, he got to know several participants who were experts in areas like "lower levels that [he hadn't] taught as much" (Interview 5, March 16, 2018).

Andy was one such person. As the most experienced teacher in the group, he initially saw the workshop as a "good er chance first to get to know my co-workers," but through his involvement with it soon began to feel like a valuable member of the group (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). To quote him exactly, "I felt fine because I think, or I feel that my voice is important. I feel like my opinion counts and they consider what I have to say" (Interview 6, March 16, 2018).

Nor is this an isolated observation; at least two of the native-speaking participants specifically mentioned that one of their major takeaways from workshop was the opportunity to get to meet people with diverse points of view. Bryson, for example, saw the workshop as a good opportunity to get to know "different teaching styles and to get to know different people, both
native and non-native speakers, teaching in English" (Interview 2, March 16, 2018). Santi, meanwhile, in addition to the comment made above, also mentioned the "wide range of people we had. You know you’re a native speaker, I’m a native speaker, we had some people from Mexico, we had some people from other places, so it was, ya know, good in that way" (Interview 5, March 16, 2018).

Not that everyone was wholly pleased with the extent of the interaction that resulted. Although she was the only participant to report this, Isadora, found "the group thing" to be "too short," adding that "I think we can give more feedback and we can learn more things from you and from other teachers" (Interview 4, March 16, 2018). Comments like hers, combined with the other threads mentioned above, offered interesting insights into how exactly these efforts were perceived from participants, and how they can potentially be improved in future iterations of the workshop.

**Intrapersonal Change**

Finally, though this theme was far and away the least common of the three, it is worth noting that three teachers reported what can be called intrapersonal change, that is to say internal change. Zelda and Diem, for example, both came away from the demonstration lesson with a renewed sense of self-assessment. Zelda, for his part, vowed to re-examine his teaching in light of "the things that I did well ... and the things that I'm not doing well" (Interview 1, March 16, 2018). So, too, did Diem, who said that the workshop gave him a new perspective on his teaching that he hopes he "can apply in his lessons" (Interview 2, March 16, 2018).

Cali, on the other hand, came away from the workshop inspired. For her the bottom line for the workshop was, “What can I bring that is unique, that is dynamic, that energizes my students, that lets people le – lets, yes, lets people learn and that will show that you are actually a great teacher?” (Interview 7, March 16, 2018).
Although these three teachers reported intrapersonal change, this data, combined with participants’ academic and interpersonal change, suggest that the workshop nevertheless resulted in significantly changed perceptions for a number of the participants.

**Changes That Should Be Made To The Workshop**

Having been asked how they changed as a result of the workshop, some participants felt it only natural to offer their own suggestions about how the workshop could be changed (i.e., improved) in the future. Not everyone had a suggestion. Zelda, for example, said, "I’m taking different, er, online classes and this was a pretty good one [with a] really good teacher" (Interview 1, March 16, 2018). Five of the participants, however, did suggest changes. Their feedback can be roughly divided into two parts, the first concerned with the manner in which information was presented in the video lectures, and the second concerned with the length of the workshop and its components.

Andy had a lot to say about the first of these, questioning the manner of presentation used in the video lectures. An experienced teacher himself, during his exit interview he admitted to thinking during the online sessions, “OK, is there another way, a more convenient way, to do it” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). By “it” he means the expository, lecture style of the video lectures. For him, the single best way to improve the workshop would be to show a sample class rather than explain it. This idea was also echoed by Cali, who herself said "it would be better to see a whole class with this timing 15, 30, 45 but in a real situation I think it could be great" (Interview 1, March 16, 2018). Both of these participants offered several ideas about how the video lectures could follow some of my own suggestions (chief among them showing, not telling). This feedback will be discussed at length in Chapter 5.

Three of the five participants who suggested changes to the workshop had more to say about the second area of concern: the length of the workshop and its components. Indeed, the
issue of time came up again and again in the post-intervention interviews. Despite the ubiquity of this theme, however, participants' perceptions of it did differ considerably. Zelda, for example, went so far as to say that the time-intensive nature of the training was “the only thing [he] didn’t like” (Interview 1, March 16, 2018). He, along with Andy, felt that the Monday to Friday time frame asked them to do too much in too little time, with the former saying at one point “I – we need to do more stuff, other stuff” (Interview 1, March 16, 2018) and the latter saying, “Maybe that was a difficult week but it was kinda of a rush during all the week” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018). Andy elaborated on this detail and added that outside pressures prevented him from completing the modules piece by piece, over time and on different days. He explained that “I didn’t have that much time, so I tried to do everything in…I think I did it in one – one day” (Interview 6, March 16, 2018).

Isadora, meanwhile, had more nuanced thoughts, and mentioned no less than three times during her exit interview that she felt that the online and in-person parts of the training were disproportionately long and short, saying at one point “I think the online thing was too long and the live thing was too short” (Interview 4, March 16, 2018). Zelda, too, touched on this, saying at one point, “You wouldn’t think it would take that long but yeah it took a long time” (Interview 1, March 16, 2018).

Despite the strong feelings of a few, even when specifically asked, the majority of the participants had no problem with the pace of the workshop, in large part because they themselves were able to dictate when and how they completed its various modules. Bryson, Diem, Santi, and Zelda all fell into this camp, recognizing as they did that the workshop was intended to accommodate the complex schedules of the participants, not further complicate them. Santi, for example, said, “I think the pace was really good. I mean I felt like it was relaxed but still focused
[so] that we got a lot done without feeling too rushed or that it was going to take too long either” (Interview 5, March 16, 2018).

Even Zelda, who elsewhere reflected that “it’s hard” to devote so much time to workshop activities, noted that when he was actually doing them, "I didn’t even feel the time passing by and that was, that was cool” (Interview 1, March 16, 2018). Cali also noted this, saying that the workshop was “pretty good ... because you have time to organize your agenda. You can do the – the online part whenever you want to, kind of, and you just have to schedule the other two appointments and that’s it” (Interview 7, March 16, 2018).

On a more granular level, however, Cali did find fault with the design of the online modules. Specifically, she objected to the fact that "even though the online is splitted [sic] into three different parts but the activities are all one after the other, you feel like you have to do it all at once” (Interview 7, March 16, 2018). That is to say, because each module was given its own Google Sites page, with each activity embedded on it one after the other, it did not appear to her that you could complete the activities separately but rather had to do them one at a time. Although this was not strictly true, it does suggest that this element of the design should be revisited (or at least better explained) in future iterations of the workshop.

In the end, these results can be summarized by noting that many of the participants had no problems with the length of the modules, but some thought activities in the online section were too long. Others, however, thought those featured in the face-to-face sections were too short. These comments will be used to inform future iterations of the workshop.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter provided an overview of data collected during the study. Data were collected from a variety of sources that were then used to construct a narrative description of the participants’ 1) backgrounds, 2) perceptions of the ILI ABW, and 3) performance on the
demonstration lessons. The chapter concluded by discussing changes that participants perceived within themselves as a result of the workshop, and their own thoughts on how the workshop itself could change.
The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of novice and experienced teachers towards a blended learning teacher professional development workshop to better situate it in the context of the learners. To do this, the study first sought to understand the diverse backgrounds of the participants in the sample. The study then examined how these participants perceived different aspects of the workshop and, where possible, determined how their unique contexts may have influenced and/or affected perception of the workshop. This chapter discusses the implications of these findings. To do so, the research questions that guided the study are presented, along with a summary of the design framework and methodology to investigate them, a discussion of the results found during the study, and a series of conclusions that can be made about the results in light of previous literature on the topic. The chapter also contains discussion of the study’s limitations, an overview of the theoretical and practical implications of the study, and several recommendations for further inquiry.

The Research Questions

The study was guided by the following central and sub research questions:

- **RQ1**: What are novice and experienced teachers’ perceptions of blended teacher professional development?
  - **SQ1**: What are teachers’ perceptions of their own learning as a result of blended teacher professional development?
  - **SQ2**: What are teachers’ perceptions of their behavioral changes as a result of blended teacher professional development?

The Design Framework and Methodology

Design Framework

The first step towards addressing these questions was to design a workshop which incorporated the principles of effective blended learning course design, teacher professional
development, and andragogy. The literature that informed this design was laid out in Chapter 2 and resulted in both the design framework reproduced below and the workshop design that was explained in detail in Chapter 3.

**Methodology**

The next step was to implement the workshop and record the perceptions of the participants. This study used a qualitative approach to examine both the backgrounds and perceptions of the novice and experienced teachers who participated in the ILI Approach Blended Workshop (ABW). In so doing, the workshop was evaluated using the first three levels of Kirkpatrick's Training Evaluation Model (i.e., reaction, learning, and behavior). To gather the data used in this study, two semi-structured interviews with each participant were conducted and observations were made during their demonstration lessons. One of the two interviews was conducted before the workshop (and therefore the demonstration lessons) and the other after it. Observational data from the demonstration lessons and the rubrics that were used to evaluate them were also included to add context to participants’ self-reported perceptions. Taken together, this three-part data collection strategy was used in order to better understand the experiences of participants and their perceptions of the workshop. The use of qualitative research allowed me to “…empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices…” and to “…be sensitive to issues such as gender differences, race, economic status, and individual differences” (Creswell, 2007, p. 40).

Once the data were collected, I used thematic analysis to code the data and identify the emergent themes of the study. Thematic analysis proved particularly well-suited as a means of "identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). This is because thematic analysis 1) allows for flexibility in the analysis of data, 2) provides a structure for organization of themes, and 3) assists in interpreting the research topic (Braun
&Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-part process of thematic analysis (summarized in the Figure 5-1, below) was used.

Figure 5-1. Illustration of Braun and Clarke’s Six-Part Process of Thematic Analysis.

Discussion of Findings

Level 1: Reaction

The research question at the heart of this study was, “What are novice and experienced teachers’ perceptions of blended teacher professional development?” The data (and themes derived from it), discussed in Chapter 4, go a long way towards addressing this question. The question was intended to correspond to the first level of Kirkpatrick’s Training Evaluation Model: Reaction (1996). Reaction in this case can be considered participants’ immediate response to the workshop. The best way to come to terms with these reactions would be to consider the feedback gathered from the exit interviews that were held immediately after the workshop was concluded. Perceptions’ reactions to the components of the workshop were as follows:

- The Preliminary Session: Although almost all of the participants found the preliminary face-to-face sessions which opened the workshop to be informative, several participants reported that they found the integration activities which dominated the second half of the preliminary session to be disorganized. Their feedback suggests that the integration activities of the preliminary session should be reconsidered in future iterations of the workshop.
The Online Components: The results of this study suggest that participants found the online components in general were easy to access. Feedback about the individual components, however, was more mixed:

- Online Discussions – Although time-consuming, participants reported that the online discussions fostered positive interactions among and between participants. Their feedback suggests that this component does not need to be reconsidered in future iterations of the workshop.

- Video Lectures – Participant feedback about the video lectures varied significantly in light of their personal frame of reference about their length, but did not correspond to their level of teaching experience or their experience (or lack thereof) with online or blended learning. In addition to concerns about length, several participants also suggested that the video lectures did not cater to the unique learning styles of learners. Their feedback suggests that considerable changes should be made to the video lectures in future iterations of the workshop.

- Online Assessments – Although participants reported that the online assessments were difficult, they nevertheless suggested that their difficulty helped learning. Despite the fact that one participant suggested that their format introduced the possibility of cheating, feedback suggests that this component does not need to be reconsidered in future iterations of the workshop.

- Online Self-Reflection Activities – Participant perceptions of the self-reflection activities that closed the first two online modules diverged in line with their level of teaching experience but were nevertheless positive. While inexperienced teachers tended to see the self-reflection activities as an opportunity to reassess the material presented in the videos in a more critical way, more experienced teachers saw the self-reflection activities as an opportunity for self-assessment (i.e., as opportunities to examine their own practices in light of the ideas presented in the online modules). Their feedback suggests that this component does not need to be reconsidered in future iterations of the workshop.

The Demonstration Lessons: Many of the participants reported how nervous giving a demonstration lesson in front of their peers made them and/or how challenging the experience was for them. At the same time, almost all of the participants responded well to the experiential learning aspect of the demonstration lessons. Importantly, some participants reported that they learned more by delivering their demonstration lessons while others ascribed more value to observations they made during the demonstration lessons of other participants. Still others said they learned from both. The fact that the feedback on this theme was so mixed suggests that this element of the workshop provides ample opportunity for learners to grow their knowledge of the ILI Approach in the way that is most meaningful for them. Their feedback suggests that this component does not need to be significantly reconsidered in future iterations of the workshop.

The Demonstration Lesson Discussions: The data suggest that the discussions that followed each demonstration lesson (and the opportunity to give and receive feedback
that came with it) were one of the most valuable parts of the workshop. While some welcomed feedback and others preferred giving it, this element of the workshop was cited by several participants as a meaningful opportunity to consolidate their knowledge of the ILI Approach, while simultaneously exchanging ideas with their peers in a positive and constructive way. At the same time, the fact that at least one participant found the discussion to be inequitable suggests that some aspects of this component need to be significantly reconsidered in future iterations of the workshop.

Taken together, the findings above suggest that participants’ perceptions of blended teacher professional development (i.e., the ILI ABW) were generally positive. Where this was not the case, their feedback will be used to inform the implications section of this study as well as future iterations of the workshop. Most crucially, however, and in direct response to the research question above, despite concerns on the part of the ILI AAC, teaching experience itself (e.g., novice versus experienced) seems not to have played a decisive role in predicting participant perceptions. While it is true that one particularly experienced participant (Isadora) was more negative than the average, three other teachers with significant teaching experience and all three participants without teaching experience had generally the same positive response to the workshop. Moreover, the fact that constructive feedback of a similar nature was gathered from participants as diverse as Andy and Cali suggests that the ILI ABW can be meaningful for both novice and experienced teachers.

At the same time, other aspects of the participants’ backgrounds did not seem to have any meaningful effect on their perceptions. For example, despite the fact that some participants had never taken an online or blended course while others had (and still others had gone so far as to give them), no one reported issues completing the online portion of the course. Nor did nation of origin or educational background have any effect. In fact, this study found that there was no element of a participant’s background that consistently played a decisive role in shaping their perceptions of the workshop. Indeed, regardless of their background, education, experience, and predisposition towards teacher professional development or experience with online and blended
courses, all of the participants were able to participate in a meaningful way in the online section of the workshop and present their demonstration lessons. In so doing, participants were able to build new skills, bring their existing skills into alignment with ILI expectations, and/or have positive interactions with other members of the ILI teaching staff.

**Level 2: Learning**

The first of the two sub-questions in this study was “*What are teachers’ perceptions of their own learning as a result of blended teacher professional development?*” This question most strongly correlates to the second level of Kirkpatrick’s Training Evaluation Model, Learning (1996), and can be seen as the extent to which participants felt that they retained new information as a result of the course. The feedback gathered from participants during their exit interviews also helped to address this question and suggests that participants learned in two different ways: stylistically and interpersonally.

**Learning new styles of teaching (The ILI approach)**

Five of the seven participants reported that they learned about *structuring lessons* in general and the *15-30-45 model* in particular. This is important because the 15-30-45 model is so important to ILI’s formal lesson planning strategy and course pacing. The feedback from participants suggests that one of the most important goals of the workshop was at least partially accomplished. Partially because of the fact those who did mention the 15-30-45 model focused on different components of it (e.g., the 15, 30, or 45) and two participants did not mention it (or, indeed, any other) aspect of the ILI Approach at all. Taken together these findings suggest that participants perceived the ILI ABW as able to effectively impact their learning. At the same time, these results also suggest that more attention should be paid to promoting learning in future iterations of the workshop. The 15-30-45 model was not the only wholly original content provided in the video lectures but it was the concept discussed in the greatest detail. The data
collected in this study suggests that if equal (or greater) time in the video lectures had been
dedicated to the Elements of Effective Instruction, this too would have been cited by participants.
As it was not, the ILI ABW has proved itself to be uneven at best. Possible ways to rectify this
imbalance are provided in the implications section of this chapter.

**Learning about others (interpersonal relationship building)**

Another interesting aspect of learning that resulted from the workshop was that several
(but not all) participants reported that they learned about each other in the process. This was part
of a larger sense of positive interaction felt between and among teachers and is promising
because fostering positive interactions among and between participants was one of the major
goals of the workshop. More saliently for the sub-question at hand, however, while some
participants simply responded to the social aspect of working with peers, others felt that the
connections they made in the workshop gave them access to new sources of information. To wit,
participants were able to identify and establish contact with potential subject-matter experts in
areas of teaching they themselves felt less comfortable with. This suggests that the current
formulation of the workshop is sufficient to promote exactly the kind of relationship-building
that the workshop was trying to promote. At the same time, the fact that this was the exception
rather than the rule suggests that more could be done to encourage these links in future iterations
of the workshop.

**Level 3: Behavior**

The second of the two sub-questions in this study was “What are teachers’ perceptions of
their behavioral changes as a result of blended teacher professional development?” This question
most strongly relates to the third level of Kirkpatrick’s Training Evaluation Model, Behavior
(1996), and can be seen as the extent to which participants felt that their actions had changed as a
result of the workshop. Although it was still early to say for sure, the feedback gathered from
participants during their exit interviews also began to address this question and suggests that the behavior of at least some participants changed.

Though these behavioral changes were not the same across the board, they offer a tantalizing glimpse into the potential of the workshop to instill this kind of change in the future. Although it is early days still, the two participants who performed at the lowest level on the demonstration lessons saw their performance as a wake-up call of sorts. For them the workshop gave them not only a standard by which to measure themselves but also a means of measuring success. They both (independently) reported their resolve to teach differently in the future. A third participant, on the other hand, came away from the workshop inspired. Although she lacked teaching experience or credentials, and felt uncertain in the classroom prior to her involvement in the ILI ABW, she reported that her work in the ILI ABW changed how she would act in the future. Far from being intimidated in the classroom, because of the ILI ABW she felt that she had something to offer her students and was eager to give it. Promising though these results may be, their relative paucity suggests that more could be done to promote intrapersonal learning in future iterations of the workshop.

**Comparison of Findings with Previous Literature**

Having come to the conclusions above, it is important to compare these results with those reported in previous literature. As outlined in Chapter 2, this study began with an attempt to come to terms with the best practices involved in teaching professional development, andragogy, and blended learning. The efforts made to put these principles into action in a blended learning teacher professional development workshop (i.e., the ILI ABW) were described at length in Chapter 3 of this study. What follows, then, is an overview of these findings relative to existing scholarship in each of the three areas outlined above.
Effective Teacher Professional Development.

Various principles of effective teacher professional development were incorporated into the ILI ABW. These included: 1) duration (Guskey, 2000; Garet et al., 2001; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989), 2) emphasis on content (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Corcoran, 1995; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009), 3) coherence with other initiatives (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009; Putnam & Borko, 2000), and 4) constructivism (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Desimone, 2009; Wilson & Berne, 1999). The findings of this study strongly support points 2, 3, and 4, above. To wit, in terms of an emphasis on content, the ILI ABW worked to incorporate Darling-Hammond et al.’s (2009) suggestion that TPD activities which are more concrete and specific are more effective than those which focus on abstract theory. Indeed, the rubric results as well as the feedback garnered from participants supports this approach. Moreover, participants reported significantly more tangible takeaways from the workshop than abstract ones.

Similarly, when considering coherence with other initiatives, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) found that TPD is more effective when it aligns with other endeavors that are at work within a system and so it was with this initiative: no participant reported a significant difference between what was being covered by the ABW and the concurrent Administrative trainings all new hires must attend. Although a relatively minor point in this study, this suggests that cognitive dissonance did not hinder participant advancement.

Constructivism, on the other hand, was an aspect of much greater impact for this study. Per the finding that constructivist-based instruction correlates with effective teacher professional development (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Desimone, 2009; Wilson & Berne, 1999), the online discussion and face-to-face demonstration lesson and discussion aspects of the ILI ABW were designed to incorporate elements of constructivist pedagogy. The data suggest
that the combination of these elements as presented in this study was generally well-received by participants who, indeed, credited these efforts not only with a clearer understanding of the principle in the workshop but positive interactions with other members of the workshop cohort.

One area where participants did report negative perceptions, however, was with regard to the video lectures. In hindsight, there is little doubt about why: no matter how carefully crafted they are, watching video lectures remains a passive learning activity that does not promote constructivist or active learning. To that end, a return to the literature reveals several ways in which video lectures could be revised to better incorporate the principles of active learning. These lessons will have a significant role to play in the redesign of the video lectures featured in the ILI ABW. Among these are:

- **Use of Guiding Questions** - Lawson, Bodle, Houlette, and Haubner (2006) found that providing students with guiding questions while watching educational videos is shown to improve retention and satisfaction.

- **Embed Questions in Videos** – the results of Vural (2013) suggest that video lectures should incorporate interactive activities in order to engage the learner in the learning process. They found that videos which featured embedded questions promoted student learning, interaction time, and engagement.

- **Give Students Control** – Zhang, Zhou, Briggs, and Nunamaker (2006) reported that students who were able to control their own movement through a video by, for example, selecting important sections to review or backtracking on command, demonstrated better achievement of learning outcomes and greater satisfaction.

On the other hand, the duration of the workshop was another area of concern raised by participants. While it is true that the length of the workshop did enable participants to reflect on the material presented in the workshop (via the discussion, self-reflection, and demonstration activities, among others) and incorporate it into their demonstration lessons, the length and pace of the ILI ABW was the one of the greatest points of concern raised by participants. This was so despite the fact that it was relatively short by the standards of other TPD workshops (Guskey, 2000; Garet et al., 2001; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989). In fact, even
in its relatively brevity the workshop was decried as too time-consuming by some participants. Perhaps it is true that the length enhanced its effectiveness but it definitely affected (negatively) how it was perceived. As such, this study challenges the general trend of best practices in teacher professional development as previously reported about duration. The current research potentially identifies a population (part-time EFL teachers) who do not perceive longer training programs favorably.

**Andragogy**

As with teacher professional development, the design of the ILI ABW sought to incorporate the best practices suggested by the literature related to andragogy. To do so it relied on the principles presented by Knowles (1984, 1989) and Vella, (2000). Knowles, for his part, outlined six principles and attempts to address all six were made in the design and implementation of the ILI ABW. These were: 1) need to know, 2) foundation, 3), self-concept, 4) readiness, 5) orientation, and 6) motivation. Feedback from the participants supports the finding that all six assumptions that Knowles suggested promoting adult learning were, indeed, regarded favorably by participants and contributed to the success of the workshop. But two principles in particular were most clearly supported by the results of this study. The first of these comes in the form of orientation, the principle which holds that adults are interested in the immediate application of knowledge (Knowles, 1984, 1999; Knowles et al., 2005). Feedback from several participants (e.g., Bryson, Cali, and Santi, among others) suggested that they were expressly motivated by the goal-oriented nature of the workshop and responded well to its emphasis on practice rather than theory. For them the workshop was a success expressly because it was the exercise with two very real (and immediate) applications: the demonstration lessons which ended the workshop as well as their soon-to-begin work with ILI.
Foundation was the other of Knowles principles of Andragogy which had an outsized presence in the workshop. Foundation is the principle that holds that adult learners have prior experiences which provide the basis for learning activities (Knowles, 1984, 1999; Knowles et al., 2005) and so it was in this study. After all, it was those teachers with more experience (e.g., Andy) who were able to contribute meaningful feedback to discussions about the demonstration lessons of their peers and, in so doing, add significant value to the discussions while at the same time promoting community building.

At the same time, the results of this study also support Vella's five principles of facilitated learning (2000). This study embraced these principles in the design of the ILI ABW by 1) structuring a learner-centered dialogue, 2) integrating theory and practice, 3) encouraging personal accountability, 4) creating a positive exchange between facilitators and adult learners, and 5) allowing each participant to use a different learning style and, indeed, owes much of its success to them. Although examples like Diem (one of the participants) demonstrates that personal accountability is not absolute, the fact that each of these elements were singled out by various participants during their exit interviews speaks to their effectiveness.

The Best Practice of Blended Learning Course Design

The best practices for blended learning were also discussed at length in Chapters 2 and 3 and incorporated into the design of the ILI ABW. Those principles were: 1) course goals and learning outcomes, 2) ease of communication, 3) pedagogical and organizational design, 4) engaged learning, 5) collaboration and community, 6) assessments and feedback, 7) grading, 8) ease of access, and 9) preparation and revisions. In many ways this study owes its success to the successful application of these principles. By their very nature, however, many of these elements went unnoticed by or, more accurately, uncommented on, by participants. Despite the paucity of feedback on these elements, those that were remarked on by participants were:
• **Pedagogical and organizational design:** In accordance with Stein and Graham’s suggestion that “information [be] divided into blocks of information” and that these blocks build “progressively” (2014, p. 196), the workshop was subdivided into five distinct modules which build from the relatively general to the quite specific. Several participants, among them the most inexperienced in the cohort, commented on how this design served as a manageable introduction to ILI and its corporate and academic philosophies.

• **Collaboration and community:** The principle that “community-driven activities encourage learners to explore, share, analyze, and refine their thinking and practice through social interaction” (Stein & Graham, 2014, p. 140) was at the heart of this workshop. Several participants expressly attributed their learning to these interactions, be they through observations of or discussion with others.

• **Assessments and feedback:** The demonstration lessons and the discussions that followed were excellent examples of not only collaborative learning but also of immediate feedback. It was these discussions that several participants cited as turning points in their own self-reflection. This immediate feedback in the demonstration lessons, as well as that provided through the online assessments, also promoted participants’ engagement (per McGee & Reis, 2012) as evinced through the active involvement in post-demonstration discussion of even the most experienced participants.

• **Ease of Access:** Based on participant feedback, the decision to use low-threshold, mass-market technologies was inspired by the findings reported by McGee and Reis (2012) and received quite favorably by participants. Moreover, this decision, combined as it was with the decision to have the first session of the workshop face-to-face (per Martyn, 2003), helped many participants feel in control of their personal trajectory through the workshop.

**Video Lecture Design**

All that having been said, participants were sharply critical of one of the key aspects of the workshop: the video lectures. A closer examination of the principles of effective video lecture design and implementation (which, crucially, was neglected in the run-up to this study) may 1) explain their responses and 2) help improve this element of the workshop. A review of the literature on this subject reveals several aspects of effective video lecture design that may improve the videos moving forward.
**Student engagement**

The first of these are those intended to promote student engagement. Guo, Kim, and Robin, in their study on “How Video Production Affects Student Engagement” (2014) discuss at length the elements of video lecture design and implementation which they found promote student engagement. These are:

- Shorter videos are more engaging;
- A talking head is more engaging;
- High production value might not matter;
- Khan-style tutorials are more engaging;
- Pre-production improves engagement;
- [Faster] speaking rate affects engagement;
- Students engage differently with lectures and tutorials (adapted from Guo, Kim, & Robin, 2014).

Of these principles, several were incorporated into the videos used in the workshop. Among these were the ideas that “talking head is more engaging” (in that the ILI ABW video lectures do feature, in the words of Guo, Kim, and Robin, “videos that intersperse an instructor’s talking head with slides”), “high production value might not matter” (in that the ILI ABW video lectures were filmed on a low budget in the same classrooms used to teach ILI classes in general and the ILI training sessions in particular, and that “pre-production improves engagement” (in that the lectures used for the ILI ABW videos were scripted well in advance of their recording and expressly for use in the ILI ABW) (2014, p. 2).

At the same time, several of the principles suggested by Guo, Kim and Robin were not incorporated in the ILI ABW. While one, namely that a faster speaking rate promotes student engagement, seems ill-suited for a student population which included non-native English speakers, others would doubtless improve the videos lectures used in the ILI ABW. Among the most relevant of these for this study is the idea that shorter videos are more engaging. More’s the pity as relates to the original ILI ABW video lectures because, to quote the authors, “[v]ideo
length was by far the most significant indicator of engagement” and, as a result “[i]nstructors should segment videos into short chunks, ideally less than 6 minutes” (Guo, Kim, & Robin, 2014, p 4). The ILI ABW video lectures were in clear contravention to this principle, and this point should be addressed in future iterations of the workshop.

Another major point raised by Guo, Kim, and Robin are the interrelated ideas that “Khan-Style Tutorials Are More Engaging” and, indeed, that “Students Engage Differently With Lectures And Tutorials” (Guo, Kim, & Robin, 2014, p 2). Considering the former point first, the authors suggest that video lectures which feature “an instructor drawing on a digital tablet” are more engaging than those which are built around PowerPoint presentations (e.g., the ILI ABW videos). Not only are these explanations typically more concise but they also allow instructors to situate themselves “on the same level” as the student (as opposed to talking at students in “‘lecturer mode’” (Guo, Kim, & Robin, 2014, p. 6). Given the context of the ILI ABW, wherein one teacher is leading a teacher professional development workshop for other instructors, this approach may be particularly apt for the ILI ABW.

Then, too, the point that “Students Engage Differently With Lectures And Tutorials” (Guo, Kim, & Robin, 2014, p 4) may also prove useful in reconciling one of the issues raised by participants in the workshop: the extreme length of the video lectures in the final online module. Shorter videos (as discussed above) are preferable. But the fact that “students only watch, on average, 2 to 3 minutes of each tutorial video” regardless of their length, but “will often re-watch and jump to relevant parts of longer tutorial videos” (Guo, Kim, & Robin, 2014, p. 6) could have a significant impact on how the video lectures are redesigned. For example, while the lecture format may still be well suited to the material in the first two online modules (which feature declarative knowledge), the final module, with its focus on procedural knowledge, may benefit
from the use of a more tutorial approach. Such tutorials, per the authors, benefit from “hyperlink bookmarks or visual signposts … such as big blocks of text to signify transitions, might facilitate skimming and re-watching” (Guo, Kim, & Robin, 2014, p. 8). Since I always intended for participants to return to the video lectures independently of the workshop (i.e., during their actual teaching practice), this idea, like the others mentioned here, will be invaluable as the video lectures are revised for future iterations of the ILI ABW.

**Segmenting, signaling, and weeding**

The second is how the cognitive theory of multimedia learning can be applied to the creation of online videos. Particularly germane to the present study is Ibrahim, Antonenko, Greenwood, and Wheeler’s (2012) study on the “[e]ffects of segmenting, signaling, and weeding on learning from educational video.” Their research is informed by the cognitive theory of multimedia learning proposed by Mayer and Moreno (2003) but, where “numerous studies applied the SSW principles to the design of animations and hypermedia, little research has examined the effects of these design principles in the context of educational video” (Ibrahim, et al., 2012, p. 4) and is therefore quite relevant to the present study.

Per the researchers, CTML suggests that, since working memory has a limited capacity and information must be processed by working memory to be encoded in long-term memory, it is important to prompt working memory to accept, process, and send only the most crucial information to long-term memory (Ibrahim, et al., 2012). To do this in the most effective way possible, their study examined the effects of three multimedia design principles on the learning outcomes of students. These principles are segmenting, signaling, and weeding, which can be explained as follows:

- Segmenting calls on content creators to break long streams of instruction into multiple, user-controlled segments of approximately five to nine minutes in length.
- Signaling calls on content creators to apply the signaling principle in CTML to help learners identify (using, for example, verbal or visual cues) which information is the most important to remember in multimedia instruction.

- Weeding calls on content creators to apply the coherence principle in CTML to remove lecture content that is not essential to the learning objectives. (Mayer & Moreno, 2003)

These three principles were introduced by Mayer and Moreno in 2003. The fact that Ibrahim et al. (2012) found the use of these three principles in video lectures “support previous findings produced in the context of learning from educational animations and hypermedia” has significant implications for the ILI ABW. They, like Guo, Kim, and Robin (2014), argue that shorter videos are better and further justify their findings by placing this principle in the context of CTML as a whole. Moreover, they add the idea that signaling can help learners “organize relevant information into a coherent structure” (Ibrahim et al., 2012, p. 12). At the same time, their findings with relation to weeding suggests that “adding entertaining but irrelevant information to a multimedia presentation resulted in poorer understanding of the content.” For the ILI ABW these implications are clear: while the ILI ABW (serendipitously) adhered to the signaling and weeding principles, it failed to take into account the principle of segmentation. Thus the lessons afforded by their study further reinforce the need for short videos. But they also underscore the point that the revised video lectures in the ILI ABW must continue to employ a judicious use of signaling and relevant information.

Implications

Although the study found the ILI ABW to be a moderate success in many respects, it also found that the existing literature on teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design does not perfectly anticipate the context within which ILI operates. That is to say, while the ILI ABW most certainly had its flaws, it must also be true that at least some of the principles used to inform it were a poor fit for a Mexico City-based language school which
employs part-time instructors for Business English classes. For example, while it may be true
that a longer training program is more effective for full-time in-service teachers, it cannot be
denied that the length of this induction workshop was negatively perceived by several
participants. The same could be said of the need to know and motivation: while these principles
of andragogy may be true of adult teachers in other contexts, the findings of this study suggest
that this message was not perfectly received by all of the study participants in this particular
context.

It is this context, however, that I work in and, as a result, these findings stand to have
significant implications not only for my personal practice but also for the design of the workshop
and the role of teacher professional development at ILI as well.

Implications for Professional Practice

For me, the journey that was the ILI ABW was a learning experience in every sense of
the word. On the one hand, the process of coming to terms with the elements of effective teacher
professor development, andragogy, and blended learning course design was an education in
itself. On the other hand, the launch of the workshop itself was just as eye opening. It was then
that the rubber hit the road, so to speak. What had heretofore been mere conjecture was evaluated
by real teachers in its intended context.

Three points in particular were quite illuminating. The first of these relates to certain
limitations I experienced as a course designer. Although I tried my best to consider the myriad
factors necessary to make the workshop a success, I failed to anticipate a number of issues.
Foremost among these was my failure to generally research and incorporate the lessons of
effective video lecture design and implementation as described above. More specifically, and
again in light of the video lectures, I failed to practice what I preached. That is to say, although I
did not research (or incorporate the principles of) effective video lecture design, I also failed to
adhere to the best practices promoted in the ILI Approach (e.g., “showing, not telling”). By using lengthy, talking head lectures with few visuals I not only ignored the tenets of the ILI Approach but also set a bad example for the participants.

Also as a course designer, I failed to anticipate the scheduling needs of participants. Although the administration at ILI mandates that induction trainings are a requirement of employment and as such are unpaid, I neglected to mitigate this by giving participants true freedom in scheduling the online activities of the workshop. Although I truly believed that the design of the ILI ABW promoted freedom of choice, feedback from two participants (Andy and Zelda) suggested that at least some teachers did not have as much freedom of choice with regard to scheduling as they would have liked. Their feedback suggests that I, wrongly, assumed that participants would prefer to complete work-related activities during the work week and schedule the workshop from Monday to Friday. However, since this was an unpaid induction training, at least some participants found that completing the workshop during the workweek presented them with a potentially significant opportunity cost. While this did not seem to seriously impair the performance of some participants (Andy, for example, gave one of the best demonstration lessons and contributed considerably to those of other people during the discussions that followed each demonstration lesson) this suggests that I did not adequately anticipate the needs of the target population when designing this week-long workshop. It is humbling to think that even after so much preparation, I could have miscalculated the timing of the workshop to such an extent, but it also serves as an important impetus to work toward perfecting the workshop. For this reason, future iterations of the workshop must be scheduled in such a way as to incorporate time both during the workweek and weekend (e.g., from Monday to Monday or even Saturday to Saturday).
Finally, as an instructor, I must reckon with the case of Diem and Isadora’s reaction to it. While every other participant put forth the requisite effort in the online and in-person activities in the workshop (including some who matched Diem almost point for point in terms of background), he alone failed to demonstrate proficient (if not masterful) knowledge of the ILI Approach. Although there are many possible reasons for his status as an outlier, the fact that I failed to anticipate this problem had a potentially adverse effect on him and Isadora. Although I have spent (and will doubtless spend still more) time reflecting on this, as the author of this study, the designer of the ILI ABW, and his teacher, I cannot help but feel that I failed the both of them. To this end, I as an instructor must be more vigilant in preventing and planning for situations like this in the future.

**Workshop Redesign**

In light of the feedback received from participants, the existing design of the workshop should be modified in several ways. For the sake of simplicity, these will be grouped under the subheadings of global feedback, the preliminary session, the online components, and the demonstration lesson and discussions.

**Global feedback**

The single greatest element of the workshop that colored participants’ perceptions of it was that of time. Although the blended learning approach was expressly chosen to reduce the scheduling burden imposed by a previous iteration of the workshop, for both trainees and administrators, several participants felt that the Monday to Friday time scale imposed in this iteration of the workshop conflicted with their existing personal and professional obligations. Thus it may be necessary to select a time frame (e.g. Monday to Monday, Friday to Friday, or even Saturday to Saturday) that better accommodates this particular concern in future workshops.
and gives participants time both during the work week and over the weekend to complete the online components at a time that is more convenient for them.

**The preliminary session**

Based on the feedback of participants, many aspects of the preliminary session can stay as they currently are. One major exception to this would be to better clarify for participants the importance of both of the icebreaker activities (i.e., the structured as well as the unstructured one) with the hopes that this initial encounter can be even more meaningful for participants. If participants know from the start that community building is one of the goals of the workshop, it is hoped that they will see these activities as more valuable and, indeed, seek to form more rewarding relationships from the outset of the workshop. In the same light, and taking into the consideration other feedback about the preliminary information session, opportunities to use this initial session for clearly instructional purposes should be investigated. Though not a major criticism voiced by many participants, the opportunity to maximize this face-to-face session must not be ignored. Although that particular element has yet to be defined, the potential exists and, the data suggest, would be welcomed by some participants.

Finally, and on a more basic level, the very name and number of the Preliminary Session needs to be revisited. In naming the session “Preliminary” and numbering the module “0,” the importance of the activities that take place are undermined. Quite simply, the word “preliminary” does not adequately describe or explain the importance of a session which is meant to serve as an orientation to the workshop and an introduction to the other participants. Renaming the session with those words in mind (e.g., Orientation or Introduction Session) would better express its purpose. At the same time, since people do not start counting with 0 but rather with 1 (and, indeed, the workshop rightly has five modules not four), the very numbering of the session must be reconsidered in order to give the session equal footing with the other modules. That end, the
preliminary session, must in future iterations, be renamed and renumbered as “Module 1: Orientation Session.”

The online components

Based on the feedback of participants, many aspects of the preliminary session can stay as they currently are. These include the online discussions that open Modules 1 and 2 and the self-reflection activities that close the same. Both of these aspects of the online course were well-received by participants and, per their feedback, contributed to the goals of the workshop. The same could also be said of the online assessments in all three modules. Though they were decried by many of the participants for being difficult, many also conceded that this level of difficulty also forced participants to carefully scrutinize the video lectures and thereby boosted their retention of the information presented therein.

At the same time, feedback from the participants does suggest that design of the online components should be reconsidered in three ways. The first two of these are interrelated as both pertain to the way the information is presented. As it currently stands, each online module is presented as a single Google Page, suggesting to at least one participant that all of these components must be completed at the same time and to another that trainees could easily cheat on the online assessments by accessing the videos that relate to them out of order. Tackling the former idea first, although rote memorization is not the goal of the workshop, repeated viewings of the video lectures are encouraged both during and after the workshop, so the idea of separating the two components will not be incorporated into future iterations of the workshop. On the other hand, the idea of subdividing the other components in each module into distinct pages should be investigated. As Table 5-1 illustrates, such a system would have separate pages for online discussions, video lectures, and online assessment. It would also include self-reflection
activities in Modules 1 and 2 as well as, of course, a revised navigation system for the workshop as a whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5-1. Illustration of Changes to the Structure of the Online Components of the ILI ABW.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Currently</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Online Discussion, Video Lecture, Online Assessment, Self-Reflection Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Video Lecture, Online Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Self-Reflection Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Online Discussion, Video Lecture, Online Assessment and Self-Reflection Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Video Lecture, Online Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Self-Reflection Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Video Lecture and Online Assessment (with demonstration lesson reminder)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Secondly, the idea of breaking down the material into more manageable chunks clearly must be extended to the video lectures moving forward. In light of the feedback from participants about the video lectures and considering the research on video lecture design and implementation discussed above, the video lectures must be redesigned for future iterations of the workshop. While the lessons of Guo, Kim, and Robin (2014) and Ibrahim et al. (2012) reveal that not everything needs to be reconsidered, they also make it clear that several things must be. For example, and per the former, while pre-planned videos featuring a “talking head,” intercut with visuals, are not so far off the mark for the first two video lectures, both the feedback from participants and the literature on video lecture design and implementation make it clear that these videos, along with the third, must be broken up into smaller segments.

In the case of the first two modules, lecture-style videos remain apt but, taking into account the advice of Ibrahim et al. (2012), a judicious selection of material (i.e., weeding) and
adequate signaling must be maintained. At the same time, considering again the findings of Guo, Kim, and Robin (2014) the information that was presented in video lectures for the third module may be better suited to a more tutorial style. Via this change, the videos for this module would address the concerns raised by the participants in this study – i.e., they would better “show, not tell,” while at the same time catering to the unique learning styles of the potential audience – while at the same time better facilitating repeated viewings. Finally, as all three video lectures currently utilize a wholly audio-visual approach, efforts to incorporate more interactivity (using the examples of active learning discussed above) should be incorporated throughout. One way this could be addressed would be to embed the existing assessment questions in the videos using a tool such as EdPuzzle.

Finally, the fact that only one aspect of the ILI Approach (the 15-30-45) was raised by participants during their exit interviews suggests that more attention should be paid to other aspects of the ILI Approach in future iterations of the workshop. For example, more than half of the participants neglected to provide an outline for their lessons at the outset of their demonstration lessons (as mandated in the Elements of Effective Instruction in Module 2). Moreover, this failing was discussed repeatedly in the discussions that followed each presentation. Despite this, not one participant mentioned it in their exit interviews. This suggests that this point may not have been covered sufficiently in the video lectures or reinforced in the post-demonstration lesson discussions. More attention should be paid to spelling out the expectations of some of these overlooked aspects of the ILI Approach in future iterations of the workshop.

The demonstration lessons and discussions

The demonstration lessons and the discussions that followed them were far and away the most positively perceived component of the workshop. More than that, based on participant
feedback and researcher observations, they were also the elements of the workshop that most clearly accomplished the instructional and community-building goals that motivated the ILI ABW. As the experience of Diem (and Isadora’s reaction to his performance) revealed, however, they were not perfect and at least one element bears reconsideration.

That element is the “no-fail” policy at work within the workshop. Because of this policy, which assumes that even the worst teacher can improve, no participant was “failed” for their performance in the demonstration lesson. In theory this is simple enough, as no demonstration lesson is truly perfect and all participants are subject to peer feedback during the group discussion. In the absolute worst cases, participants like Diem are merely subject to more peer scrutiny and invited to try again during the next training session.

This approach was adopted in part to be diplomatic and in part to promote a positive dialogue throughout the workshop, but must be reconsidered in light of the strength and intensity of Isadora’s reaction. Though she was the only one of the participants to voice her concerns about this incident, it clearly served as a frustrating and demotivating element of the workshop and clearly influenced her perception of it.

Table 5-2, below outlines the current and suggested redesign of the ILI ABW. It shows 1) the new numbering system of the revised workshop, 2) how the preliminary module (now Module 1) would be modified to better explain the types of icebreaker activities used and would open the door to including instructional material in that module, 3) how the new Module 2 would now include the subdivision of its various components into distinct pages and updated video lectures, 3) how the new Module 3 would be updated to reflect this new navigation system and feature new video lectures that better emphasize and explain the Elements of Effective Instruction, 4) how the new Module 4 would be changed only to modify its video lectures, and 5)
how the new Module 5 would go unchanged except for a clearer explanation of the consequences of poor performance (i.e., repeat participation in the workshop).

Table 5.2. Comparison of Original Format of the ILI ABW With Suggested Revisions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Module Number</th>
<th>New Module Number</th>
<th>Modality</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Current Design</th>
<th>Suggested Redesign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 0                 | 1                 | Face-to-face | Introduction         | 1) Workshop Overview  
2) Icebreaker Activities                                                    | 1) Rename/number  
2) Workshop Overview  
3) Structured and Unstructured Community-Building Exercises  
4) Possible Instructional Activities                                                  |
| 1                 | 2                 | Online       | Roles and Responsibilities | 1) Online Discussion, Video Lecture, Online Assessment, Self-Reflection Activity | 1) Preliminary Discussion  
2) Updated Video Lecture  
3) Online Quiz with Self-Reflection                                                  |
| 2                 | 3                 | Online       | Effective Teaching   | 1) Online Discussion, Video Lecture, Online Assessment, Self-Reflection Activity | 1) Preliminary Discussion  
2) Updated Video Lecture  
3) Online Quiz with Self-Reflection                                                  |
| 3                 | 4                 | Online       | The ILI Approach     | 1) Video Lecture and Online Assessment (with demonstration lesson reminder)    | 1) Updated Video Lecture and Online Assessment (with demonstration lesson reminder) |
| 4                 | 5                 | Face-to-face | Demonstration Lesson | 1) Demonstration Lessons and Discussion Sessions                               | 1) Demonstration Lessons and Discussion Sessions with Safeguards for Poor Performers. |
Institution

The implications of the current study are, on the whole, quite promising for ILI. While few teachers demonstrated a complete mastery of the concepts presented in the workshop and not everyone was truly in favor of the approach it took, there was no single element (be it teaching experience, background, or any other point of difference discussed above) that correlated perfectly with either of these points.

Moreover, though the workshop was very much a work in progress, novice teachers were able to present demonstration lessons that were as effective on some metrics as even the most experienced teachers in the cohort. This would seem to suggest that the use of a blended approach warrants further investigation. At the same time, the findings of this study suggest that a blended workshop can serve as a meaningful introduction to the ILI Approach and, indeed, as the first step in a larger training program.

It behooves ILI to think beyond the one-week timespan of the ILI ABW. Although ILI already conducts monthly check-ins during which teachers discuss in a group setting the issues they have experienced in the classroom this month with the Academic Director and their peers, the way these sessions are held should be reconsidered in order to sustain the positive interactions experienced (and interpersonal connections made) by participants in the ILI ABW. Having already created a cohort which works well together, these sessions should be held consistently (whenever as possible) with the same group. In so doing participants would be able to capitalize on the connections made in the ILI ABW to problem-solve during the monthly check-in sessions. The same should also be true of the follow-up training sessions held throughout the academic year to provide teachers with new skills.

Finally, however, efforts to continue fostering interaction between these in-person sessions should be made. A system where the online discussions begun in the online modules of
the workshop continue, unmoderated, throughout teachers’ tenures at ILI would provide participants with an interface through which they can share ideas and resources.

As it stands, however, even at this stage the results of this study suggest that a teacher development program that employs blended learning can be used to effectively train new teachers in a way that is more efficient for both ILI administrators and staff. This opens the door for training programs that could be offered to ILI teachers who are not only geographically remote but also (because of the increases in economies of scale involved in training) less senior. These efforts could result in increased standardization across and within the organization’s centers across Mexico, buy-in among teachers of lesser seniority, and ultimately may positively impact end-student learning.

Finally, the results of this study have implications that go well beyond ILI itself. As the demand for English proficiency in developing countries continues to outstrip the natural supply of qualified instructors, the need for effective training programs persists. The results of this study suggest that blended learning teacher professional development can be an effective way to solve this problem. Although the ILI ABW itself may still be a work in progress, the fact that a teacher professional development initiative that used blended learning was positively perceived by participants, combined with the fact that several of the participants in the study reported that they either acquired new knowledge about their new institution’s teaching philosophy and had or would change their behaviors as a result of their involvement in the workshop, suggests that it and other workshops like it have a part to play in solving this problem.

**Limitations**

This study falls prey to many of the inherent limitations associated with qualitative studies in general. These include (but are not limited to): 1) the use of a small sample size that imposes strong limits upon the ability to generalize findings to the larger population, 2) the
decision to limit the breadth of data collection and analysis in order to increase its depth, and 3) a heightened degree of subjectivity (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002). These limitations, though acceptable for the purposes of the current investigation, could be improved upon in future analyses of this research problem via the utilization of a quantitative approach that would afford greater breadth, opportunities for generalizability, and increased scientific objectivity. Conversely, a case study approach could enable a more meticulous exploration of the subtleties at work within the sample and thereby reveal more meaningful results for the specific context at the heart of this study.

At the same time, it should be noted that the selection of participants for the current study were primarily associated with their eligibility to participate in the investigation (i.e., new hires who had not heretofore been trained on the ILI Approach). For this reason, the possibility that the participants who were selected for inclusion in the study are outliers, or that those potential participants who withdrew from the study may have done so expressly because of their negative associations with blended learning, must be considered.

Then, too, this study is limited because it assumes, when using the Kirkpatrick Training Evaluation Model, a causal sequence of teacher learning (Bates, 2004). In so doing, it assumes that changes in behavior will occur. In professional development, this means that teachers must have a receptive reaction to the information that the teacher acquires in their training in order to modify their knowledge, beliefs, and ultimately, their behavior in the classroom. The Kirkpatrick Model has been challenged in recent years for expressly this reason. To quote Bates, who bases his judgment on the results of two meta-analyses of training evaluation studies using Kirkpatrick’s framework, researchers have “found little evidence either of substantial
correlations between measures at different outcome levels or evidence of the linear causality suggested by Kirkpatrick” (2004, p. 342).

Guskey, on the other hand, bases his model on Kirkpatrick’s but suggests that shifts in teacher attitude and knowledge do not occur solely because of the information acquired in a training session. Instead, he maintains that teachers change their beliefs and attitudes by changing their practices and reflecting on the results (Guskey, 2000). In this way, the Guskey Model provides an alternative to the idea that it is necessary to change teacher beliefs and attitudes prior to changing classroom practices in order to achieve improved student outcomes. In other words, Guskey challenges the causal sequence laid out by Kirkpatrick and suggests that teacher professional development programs must create space for teachers to implement new practices in their classrooms in order to evaluate student learning. Adopting one perspective over the other has profound implications for the design of the workshop and how it is implemented at ILI.

The design of this study may also have been improved by the refinement of the interview guide to add questions of additional interest or import to the study or, conversely, to reduce or eliminate the redundancies that appeared in some interviews. Moreover, the thematic analysis of collected data could have been enhanced through the use of dedicated qualitative analytic software. While the methods of data collection and analysis certainly met the needs of the current investigation and generated substantial findings, these procedural adjustments constitute reasonably achievable improvements to the meaningfulness of the entry and exit interviews as well as the exhaustive analytical process that cannot be effectively replicated through a manual approach to data analysis.
Recommendations for Future Research

Before undertaking this study, I reviewed the existing literature to determine where there are gaps and where there is a need for further exploration. Though the areas of teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning have been studied extensively in isolation, little scholarship exists on the intersection of these disciplines. Moreover, the research which does exist does not consider the relatively informal context of private English language instruction in developing countries. This study works to fill this gap but much must still be done. For example, the study does not measure the long-term results (the fourth and final stage in Kirkpatrick’s Training Evaluation Model (1996) of the ILI ABW. Nor does it examine the effects that teacher professional development of this sort have on end-student performance. At a time when a command of English is becoming increasingly valuable, gaps in the literature such as these are glaring. Longer and more in-depth studies must be conducted and, as the demand for English language instruction in Mexico and around the world increases, the time to do this is now.

At the same time, the potential significance of this study to my context cannot be understated. The successful creation and implementation of a teacher professional development program based on best practices for blended learning has the potential to enable my organization to more easily and effectively train new teachers without regard to their geographic location. This could result in increased standardization across and within the organization's centers, buy-in among teachers, and may positively impact end-student learning.

More generally, given that very little research to date has been conducted on blended teacher professional development and almost none has been conducted in the English as a Foreign Language or Adult Education contexts, more research must be done on the design of teacher professional development programs in this context. Larger, longer, and more detailed
studies on the effectiveness of blended teacher development programs for English teachers in developing economies must be conducted. Indeed, in an era where the demand for qualified teachers continues to grow, it is my hope that this study will inspire a new generation of teacher professional development initiatives that leverages technological advances to provide an efficient teacher training paradigm that, ultimately, can positively impact student learning.

**Conclusion**

As noted in Chapter 1 and elsewhere, the purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of novice and experienced teachers towards a blended learning teacher professional development workshop to better situate it in the context of the learners. The literature review in Chapter 2 provided a foundation of knowledge and identified gaps in scholarship related to the intersection of teacher professional development, andragogy, and blended learning course design. Chapter 3 outlined the design of the ILI ABW, the workshop at the heart of this study, and explained how it took into consideration the best practices available in those disciplines. It also explained how the methodology used in this study addressed the research questions and sub-questions of interest. In Chapter 4, a rigorous thematic analysis of the data that was collected was presented. Finally, in Chapter 5, the resulting themes were examined in light of the existing literature and with regard to their implications to my personal practice, the workshop, my organization, and teacher professional development for English teachers in developing economies in general.

Although the ILI ABW proved to be far from perfect, it was nevertheless positively received by the participants of the workshop and, where it was not, no single element of participants’ backgrounds consistently played a decisive role in their performance during the workshop. This conclusion, combined with the fact that many of participants reported that they acquired new knowledge about their new institution’s teaching philosophy and some that they
had or would change their behaviors as a result of their involvement in the workshop, suggests that blended learning can be a useful way of providing teacher professional development opportunities to novice and experienced English teachers at ILI. This warrants further investigation elsewhere in Mexico and in other developing economies.
APPENDIX A
THE ILI APPROACH INDUCTION WORKSHOP OUTLINE

The ILI Approach Induction Workshop serves simultaneously as teaching professional development and an introduction to the expectations asked of all ILI instructors. It has three main objectives:

**Objective 1: The Roles and Responsibilities of an ILI instructor**
1. What are the roles of a teacher?
   - a. Organizer
   - b. Manager/Controller
   - c. Assessor
   - d. Observer/Monitor
   - e. Tutor/Coach
   - f. Participant
2. What role is missing?
   - a. Friend.
3. Elements of Professionalism
   - a. Professional Distance
   - b. Timeliness
   - c. Preparedness
   - d. Expertise
     - What do you do if you don’t know the answer to a question?

**Objective 2: (In)Effective Instruction**
1. Can you think of examples of negative learning experiences in your own life?
2. Elements of Effective Instruction
   - a. Providing Comprehensible Input, which incorporates the lesson of showing, not telling for the benefit of both lower-level and visual learners
   - b. Linking New Information to Existing Knowledge, which demands that teachers carefully select examples in advance
   - c. Lesson Planning as well as the related value of communicating that plan to the student(s)
   - d. Determining Key Concepts and structuring the learning cycle
   - e. Preteaching Vocabulary and other difficult concepts
   - f. Promoting Student Talk Time

**Objective 3: The ILI Curriculum and ILI Approach**
1. Pacing a 90-Minute Class
   - a. 15-30-45
     - 15 for Warm Up
     - 30 for Revision, Reinforcement, and Responsive Teaching
     - 45 for the Market Leader material

2. Pacing a full semester
   - a. 48 teaching-hours per semester.
b. One Market Leader section each class.
   - In the Final 45
   - Skip Case Studies (or put them in the Middle 30)
c. Five classes a unit.
d. Six units a semester.
e. 30 classes with time for review before the final exam.
   - 30 x 1.5 = 45 hours, leaving 3 hours for review.

3. Working with the Market Leader
   a. Special Tips for teaching
      - Vocabulary
      - Listening
      - Reading
      - Grammar
      - Useful Language
   b. The importance of communicating structure!
APPENDIX B
THE ILI APPROACH WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

As noted in the main body of this study, the Modern Language Center Approach Workshop has three overarching objectives whose mastery will be demonstrated through the use of a final teaching practicum at the conclusion of the course.

Module 0. After the completion of this preliminary, synchronous module, the participants will understand the workshop structure and deliverables.

Module 1. After the completion of the workshop, participants will be able to demonstrate their mastery of the roles and responsibilities of an ILI teacher by achieving no less than 3 on the professionalism section of the teaching practicum.

Objective 1.1 After the completion of the asynchronous first unit, participants will be able distinguish between the different roles of a teacher by successfully answering multiple-choice questions on the end-of-unit quiz with 90% accuracy.

Objective 1.2 After the completion of the asynchronous first unit, participants will understand the important difference between “being friends and being friendly” and will demonstrate this understanding by categorizing appropriate and inappropriate behaviors on the end of unit quiz with 90% accuracy.

Objective 1.2.1 After the completion of the asynchronous first unit, participants will be able to accurately identify all four of the key elements of professionalism in a short-answer section of the end of unit quiz.

Module 2. After the completion of the workshop, participants will be able to demonstrate proficiency in the elements of effective instruction by achieving no less than 3 on the preparedness and effectiveness sections of the teaching practicum.

Objective 2.1 After the completion of the asynchronous second unit, participants will be able accurately identify examples of ineffective teaching on the end-of-unit quiz with 90% accuracy.

Objective 2.2 After the completion of the asynchronous second unit, participants will be able to accurately name/paraphrase all six of the elements of effective instruction as defined by ILI in a short-answer section of the end of unit quiz.

Module 3. After the completion of the workshop, participants will be able to demonstrate their mastery of the ILI Approach by achieving no less than 3 on the dynamic and knowledge of the ILI Approach sections of the teaching practicum.

Objective 3.1 After the completion of the asynchronous third unit, participants will be able to identify the structure of the ILI curriculum by answering, with 90% accuracy, multiple choice questions on its structure and style on the end of unit quiz.

Objective 3.2 After the completion of the asynchronous third unit, participants will be able to answer multiple choice questions that relate the ILI learner levels to Market Leader textbooks on the end-of-unit quiz with 90% accuracy.

Objective 3.2.1 After the completion of the asynchronous third unit, participants will demonstrate their understanding of the strengths and weakness of the Market Leader Textbooks series by accurately identifying, through free response questions on the end-of-unit quiz, which sections need supplementary materials.
Objective 3.2.2 After the completion of the asynchronous third unit, participants will be able to provide useful suggestions about supplementary materials on the free response section of the end-of-unit quiz. 

Objective 3.3 After the completion of the asynchronous third unit, participants will be able to accurately paraphrase how to best use the Market Leader materials using the ILI Approach by answering questions on the free response section of the end-of-unit quiz.

Module 4. After the completion of the teaching practicum which comprises the concluding synchronous module, the participants will be able to demonstrate their mastery of all aspects of the ILI Approach.
APPENDIX C
SURVEYS AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

Preliminary Survey

1. Where did you grow up?
   a. Where do you live now?

2. Did you learn English as a child [native speaker] or as an adult [non-native speaker]?
   a. In which country(s)?

3. What is the highest level of education that you have attained?
   a. Do you have any teaching certificates?

4. Have you taught before?
   a. If so, for how long?

5. Are you currently teaching?
   a. If so, at which levels?

Pre-Intervention Interview

1. Will you start by telling me a little bit about your background and education?

2. What is your classroom experience to date?
   a. Probing Question A: How many years have you been teaching?
   b. Probing Question B: Describe your experience in terms of the age groups, group sizes, location, etc.

3. In general, would you describe yourself as a knowledgeable in Teaching English as a Foreign Language?
   a. Probing Question C: What makes you say that?

4. Do you have experience with teacher professional development?
   a. Probing Question D: What are your views about teacher professional development?
5. Do you have experience with online learning?
   a. Probing Question F: What are your views about online learning?
   b. Probing Question G: Do you have experience with blended learning (that is, learning which includes both face-to-face and online components)?
   c. Probing Question H: What are your views about blended learning (that is, learning which includes both face-to-face and online components)?

6. What are some of the roles and responsibilities of a teacher?
   a. Probing Question I: Is there anything a teacher shouldn’t do?

7. What does ineffective instruction mean to you?
   a. Probing Question J: What does effective instruction mean to you?
   b. Probing Question K: What are some examples of effective teaching practices?

8. How would you structure a 90-minute class?
   a. Probing Question L: How would you allocate time to each part?

9. How do you feel about the role of textbooks in the classroom?
   a. Probing Question M: Is there a particular reason you feel that way?

10. How do you feel about the role of textbooks in the classroom?
    a. Probing Question N: Is there a particular reason you feel that way?

    *Post-Intervention Interviews*

    With the post-intervention interview questions the data is again qualitative but this time more specifically targeted at their experience vis-a-vis the workshop in particular and include more targeted questions like:

    1. How did you feel about the workshop in general?
       a. Probing Question A: Was there anything you particularly liked or disliked?
2. How did you feel about the pace of the workshop?

3. How did you feel about the preliminary information session?

4. How did you feel about the different online components?
   a. Probing Question B: How did you feel during the online discussions?
   b. Probing Question C: How did you feel during the online lecture?
   c. Probing Question D: How did you feel during the self-reflection?
   d. Probing Question D: Did these components help you learn? How?

5. How did you feel during the practicum session?
   a. Probing Question E: How did you teach it differently as a result of the workshop, if at all?
APPENDIX D
ILI ABW ONLINE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Assessment 1: Teacher Roles

Match the role, on the left, with its corresponding description on the right:

1. **Assessor**
   - a. This task involves giving instructions, organizing students into groups/pairs, initiating activities, bringing activities to a close and organizing feedback.

2. **Manager/Controller**
   - b. This task calls upon teachers to customize their lessons and push students to achieve more.

3. **Observer/Monitor**
   - c. This task is supervisory in nature, and requires teachers to keep an eye on the class even when not directly involved in an activity.

4. **Organizer**
   - d. This task makes the teacher, at least temporarily, an equal during in-class activities.

5. **Participant**
   - e. This task puts the teacher in charge of the class and of the activity, ensuring its completion and maintaining order in the classroom.

6. **Tutor/Coach**
   - f. This task requires teachers to provide students with constructive feedback and evaluation.

**Explain, in your own words,**

a) the difference between “being friends and being friendly” and

b) why that is important.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

List all four elements of professionalism:

1. ___________
2. ___________
3. ___________
4. ___________
Assessment 2: The Qualities of an Effective Teacher

Name some qualities of ineffective teaching and explain the consequences of ineffective teaching:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

List, in your words, all six elements effective teaching:
1. ______________________
2. ______________________
3. ______________________
4. ______________________
5. ______________________
6. ______________________
Assessment 3: The ILI Approach

1. Match the number, on the left, with its corresponding level on the right:

3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  

Elementary  
Advanced  
Intermediate  
Pre-Intermediate  
Upper Intermediate

2. Which section(s) of each the Market Leader is/are optional?:

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

3. What are some areas of focus for the middle 30?

______________________________________________________________________________

4. Please outline how best to teach reading:

______________________________________________________________________________

5. Please outline how best to teach useful language:

______________________________________________________________________________

6. Which section(s) of each the Market Leader unit require(s) the most supplementary material?

______________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX E
ILI ABW PRACTICUM RUBRIC AND GUIDE

Name of Assessor: ___________________  Teacher: ___________________
Date and Time: _______________  Section of Market Leader: _____________

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<th>4</th>
<th>Explanation of Mark</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparedness/ Structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dynamism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the ILI Approach</td>
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<td><strong>APPENDIX F</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RUBRIC GUIDE</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Professionalism</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instructor has dressed unprofessionally and shows no awareness of the dress code requirements as laid out by the ILI Approach</td>
<td>The instructor has clearly violated the dress code requirements as laid out by the ILI Approach (i.e., jeans, T-shirt, etc.)</td>
<td>The instructor has satisfied all but one of the dress code requirements as laid out by the ILI Approach (i.e., footwear, polos, etc.)</td>
<td>The instructor has satisfied all of the dress code requirements as laid out by the ILI Approach</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Preparedness/ Structure</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>The instructor does not appear to have prepared a plan and this lack of preparation has diminished his or her effectiveness.</td>
<td>The instructor’s lack of a plan has not distracted from his or her effectiveness.</td>
<td>The instructor clearly prepared a plan (e.g., using outside materials) but has failed to communicate his or her objectives at the beginning of the session.</td>
<td>The instructor not only has prepared a plan for the lesson but also communicates it effectively at the beginning of the session</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Effectiveness</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instructor does not demonstrate an understanding of the principles of effective teaching</td>
<td>The instructor demonstrates few aspects of effective teaching (e.g., showing not telling, linking, preteaching, etc.)</td>
<td>The instructor demonstrates some aspects of effective teaching (e.g., showing not telling, linking, preteaching, etc.)</td>
<td>The instructor demonstrates multiple aspects of effective teaching (e.g., showing not telling, linking, preteaching, etc.)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Dynamism</strong></th>
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<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instructor does not teach with enthusiasm which inhibits student participation.</td>
<td>The instructor teaches with enthusiasm but does not allow enough time for student participation.</td>
<td>The instructor shows some difficulty balancing teaching with enthusiasm and promoting student talk time.</td>
<td>The instructor capably teaches with enthusiasm while still promoting student talk time.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Knowledge of the ILI Approach</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instructor neither structures the lesson well nor demonstrates an ability to maximize the Market Leader material.</td>
<td>The instructor structures the lesson well but does not demonstrate an ability to maximize the Market Leader material.</td>
<td>The instructor clearly demonstrates how best to maximize the Market Leader material but does not structure the lesson well.</td>
<td>The instructor clearly demonstrates how best to structure a lesson and maximize the Market Leader material (using outside resource when necessary).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX G
## EXAMPLE RUBRIC RESULTS

Name of Assessor: Jonathan Frankel  
Teacher: Zelda  
Date and Time: 1:45pm, March 16th 2018  
Section of Market Leader: Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th><strong>Explanation of Mark</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professionalism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Well-dressed (with blazer and tie).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparedness/Structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evidences use of structure but does not communicate this to the class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Effectiveness**      |   | X |   |   | a. DOES NOT Provide Comprehensible Input (does not appeal to different learning styles)  
b. DOES NOT Link New Information to Existing Knowledge  
c. DOES Plan the Lesson but DOES NOT communicate that plan to the student(s)  
d. DOES Determine Key Concepts and structuring the learning cycle  
e. DOES Preteach Vocabulary and other difficult concepts  
f. DOES NOT Promote Student Talk Time |
| **Dynamism**           |   |   | X |   | Conveys a professional presence but does not effectively promote positive interaction among the students. |
| **Knowledge of the ILI Approach** |   |   | X |   | Although the teacher presents a solid lesson he does not incorporate outside materials. |

Post-Hoc Reflection: **Zelda is professional in both appearance and demeanor but does not anticipate/incorporate student needs, promote group work, or fully apply the principles of the ILI Approach.**
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jonathan D. Frankel has worked in the field of English education for over 10 years. He is the Academic Director of a Mexico City-based language solutions provider which serves its clients by offering a wide range of language services and where he previously served as the Academic Administrator and Head Teacher. He holds a curriculum and instruction with a concentration in educational technology (2018, UF), a Master of International Business with concentrations in Latin American Business and Entrepreneurship (2008, UF), and a Bachelor of Arts in history (2007, UF). His research interests include effective English as a Foreign Language Instruction, teacher professional development, and blended learning course design.