LANGUAUGE, LEARNING, AND LEADERSHIP:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF TEACHERS’ EXPERIENCES WITHIN THE LEARNING-
ORIENTED LEADERSHIP MODEL: LEARNING TO BETTER MEET ADAPTIVE
TEACHING CHALLENGES INVOLVING ENGLISH LEARNERS IN URBAN SCHOOLS

by

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ABSTRACT

LANGUAGE, LEARNING, AND LEADERSHIP:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF TEACHERS’ EXPERIENCES WITHIN THE LEARNING-ORIENTED LEADERSHIP MODEL LEARNING TO HELP THEM BETTER MEET ADAPTIVE TEACHING CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH LEARNERS IN URBAN SCHOOLS

Sarah Elizabeth Benis Scheier-Dolberg

Transformation of failing and underperforming urban schools requires school leaders to successfully address what Ronald Heifetz (1994) terms adaptive challenges—problems in the workplace that require new learning to occur because the problem is not well defined and/or there is not yet a known solution for that problem. For teachers, a key adaptive challenge in urban schools involves teaching English learners, students not sufficiently proficient in English to be able to benefit from regular classroom instruction. This study explores the experiences of teachers of English learners engaging in the pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) designed to help teachers build their internal capacities to better meet adaptive teaching challenges. By internal capacities I mean how one
interprets, organizes, understands, and makes meaning of one’s experiences (Drago-Severson, 2009).

In this qualitative multi-site case study, data collection includes 48 hours of interview data with 16 teachers. Two urban school sites will be selected based on the principals’ implementation of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), urban location, and the number of teachers teaching English learners. The learning-oriented leadership model is composed of four pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, providing leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) that support internal capacity building, or growth. Three one-hour interviews with each of the 16 participants will be conducted, eight participants from each of the two sites. The first interview will address the research question:

*What do 16 teachers of English learners from two urban schools name as the adaptive challenges they face in their teaching? How do they describe and understand these teaching challenges?*

The second interview will address the study’s second research question: *How do 16 teachers of English learners describe and understand their experiences participating in the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) that compose the learning-oriented leadership model? In what ways, if any, do they describe how participant in the pillar practices has helped them to better meet adaptive teaching challenges they face? How so? What kinds of learning do they name from participating in the practices?*

The third interview will address the research question: *In what ways, if any, do participants describe how their cultural background influences their instructional decision making, how they relate to students, and how they relate to colleagues? How, if at all, do participants describe influences of their cultural background on their participation in the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry)?
Data analysis of interviews will include 1) writing analytic notes and memos about interviews after conducting them to address issues of researcher bias and reactivity; 2) transcribing interviews and reviewing transcripts to address descriptive validity threats; 3) preliminary coding (emic and etic, or theoretical, codes); 4) categorization, 5) in-depth narrative summaries; and 6) within-case and cross-case analysis.

This study’s potential implications include 1) naming adaptive teaching challenges that a sample of teachers of English learners face in their work engaging English learners, 2) extending the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) to better understand how teachers of English learners experience the pillar practices as supports to their growth and instructional practices, and 3) potential suggestions for expanding professional development for teachers of English learners to better support internal capacity-building.
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As a well-educated white woman from a rural, stable upbringing in New England, I carry with me a privileged complexion and command of spoken and written academic English that opens doors for me. My high school and undergraduate education and my professional work with educators, students, and families from diverse backgrounds have afforded me a critical consciousness of those privileges. Opportunity in America in many ways is defined by zip code and first language, and the awareness of that basic and gross inequity for Americans who grow up in poverty and grow up with a first language other than standard academic English drives my work as an educator and researcher. As an educator, I am motivated by the fulfillment I feel when I serve as the bridge that makes equity in educational opportunity possible for families who both do not speak standard English as their first language and live in high-poverty urban centers. As a researcher, I seek to ask and answer questions that stem from my previous work in urban schools as an educator struggling to provide access to learning standard academic English while benefiting from a high quality education in all other subjects.

I entered the profession of teaching because I had great teachers and because I believed that all children and families, even those operating at the margins of American society, are entitled to equitable access to high quality education. As a teacher, I quickly learned that becoming and remaining a teacher required more than passion and vision, more than knowledge of my content areas and pedagogical practices, and more than the skill set found in great teachers. I struggled often, and like my colleagues next door and across the hall, I had difficulty coping with the myriad challenges of teaching in an urban school with students chronically
absent, usually behind grade level in multiple subjects, and turned off of learning; led by principals unable to provide adequate resources for instruction or meaningful professional development, often overwhelmed by district-level policies; and building facilities unsafe, unsanitary, and unfit for learning.

I have chosen to study a model of school leadership that provides the spaces, supports, and challenges for teachers to grow in order to better meet the complex challenges they face every day as they support English learners and their families. I focus on the growth that teachers experience where they experience the expansion of their internal capacities because those personal growth experiences have been so profound in my experiences as an educator, researcher, and graduate student. Making the transition from classroom teacher in Boston, Massachusetts to graduate student and education consultant in New York City schools over the past few years provided an opportunity to learn about and experience Ellie Drago-Severson’s learning-oriented leadership model (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) as a graduate student in the Urban Education Leaders Program at Teachers College as well as a member of her teaching team for a graduate level course in the Summer Principals Academy at Teachers College. Both learning about adult developmental theory and experiencing the pillar practices of mentoring, teaming, collegial inquiry, and assuming leadership roles in my work at Teachers College inspired this dissertation. I am also eager to explore how ideas of language, power, culture, and instruction inherent to the topic English learners in American schools connect to the leadership practices that provide developmentally appropriate learning spaces for teachers in urban schools.
Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

Increasingly urban public K-12 education demands school leaders who can engage teachers and adults at all organizational levels in tough change processes that demand individual and organizational learning to create new knowledge and tools to address today’s complex educational challenges (Cambron-McCabe, Harvey, & Cunningham; 2005; Fullan, 2004, 2006; Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2004; Higham, Hopkins, & Ahtari-dou, 2007; Hopkins, 2006; Hopkins, Craig, & Munro, 2011; Macpherson, 2009; Wagner, Kegan, Lahey, Lemons, Garnier, Helsing, Howell, & Rasmussen, 2006; Williams, 2004). Successfully engaging and educating English learners (ELs)—students not sufficiently proficient in English to be able to benefit from regular classroom instruction—in urban K-12 public schools is among the most difficult and most important challenges American urban schools face (Coburn & Riley, 2000; Gándara & Cantreras, 2009; Gándara & Hopkins, 2010; Gándara & Rumberger, 2007) as the number of English learners has more than doubled in the last 30 years, totaling over 5 million children—21% of the school-age population nation-wide (NCELA, 2011; NCES, 2010b).

While many challenges encountered by teachers in urban schools can be classified by what leadership theorist Ronald Heifetz (1994) refers to as technical challenges, problems that are well defined and the solution requires application of existing know-how, teachers also face adaptive challenges. Adaptive challenges, on the other hand, are problems in the workplace where new learning is required because the problem is not yet well defined and/or there is not yet a known solution for that problem (Heifetz, 1994). Simply put: “adaptive problems are often
systemic problems with no ready answers” (Heifetz & Laurie, 2001, p. 132). Adaptive challenges, such as engaging and educating increasing numbers of English learners in language acquisition as well as the core curriculum within the mainstream hierarchical education systems in the U.S., require adaptive leadership in K-12 education capable of creating holding environments for both individual and organizational growth (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming; Gates and Robinson, 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2004; Wagner et al., 2006).

The concept of holding environment (Winnicott, 1965) holds a central place in constructive-developmental theory and work of Robert Kegan (1982, 1994, 2000) and can be defined as a specific context with high supports and challenges where adults (1) are met at their developmental level, or way of knowing, (2) are stretched toward a more complex way of knowing through encountering alternative perspectives, and (3) are provided with a growth environment with continuity and stability (Drago-Severson, 2009). Creating conditions to support increases in the internal growth of teachers, especially teachers of English learners who face numerous adaptive teaching challenges, is a crucial consideration for school leaders faced with the challenge of successfully engaging increasing numbers of English learners. Throughout the study, I use the term adaptive teaching challenges to reference Heifetz’s (1994) work on adaptive challenges and specifically ground the focus of my study in a subset of adaptive challenges that teachers face in their work.

Eleanor Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented model of leadership redefines schools as centers of learning for adults and students alike. Adopting a learning orientation to leadership and explicitly working toward increasing adult developmental capacity through four pillar practices—teaming, mentoring, providing leadership opportunities, and collegial inquiry—that foster transformational learning shows promise for helping adults
acquire new knowledge and new ways of thinking and feeling to better meet adaptive challenges (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). Transformational learning is an important concept within Drago-Severson’s studies. The concept comes from Robert Kegan’s (1982, 1994, 2000) neo-Piagetian research and theoretical work with constructive-developmental theory. Transformational learning, in contrast to informational learning, changes how we know (Kegan, 2000). According to Piaget (1954), this type of learning is part of an accommodative process where new experiences change the underlying knowledge structures themselves. Kegan (2000) asserts that the form is changed in transformational learning and thus transformational learning is an epistemological change and not simply a behavioral change. There is a direct link between Heifetz’s (1994) adaptive learning and Kegan’s (1982, 1994, 2000) transformational learning in constructive-developmental theory. Drago-Severson in her research (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) builds on Kegan’s (1982, 1994, 2000) definition of transformational learning and constructive-developmental theory to understand the learning process of teachers as they encounter and learn to better meet adaptive teaching challenges. When referring to transformational learning throughout my study, I am also using to Kegan’s (1982, 1994, 2000) definition of the concept of transformational learning as changing how we know. I use the concept of transformational learning to support my assertions about the importance of expanding the internal capacities of teachers.

Within the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) leaders can work toward helping to build the internal capacities of teachers through employing the four pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, providing leadership roles, and collegial inquiry. Drago-Severson’s research (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) highlights findings that prior studies suggest that professional development that invests in adult learning
and development is linked to improved student achievement (Guskey, 2000). The learning-oriented leadership model research (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) is also grounded in constructive-developmental theory and suggests practices that support transformational learning, in the professional context of teachers and school leaders, mapping directly onto Heifetz’s adaptive leadership theory (Drago-Severson, 2009, 2012 forthcoming).

In describing the concept of adaptive challenge, Heifetz (1994) asserts that in order to better meet adaptive challenges, individuals must change themselves (i.e., values, beliefs, priorities, attitudes, habits, loyalties, ways of working, ways of life) because adaptive challenges demand an organizational paradigm shift to solve the problem. As Heifetz (1994) describes the need for adaptive leadership, he suggests that leaders must embrace a leadership model able to generate new capacities in individuals and organizations. Like Drago-Severson (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), Heifetz (1994) proposes that leaders must seek to expand the internal capacities of the individuals within the organization in order to meet adaptive challenges.

I assert in this study that the increasing number of EL students in urban schools poses more adaptive teaching challenges to teachers of EL students and that the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) provides opportunities for teachers of EL students to experience internal growth to better meet these adaptive teaching challenges. To support this hypothesis, it is important to describe the link between teaching EL students and increased adaptive teaching challenges.

In addition, findings from multicultural and bilingual education research highlight the critical role culture plays in instruction for all children (Banks, Cookson, Gay, Hawley, Irvine, Nieto, Schofield, & Stephan, 2001; Macias, 1988; Nieto, 1999, 2010), especially English learners in diverse American schools. Further, because the context of American schools more
often than not present cultural, linguistic, and/or community discontinuities for English learners, teachers of English learners must serve as the bridging relationships that counter and lesson these discontinuities for children, presenting complex, adaptive teaching challenges for teachers of EL students. As the numbers of EL students have increased, a prolonged shortage of teachers qualified to teach EL students has emerged (Casteel & Ballantyne, 2010). Further, Wei, Darling-Hammond, and Adamson (2010) found even with the availability of federal Title 1 funds for professional development associated with Limited English Proficient (LEP) students only 27% of teachers nationwide received any training in 2008 regarding LEP student instruction. These trainings offered to a small percentage of those teaching EL students fall within the professional development paradigm most concerned with informational learning (Casteel & Ballantyne, 2010). The literature shows that professional development trainings for teachers of EL students focus solely on the knowledge base and skill set (Collier & Thomas, 1995; Cummins, 1980; Delpit, 1995; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2004; Musanti, 2005; Nieto, 2000; Rice Doran, 2011; Santos, 2009) and not on teachers’ internal capacity to adapt to complex challenges in their work.

There is an important and unexplored link between the practices of learning-oriented leadership (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), and the adaptive teaching challenges teachers of EL students face daily in urban schools. Transforming instruction for EL students in American schools requires that all teachers expand their internal capacities in core cultural competencies because of the increasing numbers and diversity of America’s English learner population.

Throughout I use the terms English learners (ELs) and EL students interchangeably. I use the term “English learners” and “EL students” to refer to students in a K-12 setting who are
either: 1) identified by federal Title 1 labels “LEP” (Limited English Proficient) or “FLEP” (Formerly Limited English Proficient) or 2) who are arriving at schools unable to perform grade-level academic tasks in English. I do not use the term “bilingual students” unless describing studies where findings relate to schools, districts, or teacher training programs that are designed specifically to support bilingual education. I have made this choice to reflect the current context of urban educational leadership that has been impacted by the English-only policies, most notably those in the last 15 years that prioritize English acquisition over bilingualism (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). In federal and state legislation as well as district policies, the term English learner, English language learner, Limited English Proficient (LEP), or FLEP (Formerly Limited English Proficient). I have learned from my teaching and leadership experiences as well as through a review of research in English learners and bilingual education that bilingualism does not have to come at the expense of English proficiency; on the contrary, the first language is the bridge to learning English (Brisk & Harrington, 2000; Delpit, 1995; Hakuta & Gould, 1987; Molyneux, 2009; Nieto, 1999; Olsen, 1997; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Tabors, 1997).

Despite the research available documenting the gains of bilingual education, American public educational leaders exist within a linguistic landscape that emphasizes English acquisition, and because this dissertation project is defined within the context current educational leadership practices, I have chosen to use the terms English learners or EL students to reflect that linguistic choices commonly used among educational leaders. When referring to the teachers of English learners, I have also chosen terms to try to be as inclusive as possible to the variety of programs that serve English learners—mainstream, bilingual, Structured English Instruction (SEI), English as a Second Language (ESL), etc. I use the term “teachers of English learners”
unless describing studies where a specific language program is employed; in those cases, I use terms such as “bilingual teachers” or “ESL teachers.”

**Context and Background**

In section I discuss the adaptive teaching challenges that teachers of English learners face in their work in urban schools. I begin by looking at studies regarding the adaptive teaching challenges relating to 21\textsuperscript{st} century skills and then move to look at adaptive challenges in the urban schooling context and then look closely at adaptive teaching challenges relating to teaching EL students in urban context, specifically those now common in the current Era of Accountability.

**Adaptive Teaching Challenges Relating to 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Skills**

The concept of 21\textsuperscript{st} century skills has dramatically changed the landscape of education for teachers in American schools by providing a more robust framework for educating students in a new millennium. Trilling and Fadel (2009) presented a framework for 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Learning that represents the Partnership of 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Skills research on this emerging field in education that includes the core subjects and 21\textsuperscript{st} century themes (i.e., global awareness; financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; and health literacy) as well as a range of skills—life and career skills; learning and innovation skills; and informational, media, and technology skills (see Figure 1 below). This new framework impacts American schools from top to bottom as it proposes revisions to standards and assessments, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and learning environments. This new framework also impacts the work of teachers of English learners as they strive to teach this expanding 21\textsuperscript{st} century core curriculum in addition to teaching language.
The American educational system was not designed to equip all students for the challenges and demands of the 21st Century (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Elmore, 2002; Resnick, 2010; Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Wagner et al., 2006). Recent research addresses progress in American schools in providing an adequate education of basic skills for all (Resnick, 2010; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2010a, 2010b), but teaching basic skills is only part of what schooling now entails. Today’s educational systems require leaders and teachers to offer students a thinking curriculum (Resnick, 2010) that allows them to be “college ready” for the new knowledge economy (Wagner et al., 2006). These new expectations present adaptive teaching challenges for all teachers because there are few ready-made answers for a framework
that impacts schooling on so many levels (i.e., standards and assessments, curriculum and
instruction, professional development, and learning environments).

Teachers will have to generate new internal capacities while simultaneously addressing
problems for which there are few easy or ready-made answers relating the new 21st century skills
paradigm confronting all American schools. For teachers of English learners, these challenges
will have increased layers of complexity because providing basic skills to English learners has
always plagued American schools, so there is even less expertise or technical knowledge to
support the transformation that will have to happen in American schools with larger numbers of
English learners. My study will explore how teachers of EL students experience these adaptive
teaching challenges and how, if at all, their experiences engaging in the professional learning
spaces provided by their principals within the context of the learning-oriented leadership model
have helped them to develop new internal capacities critical for their ability to meet the teaching
demands of the 21st century skills paradigm shift.

There is agreement that 21st century skills are crucial for the success of American schools
and American students and that schools must do more than teach basic skills, but the emerging
definition of these skills presents an adaptive challenge to school leaders and teachers, especially
those in urban contexts. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills provides one popular model for
thinking about the new framework educational leaders must move toward as they seek to
guarantee that every child is able to enter an increasingly competitive global workforce. Resnick
(2010), Wagner et al. (2006), and Darling-Hammond (2010) also offer definitions of 21st century
learning. Resnick (2010) refers to 21st Century Learning as the knowledge and the competencies
that come out of the “thinking curriculum”; Wagner et al. (2006) give a more comprehensive 21st
Century skill list: basic skills, foundational skills, communication skills, adaptability, group
effectiveness, influence, personal management, attitude, applied skills; and Darling-Hammond (2010) echoes both Resnick (2010) and Wagner et al. (2006) adding that students must also be prepared to develop new products and ideas for the global economy they enter. There is no one agreed-upon model for 21st century skills nor is there a known process for transforming American schools from ensuring basic skills to ensuring 21st century skills for all students. Teachers are asked to move into this new paradigm without a clear, agreed-upon definition of the model or an articulated process for transformation. The 21st century skills framework clearly presents complex, adaptive teaching challenges for all teachers in American schools. This is one crucial aspect of the adaptive teaching challenges teachers of EL students face, and it is an aspect my study will investigate.

Adaptive Teaching Challenges in the Urban Educational Context

In the arena of urban education, leaders and teachers face substantially greater challenges (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Noguera, 2003), and they are increasingly complex, adaptive challenges for which there are no easy or ready-made answers. The discourse of urban education centers on crisis and thus leaders are trained to manage and lead schools within this context of heightened need and limited resources (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Noguera, 2003; Ravitch, 2010). Darling-Hammond (2010) puts it succinctly:

Concentrated poverty is shorthand for a constellation of inequities that shape schooling. These schools not only typically have less qualified teachers and less experienced teachers and fewer learning resources, but they also have lower levels of peer group support and competition, more limited curricula taught at less challenging levels, more serious health and safety problems, much more student and family mobility, and many other factors that seriously affect academic achievement. (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 37)

Students entering schools in cities tend to be at a disadvantage when compared to their non-urban peers (Darling-Hammond, 2010; NCES, 2010b) because of the poverty in American cities
and because of the scarcity of good instruction, proper facilities, and effective leadership. This context requires that teachers and leaders committed to offering all students access to the evolving 21st century skills curriculum be able to sustain their work in a climate often characterized by crisis and great need. Teachers of EL students experience this intense climate of crisis and need in urban schools as adaptive teaching challenges (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011), and my dissertation study will explore this aspect of adaptive teaching challenges faced by teachers of EL students further.

If urban school leaders are to equitably educate students living in urban contexts they need to ensure that all adults in their schools are well-supported and well-prepared; they must oversee a process whereby standards, curriculum, and assessments are focused on the 21st century skills learning goals; and finally, they must organize schools for in-depth student and teacher learning (Darling-Hammond, 2010). While Darling-Hammond (2010) does not explicitly say it, I make the connection that school leaders and teachers of EL students in today’s urban context must be adept managers of complex technical and adaptive challenges. The mission of creating and sustaining high performing, equitable schools in urban contexts requires that school leaders and teachers have the capacity to handle these complex challenges. Working within an urban context complicates further the complex, adaptive teaching challenges faced by teachers of English learners because of the scarcity of good instruction, proper facilities, and effective leadership in urban schools.

Adaptive Teaching Challenges in Teaching English Learners in Urban Contexts

Teachers and principals alike know that one of the greatest challenges to insuring educational equity in an urban environment is learning to adapt to the growing need to serve
English learners, primarily Latinos. Gándara and Cantreras (2009) define it more succinctly than most:

Today the most urgent challenge for the American educational system has a Latino face. Latinos are the largest and most rapidly growing ethnic minority in the country, but academically they are lagging dangerously behind…. About half of all Latino students fail even to graduate from high school, and while all other ethnic groups—including African Americans—have gradually increased their college graduation rates, Latinos have seen almost no such progress in three decades. (Gándara & Cantreras, 2009, p. 1-2)

More broadly, over the last thirty years, the numbers of EL students in public schools has increased substantially: the number of school-age children (children ages 5-17) who spoke a language other than English at home increased from 3.8 to 10.9 million, or from 9 to 21 percent of the population in this age range (NCES, 2010b). Many of these children are part of families who immigrate first to urban centers, and despite federal pressure to increase the achievement of EL students, most cities fall woefully short when it comes to educating English learners. Despite federal pressure to increase the achievement of EL students, most cities fall woefully short when it comes to educating EL students. Figure 2 highlights the current gap in achievement scores for all students in urban schools, showing urban schools 9% behind when compared to all public school students in the United States on the 4th and 8th Grade NAEP reading tests (NCES, 2010a). Analysis of nationwide data on NAEP reading proficiency scores (see Figure 3) for EL students compared to non-EL students underscores a dramatic point out the difficulties facing teachers in urban districts already struggling to catch up to non-urban schools: American public schools are not succeeding with English learners (NCES, 2010a).
In the wake of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation at the start of the 21st Century, urban districts and states serving heterogeneous populations with increasing numbers of immigrant families have been incentivized by the federal government to rely on high-stakes tests and other student achievement measures that are not designed to measure student growth over time (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Koretz, 2008; Ravitch, 2010). Urban educational leaders and teachers are under increased scrutiny when it comes to achievement and accountability regarding EL students.

Massachusetts, and Boston in particular, is an important geographic region to study because of the increased attention on the achievement of EL students. For instance, the Boston Public School District was jointly sued by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education in 2010 because of a systematic failure to: 1) properly screen EL students entering the district; 2) provide appropriate programs for EL students; and 3) hire and train enough teachers capable of supporting the thousands of EL students entering the district in the past 10 years (U. S. Department of Education [USDOE], 2010; Zeh, 2010). This suit in Boston highlights the legal pressure that urban districts feel to adequately serve special populations like EL students. In the context of this increased visibility of the achievement of EL students within the greater Boston area, it is crucial that teachers experience a professional
context designed to support their internal growth in the face of adaptive challenges, such as the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming).

In these high-stakes urban educational contexts, teachers often experience fewer opportunities for growth. As school districts focus on measurement of standardized test scores, they move away from an emphasis on teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Koretz, 2008; Ravitch, 2010) and further way from the instructional core of schooling. The constraints of NCLB have pushed an accountability-systems orientation on leaders in urban contexts because of the high poverty in their districts and the resulting low standardized test scores that come with high need and limited capital and human resources. It seems even more important to study those school contexts where a focus on teacher growth and internal capacity building is the norm, even in the face of Accountability Era pressures.

Adaptive teaching challenges within the Accountability Era context. This current Era of Accountability affects urban schools and teachers of EL students by shining a compliance-driven spotlight on the instruction of EL students. As current research in studies of large urban districts has suggested, this emphasis on compliance has the effect of encouraging “gaming” of the accountability system (Boother-Jennings, 2006; Diamond & Spillane, 2004; Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008; Jacob, 2004) which can lead to teachers and leaders in low performing urban schools to respond narrowly to policy compliance demands within benchmark grades and subject areas and selectively focus on improving the performance of certain students. Teachers of EL students are then faced with the dilemma of either playing the accountability game or

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1 Much data suggests that urban schools are at a disadvantage because low-income children tend to enter kindergarten academically behind and stay behind (NCES, 2010b; Ready, 2010; Reardon, 2003), and urban districts tend to have disproportionate numbers of low-income students. For instance, in 2008 a third of all urban schools had over 75% of their enrolled students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch, and in that same year almost 60% of all urban schools were comprised of at least 50% of children eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (NCES, 2010b).
addressing the needs of English learners in ways that support their success over their schooling careers.

English learners do not acquire academic English proficiency in one year and thus many students cannot pass achievement tests simply due to English proficiency issues. During the first six months to two years after arriving in a new country children are able to develop Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) that facilitate social language use at school and home (Cummins, 1980). This will help them to a limited extent on achievement tests demanding academic English proficiency. To develop the academic language expected on grade level assessments, on average, it takes students five to seven years to gain Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) for children with prior schooling and seven to ten years for children with no prior schooling or native language education (Collier & Thomas, 1995). The context of current accountability systems and the urgency associated with urban schools labeled as underperforming or failing implicitly demands that schools do more than teach English and grade-level knowledge and skills in the same way that general education teachers do. If teachers, students, and schools are to perform within the accountability system parameters, they must find new ways to overcome the reality of how long language acquisition takes. This presents teachers of EL students with a critical adaptive challenge for which there are no ready-made solutions.

It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss in the detail the issue of appropriate programs for English learners (Transitional Bilingual, Two-way Bilingual, English as a Second Language and Sheltered English Instruction, Sheltered English Immersion, etc.). But it is important to note that the on-going political discourse, legal action, and educational polices regarding language program decisions factor into the context of urban school leadership and are subject to serious scrutiny within the Era of Accountability. Language programming decisions
impact placement of students, curriculum, assessments, and assignment of teachers; these
decisions at greatly impact the challenges faced by teachers of English learners. Short-term
progress—or lack thereof—on achievement tests in English demanded by the accountability
systems play a role in the often political decisions made regarding programs for EL students
(Gándara & Contreras, 2009). The option of exploring educational programming and practices
that might better support the difficulty of teaching English language in addition to grade-level
skills and knowledge is usually off the table because of the urgency and potential sanctions
associated with attending to accountability measures first. Language programming is one more
area in which the current accountability context in urban schools forces teachers to continually
adapt to new policies year after year, presenting even greater challenges to teachers of EL
students. My dissertation will deepen what is known about teachers of EL students’ experiences
with adaptive teaching challenges associated with programming for EL students.

Problem Statement

Transformation of failing or underperforming urban schools requires school leaders to
successfully address what Ronald Heifetz (1994) terms adaptive challenges. By adaptive
challenge, Heifetz (1994) means problems in the workplace where new learning is required
because the problem is not yet well defined and/or there is not yet a known solution for that
problem. For teachers, a key adaptive teaching challenge in urban schools involves English
learners, students not sufficiently proficient in English to be able to benefit from regular
classroom instruction. Attending to the sociocultural as well as the academic aspects of
instruction for English learners is an adaptive teaching challenge that will require significant
growth among the teachers serving English learners as the population of English learners steadily
grows in the United States, especially in urban centers. My study focuses on the experiences of
teachers of English learners, specifically their descriptions and understandings of adaptive teaching challenges in their work with English learners.

A recently developed model for educational leadership addresses the need to support teachers in addressing adaptive challenges through creating opportunities for transformational learning: “a qualitative shift in how a person actively interprets, organizes, understands, and makes sense of his or her experience such that he or she develops increased capacities for better managing the complexities of daily life” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 312). Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented model of leadership redefines schools as centers of learning for adults and students alike. This leadership model adopts a learning orientation to leadership and explicitly aims to increase adult’s internal capacities through four pillar practices—teaming, mentoring, providing leadership opportunities, and collegial inquiry (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). While numerous studies have been conducted asking leaders how they use and experience the pillar practices of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), no studies have asked teachers about their experiences with the pillar practices nor asked teachers to name the adaptive teaching challenges in their classrooms. My study addresses this gap by explicitly linking teachers of EL students’ experiences with adaptive teaching challenges, the pillar practices of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), and the sociocultural context of teaching English learners and by potentially adding new and important knowledge to the fields of educational leadership, professional development, and bicultural and multicultural education.

Scholar Ron Heifetz writes about adaptive challenges and adaptive leadership both in and outside of schools (Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz, Grashow, Linsky, 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2004).
Since the publishing of *Leadership without Easy Answers* (Heifetz, 1994), educational leadership scholars have applied Heifetz’s concepts of adaptive challenges and leadership to help leaders tackle the most challenging aspects of their work, suggesting that leaders create cultures that facilitate growth in individuals and organizations where capacities—not just knowledge and skills—are developed in pursuit of actively solving adaptive challenges in teaching (Cambron-McCabe et al., 2005; Drago-Severson, 2009; Fullan, 2004, 2006; Higham et al., 2007; Hopkins, 2006; Hopkins et al., 2011; Macpherson, 2009; Wagner et al., 2006; Williams, 2004). There is a gap in the research literature in this area as no studies have been published that ask teachers of EL students to reflect upon and name the adaptive challenges they face in their work as teachers.

Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented model of leadership shows promise for helping teachers of EL students acquire new knowledge and new ways of thinking to better meet adaptive challenges. Drago-Severson’s theory (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) builds on Robert Kegan’s (1982, 1994, 2000) constructive-developmental theory to attend to the developmental diversity within adult learner populations. Few studies have explored how working within a learning-oriented model of leadership (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) grounded in constructive-developmental theory (Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2000) may help to better equip teachers to meet adaptive teaching challenges in their professional lives. No studies have been conducted to connect the learning-oriented leadership with adaptive teaching challenges connected to English learners. While a forthcoming study (Drago-Severson, 2012 forthcoming) focuses on school leaders’ experiences with the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) of the model, no studies have been conducted that examine how teachers of EL students experience the
pillar practices. My study will address this gap in the research by exploring how teachers experience the pillar practices.

**Current Context of Professional Development for Teachers of EL Students**

Several critical issues in the field of professional development for teachers of EL students further justify a study focused on the professional growth spaces for teachers of EL students in urban schools. First is the issue of a prolonged shortage of teachers qualified to teach EL students (Casteel & Ballantyne, 2010). Each reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) by the federal government emphasizes the need to recruit and train teachers with the knowledge base and skills adequate to provide appropriate education for EL students. Interestingly, even with this intense focus on training teachers to better serve EL students, few teachers have received these trainings. Wei et al. (2010) found even with the availability of federal Title 1 funds for professional development associated with Limited English Proficient (LEP) students only 27% of teachers nationwide received any training in 2008 regarding LEP student instruction.

Second, the tendency in the past has been to work toward delivering more trainings to more teachers. The urgency to fill schools with adults who are qualified with the knowledge and skills to teach English learners as the population of school-age English learners has risen exponentially has over time reinforced a professional development paradigm most concerned with informational learning (Casteel & Ballantyne, 2010). The literature shows that development for teachers focuses solely on the knowledge base and skill set (Collier & Thomas, 1995; Cummins, 1980; Delpit, 1995; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2004; Musanti, 2005; Nieto, 2000; Rice Doran, 2011; Santos, 2009) and not on their internal capacity to adapt to complex challenges in their work. Established hierarchical models of professional development focused
on providing knowledge to teachers have not improved teacher quality and thus have not closed the achievement gaps between students learning English and their English-speaking peers (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Heiligenstein, 2010; Johns, 2009; Musanti, 2005; Pardini, 2006; Santos, 2009). This way of thinking about professional development for teachers of EL students has favored models that deliver informational learning opportunities to teachers rather than collaborative, growth enhancing models of professional development that would prepare teachers to face the adaptive teaching challenges they will face with English learners in their classrooms. A qualitative multi-site case study of schools embracing a learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) that invites teachers to participate in the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) and providing opportunities for transformational rather than informational learning (changes in how we now rather than changes in what we know) will serve to provide insight into how, if at all, teachers of English learners might experience transformational learning to better meet adaptive teaching challenges in their work with English learners. My dissertation will contribute to what is known about the experiences of teachers of EL students, specifically their experiences with adaptive teaching challenges and their experience engaging in the professional learning spaces of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) designed to support their transformational learning and internal capacity building.

**Purposes of This Research**

My qualitative multi-site case study, in the broadest sense, attempts to explore the experiences of 16 teachers of EL students engaging in the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) in urban schools. I will explore how 16 teachers from two sites where leaders explicitly create developmentally appropriate professional
learning spaces for all teachers asking those teachers to name their adaptive teaching challenges, defined as pedagogical problems of practice related to language acquisition for which there are no easy or ready-made answers, for example, programming, assessment, and diagnosing learning issues for EL students. In my study I will also ask teachers to describe their experiences participating in the pillar practices (i.e. teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) and how, if at all, those experiences help them to better meet the adaptive teaching challenges in their work. Finally, building on concepts from multicultural and bilingual education, an in this study I will ask teachers to describe and reflect on how, if at all, their cultural backgrounds influence instructional decision making, relationships with students, relationships with colleagues, and their experiences with the pillar practices. The ultimate goal of my study is to gain an understanding of how the professional learning spaces created in the learning-oriented leadership model (i.e., pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, providing leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) help teachers to better meet the adaptive teaching challenges in their work with English learners.

**Research Questions**

My process for crafting my research questions is both iterative and interactive, guided by Maxwell’s (2005) work on qualitative research design. The following questions guide the study:

1. What do 16 teachers of English learners from two urban schools name as the adaptive teaching challenges they face in their teaching? How do they describe and understand these adaptive teaching challenges?

2. How do 16 teachers of English learners describe and understand their experiences participating in the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) that compose the learning-oriented model? In what ways,
if any, do they describe how participating in the pillar practices has helped them to better meet the adaptive teaching challenges they face? How so? What kinds of learning do they name from participating in these practices?

3. In what ways, if any, do participants describe how their cultural background influences their instructional decision making, how they relate to students, and how they relate to colleagues? How, if at all, do participants describe influences of their cultural background on their participation in the pillar practices (i.e., teaming mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry)?

My third research question relates to the cultural background of participants. In my study, I define the cultural background of participants in two ways. First, participants will be asked to identify their cultural background at the end of the first interview using several demographic indicators: race, ethnicity, first and second languages, and socio-economic class. Second, participants will be able to define cultural background in their own terms during the third interview focusing on the possible influence of cultural background on teachers’ experiences with instructional decision-making, relationships with students and colleagues, and the pillar practices. Throughout this research, a more complex definition of culture will be used in analysis of data for addressing research question 3. I use Sonia Nieto’s (1999) definition of culture for interpretive work in later chapters: “the ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and worldview created, shared, and transformed by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history, geographic location, language, social class, and religion” (p. 48).
Research Methodology

In this section I briefly outline my study’s design, selection criteria for sites and participants, data collection methods, and analytic methods. My third chapter along with Appendix A (Data Collection and Analysis Timeline), Appendix B (Informed Consent), Appendix C (Interview Protocol 1), Appendix D (Interview Protocol 2), Appendix E (Interview Protocol 3), and Appendix F (Preliminary Coding Scheme) provide a more comprehensive description of the study’s methodology. Given the research purpose and problem statements, I have chosen to use a qualitative multi-site case study approach, drawing heavily from Merriam (1998), Maxwell (2005), Creswell (2007), and Yin (2009) for research design and methodology. Qualitative inquiry focuses on meaning making in context, allowing the researcher to gather and interpret data that reflect how people make meaning of key experiences as well as the effects of a particular context on participants actions and understandings (Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 1998).

In this study, I am interested in describing and understanding: a) what teachers name as adaptive teaching challenges and how teachers describe and understand them (RQ #1); b) teachers’ experiences of participating in the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) in the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming; how, if at all, those experiences helped to them to tackle adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners; and what kinds of learning they name from participating in the pillar practices (RQ #2); and c) how teachers understand how their cultural background influences their instructional decision making and how they relate to students and colleagues and how, if at all, teachers understand how their cultural backgrounds influence their participation in the pillar practices (RQ #3).
In this study I also am interested interpreting how teachers’ descriptions in these areas support and/or challenge theories pertaining to learning-oriented leadership (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), adaptive leadership (Heifetz, 1994), and sociocultural theories of teaching and learning (Banks et al., 2001; Nieto, 1999, 2010). A qualitative multi-site case study approach to data collection that includes in-depth semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 1998) matches my research purposes. Because my study seeks to understand the lived experiences of participants and the meaning they make of their experiences rather than the relationships between variables, I chose a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach (Maxwell, 2005).

In this study, data collection will include 48 hours of interview data collected from two urban schools in the northeast, selected based on and the principal’s implementation of Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented leadership model, including engaging teachers the four pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, providing leadership roles, and collegial inquiry to build their capacity in order to better meet the adaptive teaching challenges they encounter. Sites will also be selected based on the urban location and the number of teachers who work with English learners in their classrooms. These site selection criteria will allow me to address my three research questions that center on the experiences of teachers working within the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). I will conduct three one-hour interviews with teach of the 16 participants, including 8 teachers from each of the two school sites. Each of the three interviews will focus on a separate research question to allow participants time to describe and reflect on their experiences with 1) adaptive teaching challenges, 2) the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry), and 3) the potential influences of their cultural
background on their work as teachers. Participants will be selected from each site based on two criteria that will ensure the presence of English learners in their classroom and at least one full year of experience engaging in the pillar practices. Data analysis of interviews will include 1) writing analytic notes and memos; 2) transcribing interviews and reviewing transcripts; 3) preliminary coding; 4) categorizing by coding; 5) in-depth narrative summaries; and 6) within-case and cross-case analysis.

Rationale and Significance of Study

Successfully addressing the research questions in this study may yield findings that extend Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) model of learning-oriented leadership beyond the fields of adult development, professional development, and educational leadership and into the growing body of research in the area of professional development design for teachers of EL students. This study may also help to re-orient the field of professional development for teachers of EL students toward a greater sensitivity of adult developmental theory and new measures of success in professional development for teachers of EL students—namely transformational learning. This may be significant because currently the context for professional development and training for teachers of EL students is tightly coupled with compliance concerns rather than teacher growth in the areas of instruction and curriculum design. A study that documents the nuances of adult development, cultural background, and learning for this population of teachers of English learners may serve to highlight an unexplored model of leadership and professional development that could be linked to improved learning opportunities for EL students, and thus, higher achievement.

Further, this study’s findings may serve to strengthen the case for educational leaders to explore the learning-oriented model of leadership (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012
forthcoming) to inspire transformational change in educators and schools as they face adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners. Naming the adaptive teaching challenges that a sample of teachers face in their work engaging and teaching English learners may extend Heifetz’s (1994) scholarship on adaptive leadership further into the field of educational leadership. In the current context of school leadership and accountability, there is an immense pressure for students, teachers, principals, and district leaders to perform on achievement measures. Most often schools are not run as learning centers, and problems and solutions are not defined in terms of growth and learning, but rather, accountability and test scores. At the same time, the working conditions in the nation’s urban public schools have become increasing complex and accountability-oriented for adults—while remaining chronically underfunded. Research that contributes to our understanding of how the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) functions in different settings, may prove significant in helping to address these tensions within the context of accountability systems in public education while building capacity for school transformation, thereby opening spaces for teacher and student learning. This study also has the potential to bridge the fields of multicultural and bilingual education with adult developmental theory in K-12 schooling contexts.

**Researcher Assumptions and Limitations of the Research**

I will select two school sites and 16 participants, so my data will not be representative of all urban schools or all teacher of EL students’ experiences. Because of my interest in the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) and its application to supporting growth of urban middle school teachers of EL students, and because this is not a common professional development model for this group of teachers, it must be noted that the data pertaining to the two sites selected will not represent professional growth
experiences of all teachers of EL students working in urban middle schools. In the future, the findings in this study may be used for analytic generalization (Yin, 2009) for future research. I have also limited the scope and size of this study exclude any research questions that might address the important, related concept from constructive-developmental theory (Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2000) of teachers’ ways of knowing, or developmental levels; therefore, no data was collected pertaining to developmental levels of teacher.

Maxwell (2005) recommends that researchers make explicit the assumptions of the multiple paradigms in which they operate. I have designed this study with assumptions embedded in the realist paradigm (Maxwell, 2005). The study is designed to answer research questions in terms of data that instrumentalists may characterize as unobservable—“the feelings, beliefs, intentions, prior behavior, effects” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 73)—but data nonetheless, that I assume are real and capable of critical analysis. The risk involved with research in this paradigm is that the researcher must rely on inferences and may draw conclusions that allow his or her assumptions to color the final results. Maxwell (2005) suggests ways for the qualitative researcher in this paradigm to “systematically and rigorously” address the validity threats, and I address those concerns in the methodology chapter.
Chapter II

SUPPORTING LITERATURE AND THEORY—CONCEPTUAL CONTEXT

In this chapter, I organize my literature review into four sections aligned, each aligned to one of my three research questions. The first section is aligned to my first research question relating to adaptive teaching challenges. The next section continues to focus on my first research question but narrows in focus to teachers’ experiences with adaptive teaching challenges in their work with English learners. Next, I move into my second area of inquiry relating to teachers’ experiences with the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) within the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). Finally, delve into my third area of inquiry, exploring the cultural dimensions of professional learning spaces for teachers of English learners.

Before moving to the first section of the chapter on adaptive teaching challenges, I present the conceptual framework that guides the study and emerged through an iterative process of engaging with the literature review, research questions, goals, methods, and validity (Maxwell, 2005). My study focuses on the experiences of teachers of EL students engaging in the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), and my research questions focus on three areas of teacher experience: 1) adaptive teaching challenges, 2) the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry), and 3) the influences of cultural background as represented in Figure 3 below. Figure 3 highlights the central focus of my dissertation: the experiences of teachers of English
learners. I have divided the general focus of teachers of English learners’ experiences into three sub-topics: adaptive teaching challenges, pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry), and influences of cultural background. Each sub-topic is given equal weight, and each represents a different research question in my study. As I interview teachers who work within the context of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) in urban schools, I will use this conceptual framework to guide my data collection and analysis. The ultimate goal of my study is to yield an understanding able to influence and improve practice and offer tentative hypotheses to help structure future research in the area of professional learning spaces that help teachers grow to better meet the adaptive teaching challenges in their work with English learners.

**Figure 3** Conceptual Framework
In conducting my research I used several databases to find peer-reviewed studies and scholarly texts to help answer the research questions. These sources included ERIC, ProQuest, PsychINFO, EBSCOhost, CLIO, Linguistic and Language Behavior Abstracts, H.W. Wilson Education Full Text, SIRS Researcher, Gale, Google Scholar, and SAGE Education Full Text Collection. Key words used were: adult development, constructive-developmental, professional development, teacher, learning-oriented leadership, bilingual, ESL, CLD, EL, ELL, LEP, multilingual, mentoring, teaming, leadership opportunities, collegial inquiry, transformational learning, and adaptive challenge. My searches were bounded by articles and books ranging from 1995 to 2011 for the purpose of reviewing recent literature.

Adaptive Teaching Challenges in Education

Ronald Heifetz (1994) is a scholar whose ideas and research have impacted leadership studies across education, medicine, and business fields. His research increasingly over the last decade has greatly influenced the field of educational leadership. Heifetz’s (1994) theory of adaptive challenges originated from the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government as part of their Education Leadership Project, and Heifetz drew examples for his theory from medicine but related the theory to leadership more generally. In 2004, Heifetz and Linsky (2004) published a piece in *Educational Leadership* relating the theory specifically to K-12 education as did Michael Fullan in 2004 and 2006 published works, followed by Wagner et al. (2006) with *Change Leadership*. In the last five years many pieces of have published connecting Heifetz’s definition of adaptive challenges with the largest problems concerning educational leadership (Coates, 2010; Drago-Severson, 2009; Fullan, 2006; Higham et al., 2007; Hopkins et al., 2011; Hora, Millar, & Ramaley, 2011; Kee, Anderson, Dearing, Shuster, & Harris, 2010; Macpherson, 2009; Wagner et al., 2006; Williams, 2006).
Heifetz’s (1994) concept of adaptive challenges plays a central role in this study as the first area of inquiry into teachers of EL students’ experiences with adaptive teaching challenges. In defining adaptive challenges, researchers often use Heifetz’s (1994) comparison of technical and adaptive challenges. What distinguishes technical challenges from adaptive challenges is whether or not the gap can be closed through applying existing know-how (Heifetz, 1994; Hopkins et al., 2011; Hingham et al., 2007). The technical challenge is a problem where technical know-how can be applied, hence the problem can be identified and the solution is already known, and there are existing capacities and knowledge to solve the problem, for example an exert who can solve the problem (Hopkins, 2006; Fullan, 2004; Hora et al., 2011; Clapp, 2010). These challenges are not necessarily simple nor the results of solving the technical challenge trivial, but they often do not require a change in one’s paradigm (Wagner et al., 2006). The differences between technical and adaptive challenges according to Heifetz’s (1994) theory are represented visually in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Technical vs. Adaptive Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical Challenges</th>
<th>Adaptive Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem is well-defined</td>
<td>Challenge is complex; no ready-made answers exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and capacity exist to solve the problem</td>
<td>Requires the transformation of long-standing habits and deeply held assumptions, values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solution requires application of existing know-how</td>
<td>Involves feelings of loss, sacrifice (sometimes betrayal of deep values)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation is clear</td>
<td>Implementation requires learning and a new way of thinking, new relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership required is related to management</td>
<td>Leadership required involves a substantial change and learning process, including adjusting values, changing perspectives, and developing new habits of behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Adapted from Heifetz (1994).

Also important to understanding how Heifetz’s (1994) concept of adaptive challenges is applied in educational contexts is the related idea that in order to solve an adaptive challenge, people within an organization or school context need to change themselves (e.g., their values,
behaviors, priorities, attitudes, habits, loyalties, ways of working, ways of life, etc.) (Heifetz, 1994, 2006; Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2004). Additionally, addressing an adaptive challenge requires a paradigm shift (Heifetz, 1994). These changes demand intensive individual and organizational learning since often the internal capacities of people within an organization must be expanded (Fullan, 2006; Hingham et al., 2007; Hopkins, 2006). This learning is difficult work that takes time and involves progress that is nonlinear (Heifetz, 1994). As the field of educational leadership has embraced Heifetz’s (1994) concept of adaptive challenge so too has the field emphasized models of leadership that seek to help educational organizations better meet adaptive challenges through a more learning-oriented and change-oriented focus on leadership (Drago-Severson, 2009, 2012 forthcoming; Wagner et al., 2006). My study examines one of these educational leadership models—the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming)—that embraces Heifetz’s (1994) concept of adaptive challenge by providing pillar practices that help teachers develop their internal capacities to better meet adaptive teaching challenges in their work. More specifically, my study will examine how teachers of English learners define the adaptive teaching challenges in their work, potentially contributing to the growing body of research on adaptive teaching challenges in K-12 education and addressing a cap in the literature that has not yet been explored.

**Adaptive Teaching Challenges Involving English Learners**

In this section, I relate Heifetz’s (1994) concept of adaptive challenge to the experiences of teachers of English learners specifically. I build upon the literature reviewed in the previous section as well as upon the research presented in the introduction pertaining to adaptive teaching challenges relating to 21st century skills, the urban educational context, teaching EL students in the urban context, and the Accountability Era context. My purpose in this section of the literature
review is two-fold: 1) to show the bodies of literature and theory that inform my first research question exploring the experiences of teacher of EL student with adaptive teaching challenges, and 2) note where the term *adaptive challenge* has appeared in the educational leadership literature and how I have modified the term for this study to refer specifically to the problems of practice that teachers face that are adaptive teaching challenges for which there are no easy or ready-made answers.

As noted in earlier, Heifetz’s (1994) theory of adaptive challenges have been applied to the areas of K-12 education and educational leadership (Coates, 2010; Drago-Severson, 2009; Fullan, 2006; Higham et al., 2007; Hopkins et al., 2011; Hora et al., 2011; Kee et al., 2010; Macpherson, 2009; Wagner et al., 2006; Williams, 2006). To apply the concept of adaptive challenges to teachers working with EL students, consider a technical challenge for which there is know-how: learning how to administer the required English and native language proficiency tests to incoming students. Adaptive challenges, where the problems themselves are unclear and the answers unknown to experts (Heifetz, 1994) include a different type of problem: for example, learning how to use existing curriculum maps designed for learners with English proficiency while absorbing new students throughout the year with little or no English language proficiency or how to support the transfer of oral literacy in a child’s native language (Haitian Creole, for example) to written literacy in English. Many EL students are from Spanish-speaking countries or communities, but as increasing numbers of EL students come from increasingly diverse regions and countries of the world, schools face more complex challenges trying to help students transfer what they know in one language to what they are learning in English when little is known about how to bridge the cultural, linguistic, and social gaps between the child’s home and school experiences. These are examples of adaptive teaching challenges where problems of
practice relate to teaching language and the core curriculum. By addressing the first research question in my qualitative multi-site case study, I will be able to provide multiple examples of the adaptive teaching challenges teachers of EL students experience, thereby expanding what is known about the adaptive teaching challenges of teachers of EL students.

In my review of the literature regarding Heifetz’s (1994) concept of adaptive challenge, there was only one article, by Gates and Robinson (2009), that specifically focused on the adaptive challenges faced by teachers and also named the challenges associated with engaging EL students as adaptive, rather than technical, challenges. In a qualitative multisite case study, Gates and Robinson (2009) gathered interview (school leaders and teachers) and observation (teacher meetings) data at two urban high school sites over a twelve-month period of time. Their findings included an application Heifetz’s (1994) typology for diagnosing technical and adaptive challenges to the collaborative teaching challenges they observed at each site. While the Gates and Robinson (2009) study focused how collaboration among mainstream high school teachers in urban schools served to help teachers address adaptive and technical problems, one finding revealed that problems of practice involving EL students were the most noteworthy examples of adaptive challenge found in their study.

Because of the lack of research investigating adaptive challenges and teachers of EL students in the educational leadership literature, I sought out other areas of literature to review to build a research-based initial list of adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners to help inform the data analysis relating to my first research question on adaptive teaching challenges. My search strategies involved using Google Scholar to locate initial sources from the last 10 years (2001-2011) including “English learner” or “English language learner” or “bilingual” in the text as well as each of the following terms: “diagnosing learning issues,”
“family communication,” “family culture,” “teacher collaboration,” “expectations,”
“achievement gap,” “assessment,” “curriculum,” “student characteristics,” and “programming.”

These terms were chosen based on a preliminary coding scheme for data analysis in a pilot study conducted for this dissertation study (Benís Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). I used these sources to identify eight adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners that appear in the literature (see Table 2 below).

Table 2 Adaptive Teaching Challenges Involving English Learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adaptive Teaching Challenges</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosing Learning Issues</td>
<td>Teacher tries to diagnose specific learning issues she or he needs to address with each individual child and/or appropriate interventions. Teacher is seeking to differentiate between common learning challenges and language learning challenges using informal or formal RTI (Response to Intervention) processes</td>
<td>Dorn &amp; Henderson, 2010; Rinaldi &amp; Samson, 2008; Ysseldyke et al., 2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Communication</td>
<td>Teacher tries to engage families of EL students and/or build meaningful relationships in the context of cultural, linguistic, and/or community discontinuities. Teacher expresses need for more or different resources to support family outreach.</td>
<td>Ferguson, 2007; Hiatt-Michael, 2007; Gándara &amp; Rumberger, 2007; Nieto, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Expectations</td>
<td>Teacher tries to help students close achievement gap with native English speaking peers and/or more economically-advantaged peers and faces chronically low expectations for EL students.</td>
<td>Gándara &amp; Rumberger, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Teacher tries to support biliteracy through developing and/or using a bilingual curriculum. Teacher tries to support noncognitive goals such as navigating U.S. culture.</td>
<td>Gándara &amp; Rumberger, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive Teaching Challenges</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Source(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Collaboration</td>
<td>Co-teaching models present challenges for teachers including: sharing ideas, classroom resources, skills, physical space; identification of teacher roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes, creating a common view of executing co-teaching model(s); limited time and resources. Teacher describes micro-political processes including conflict stances, border politics, ideology, and organizational change and learning. Teacher is working with other teachers through distributed leadership model or with bilingual teachers able to teach in more than one language who may be full teachers, aides, or other support personnel.</td>
<td>Achinstein, 2002; Dove &amp; Honigsfeld, 2010; Gándara &amp; Rumberger, 2007; Gates &amp; Robinson, 2009; Roache et al., 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td>Teacher tries to help student attain and maintain basic proficiency in English language arts for reclassification to FLEP or general education status. Teacher prepares for new assessments measuring academic content and not solely command of English are being developed in alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards. Teacher attempts to adopt or create a range of formative and summative assessment strategies for demonstrating task mastery.</td>
<td>Banks et al., 2001; Gándara &amp; Rumberger, 2007; Linquanti, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Characteristics</td>
<td>Teacher tries to make changes that must be made depending on student characteristics such as: family background, number of years in the U.S., student age and grade level, native language proficiency, initial English proficiency. Teacher describes difficulties in the social and/or cultural contexts of teaching and learning and/or use of culturally responsive activities, resources, and strategies for instruction.</td>
<td>Banks et al., 2001; Gándara &amp; Rumberger, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programming</td>
<td>Teacher needs more or different resources to support instruction including longer day and/or school year, computers, libraries spanning multiple grades and languages, communication strategies for reaching families. Teachers need flexible programming and appropriate staffing based on student characteristics.</td>
<td>Gándara &amp; Rumberger, 2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Adapted from Benis Scheier-Dolberg (2011)
The list of eight adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners originates from a qualitative multi-case pilot study I conducted to inform this dissertation (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). I interviewed five teachers of English learners and asked them to identify and describe adaptive teaching challenges they faced in their work with EL students. In developing a preliminary coding scheme for data analysis, I found eight common adaptive teaching challenges described by teachers relating to engaging English learners (represented in Table 2 above). I note the literature that informed the creation of the codes naming each of the eight adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners. Table 2 represents the preliminary coding scheme I plan to use for this study during the early analytic phases of the study which is also presented in Appendix F.

**Diagnosing Learning Issues**

Three of the five teachers in my pilot study described diagnosing learning issues and identifying appropriate interventions for individual EL students as adaptive teaching challenges (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Teachers most often experienced these adaptive teaching challenges within the context of assessing for special education services or as part of a Response To Intervention (RTI) process occurring at their schools (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). While not named adaptive teaching challenges, diagnosing learning issues for EL students was found to be a problem of practice for teachers of EL students in studies by Dorn and Henderson (2010), Rinaldi and Samson, 2008, and Ysseldyke et al. (2010). These findings supported the development of my analytical framework for my data analysis of my study’s first research question regarding adaptive teaching challenges experienced by teachers of EL students.

**Family Communication**
Four of the five teachers in my pilot study also described issues relating to communication with the families of EL students as an adaptive teaching challenge because they could not find easy or ready-made answers (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Teachers described these adaptive teaching challenges in several ways: 1) as needing more or different resources, and 2) as trying to engage families of EL students and/or build meaningful relationships in the context of cultural, linguistic, and/or community discontinuities (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Studies by Ferguson (2007), Hiatt-Michael (2007), Gándara and Rumberger (2007), and Nieto (2010) did not name these problems of practice as adaptive teaching challenges per se but they did name them as important challenges that teachers of EL students face. These findings contributed to my analytical framework for my data analysis of my research question regarding adaptive teaching challenges experienced by teachers of EL students.

**Low Expectations**

Two of the five teachers in my pilot study described the persistence low expectations of EL students in the school and American society as an adaptive teaching challenge for which they had no easy or ready-made answers (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Teachers described trying to help students close the achievement gap with native English speaking peers and/or more economically advantaged peers; teachers also described the challenges associated with chronically low expectations for EL students held by staff in the school and in society at large (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Gándara and Rumberger’s (2007) study confirmed low expectations as a chronic and seemingly intractable problem faced in schools though they did not name this problem as an adaptive teaching challenge. These findings contributed to my analytical framework for my data analysis of my research question regarding adaptive teaching challenges experienced by teachers of EL students.
Curriculum

All five teachers in my pilot student described curriculum as an adaptive teaching challenge involving EL students for which there was limited expertise to help them address the challenge (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Teachers discussed two adaptive teaching challenge areas related to curriculum: 1) supporting biliteracy through developing and/or using a bilingual curriculum, and 2) supporting noncognitive goals such as navigating U.S. culture (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Gándara and Rumberger’s (2007) study of the resources needed to provide an adequate education for English learners in California public schools confirmed these problems of practice for teacher of EL student though they did not name this problem as an adaptive teaching challenge. In their research report on the needs of English learners, prepared for the Institute for Research on Education Policy and Practice, Gándara and Rumberger (2007) reviewed data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study of the Kindergarten Class of 1989-99, from recent reports and syntheses of literature pertaining to resources for educating EL students, and from their case studies of successful schools for English learners in California. These findings informed the development of my analytical framework for data analysis of my research question regarding adaptive teaching challenges experienced by teachers of English learners.

Teacher Collaboration

All five teachers in my pilot student described teacher collaboration as an adaptive teaching challenge relating to teaching EL students (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Teachers described multiple aspects of this type of challenge. The first aspect involved challenges associated with co-teaching models such as sharing ideas, classroom resources, skills, physical space; identification of teacher roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes, creating a common view of executing coteaching model(s); limited time and resources (Benis Scheier-
Dolberg, 2011). In terms of limited time and resources, teachers discussed an absence of informal collaborative time outside of school to get to know each other as people; they also discussed having no time to ask questions about new programming changes for EL students, no access to other language teachers, and a lack of any direct supervision and feedback, noting a feeling of being “a forgotten classroom: (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Teachers also described micro-political processes including conflict stances, border politics, ideology, and organizational change and learning (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). A third area teachers discussed relating to collaboration involved working with other teachers through distributed leadership model or with bilingual teachers able to teach in more than one language who may be full teachers, aides, or other support personnel (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). By this they meant they were working collaboratively on paper by sharing classroom responsibilities, but there were no planned collaborative spaces for teachers assigned to the same students or classrooms to talk during the school day. Studies about urban middle school teacher collaboration (Achinstein, 2002), ESL coteaching models K-12 (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010), the resources needed to provide an adequate education for English learners in California public schools (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007), urban high school teacher collaboration (Gates & Robinson, 2009), and collaborative service delivery for EL students K-12 (Roache, Shore, Gouleta, & Butkevich, 2003) did not name these problems of practice as adaptive teaching challenges per se but they did name them as important challenges that teachers of EL students face relating to collaboration. These preliminary findings in my pilot study taken together with a range of sources within the larger literature bases point to a gap in the research literature regarding the definition of teacher collaboration as an important adaptive teaching challenge for teachers of EL students. All of
these findings informed the analytical framework I will use for data analysis of my research question regarding adaptive teaching challenges experienced by teachers of English learners.

**Assessment**

Four out of five teachers in my pilot study described assessment as an adaptive teaching challenge involving EL students for which there was limited expertise to support teachers in better addressing the challenge (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Teachers discussed three adaptive teaching challenge areas related to assessment: 1) helping students attain and maintain basic proficiency in English language arts for reclassification to FLEP or general education status, 2) preparing for new assessments measuring academic content and not solely command of English are being developed in alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards, and 3) adopting or creating a range of formative and summative assessment strategies for demonstrating task mastery (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Banks et al. (2001), Gándara and Rumberger (2007), and Linquanti’s (2011) studies confirmed these problems of practice for teacher of EL student though they did not name assessments for EL students as an adaptive teaching challenge. Findings from the Banks et al. (2001) research were the result of a four-year inquiry in which a National Academy of Science interdisciplinary panel of experts reviewed and synthesized the research related to diversity into essential principals to share with educational practitioners and policy makers. These findings informed the development of my analytical framework for data analysis of my research question regarding adaptive teaching challenges experienced by teachers of English learners.

**Student Characteristics**

Four out of five teachers in my pilot study described student characteristics as an adaptive teaching challenge involving EL students for which there were no easy answers (Benis Scheier-
Dolberg, 2011). Four teachers discussed two adaptive teaching challenge areas related to student characteristics: 1) making changes that must be made depending on student characteristics such as: family background, number of years in the U.S., student age and grade level, native language proficiency, initial English proficiency; 2) difficulties in the social and/or cultural contexts of teaching and learning and/or use of culturally responsive activities, resources, and strategies for instruction (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Studies about design principles for multicultural education (Banks et al., 2001) and the resources needed to provide an adequate education for English learners in California public schools (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007) confirmed these problems of practice for teacher of EL students though they did not name this problem as an adaptive teaching challenge. Findings from these studies informed the development an analytical framework for my data analysis of my first research question regarding adaptive teaching challenges experienced by teachers of English learners.

**Programming**

All five teachers in my pilot study described programming for EL students as an adaptive teaching challenge for which they had no easy or ready-made answers (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Teachers described needing more or different resources to support instruction including longer day and/or school year, computers, libraries spanning multiple grades and languages, communication strategies for reaching families; they also described needing flexible programming and appropriate staffing based on student characteristics (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011). Gándara and Rumberger’s (2007) study confirmed that programming is a crucial issue in schools though they did not name this problem as an adaptive teaching challenge. These findings informed my analytical framework for data analysis of my first research question regarding adaptive teaching challenges experienced by teachers of English learners.
These eight adaptive teaching challenges represent a preliminary and theoretical list of adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners that form a baseline for the empirical research planned for this study and directly address my first research question relating to adaptive teaching challenges experienced by teachers of EL students. These adaptive teaching challenges involving EL students are also represented in the preliminary coding scheme for this study (see Appendix F).

**The Learning-Oriented Leadership Model and Pillar Practices**

To understand the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), its pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry), and how engaging in the pillar practice can provide teachers of EL student opportunities to expand their internal capacities to better meet adaptive teaching challenges, I will review Drago-Severson’s research and related adult development theory in this section.

**The Learning-Oriented Leadership Model**

In a series of qualitative studies from 1995 to present, Drago-Severson (2004b, 2007, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) inductively developed a theory of what she calls learning-oriented leadership. She sought to understand, from teachers, school leaders, and district leaders what practices they used or experienced that promoted adult transformational learning (i.e., the increase of internal capacities or growth) and what developmental principles informed these practices. These research participants represented three different types of schools (public, private, Catholic) that differed in grade level, student population, geographic location, financial resource levels, and level of human resource support (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2007, 2009). Participants selected were diverse in terms of “gender, ethnicity, number of years in leadership positions, and educational backgrounds” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 293).
Drago-Severson’s research (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) highlights the findings of prior research (Guskey, 2000) which suggests that improving school-based professional development for adults by investing in adult learning and development are linked to improved student achievement. The learning-oriented leadership model names and connects the practices that support transformational adult learning in the professional context of school teachers and leaders, mapping directly onto Heifetz’s adaptive leadership theory (Drago-Severson, 2009, 2012 forthcoming).


Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented model is represented in Figure 4 where the four pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, providing leadership opportunities, and collegial inquiry are at the center of the model and serve to support
the transformational learning of adults working within schools. Below the base of the pillar practices in Figure 4 rests constructive-developmental theory and Kegan’s (1982, 1994, 2000). Drago-Severson draws on Kegan’s (1982, 1994, 2000) constructive-developmental theory as the theoretical foundation of the learning-oriented leadership model where the concepts of holding environment and transformational learning shape the adult capacity building opportunities within each of the four pillar practices depicted in Figure 4. Above the pillars in Figure 4, the four ways of knowing, or developmental levels, are represented because within the learning-oriented leadership models (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) because the pillar practices are used by leaders because they are robust enough to support teacher growth among staff representing a full range of developmental diversity. The three common ways of knowing among adults shown in Figure 4: instrumental, socializing, self-authoring as well as a less-common way of knowing called self-transforming. In using the term ways of knowing, or developmental level, I am referring to the system an adult uses to make meaning as defined in constructive-developmental theory through Kegan (1982, 1994, 2000) and Drago-Severson, (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). Finally, in Figure 4, the upper layers of the building depicted in the figure represent several important intents behind the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming): creating a context for transformational learning for all adult learners in schools and thus enhancing the learning and achievement contexts within schools for all students.
Looking at the center of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) in greater detail, the first pillar of *teaming* refers to experiences within the learning-oriented leadership model that “provides adults with opportunities to question their own and other people’s philosophies and assumptions about leadership, teaching, and learning. It provides a context, a holding environment, in which adults can examine and question their assumptions and engage in collaborative decision making” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 312).

Teaming is one way to provide appropriate supports and challenges to promote transformational growth in adults within their professional context. *Mentoring* is a second pillar practice that can take many forms:
(1) pairing experienced teachers with new teachers, (2) pairing teachers who have deep knowledge of the school mission with other teachers, (3) pairing experienced teachers with graduate student interns from local universities, (4) pairing experienced principals with aspiring and/or new principals, and (5) team mentoring. (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 311)

*Providing leadership roles* is a third pillar practice intentionally used to support adult growth through the “opportunity for adults to share power and decision-making authority… [promoting growth] from being responsible for an idea’s development or implementation, as well as from different kinds of opportunities to assume leadership” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 311). Finally, *collegial inquiry* within the learning-oriented leadership model is defined as “a shared dialogue in a reflective context that involves purposefully reflecting on one’s assumptions, convictions, and values as part of the learning, teaching, and leadership processes” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 309).

Teaming, mentoring, providing leadership roles, and collegial inquiry are all well-established professional development practices within education. Drago-Severson unifies these practices within her model of leadership by showing through Robert Kegan’s (1982, 1994, 2000) constructive-developmental theory how these processes help school leaders and teachers respond to adaptive challenges by changing not just what teachers know, but how they know. These four pillar practices come from extensive qualitative and mixed-methods research within educational settings where leaders intentionally work toward transformational change in their schools by attending to the developmental diversity and building developmental capacity in light of Kegan’s (1982, 1994, 2000) constructive-developmental theory (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). This model of leadership orients leaders to use the pillar practices in their professional development work. Such an approach promotes internal capacity building that enables adults in schools to better address the complex adaptive challenges in the professional
context of their lives. The learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) is the context for which my study is situated because of its approach to helping build the internal capacities of teachers to help them better meet adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners. What I mean by this is that I have purposefully selected schools where principals have learned about the learning-oriented leadership with Drago-Severson and are committed to using the pillar practices in their work to support the internal capacity building of teachers of EL students.

In the next subsection, I elaborate on the concept of ways of knowing within the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) by showing the important relationship between the concept of developmental diversity and professional learning spaces for teachers of EL students. I include this section below within the literature review to make an explicit connection between how the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) may provide unique professional learning spaces for teachers of EL students because of its sensitivity to and support for adults who represent the spectrum of developmental diversity within a school staff.

The Concepts of Developmental Diversity and Professional Learning Spaces for Teachers of EL Students

In this subsection, I further define the concept of developmental diversity (ways of knowing), how the concept of developmental diversity informs the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), and how it might influence how teachers of EL students make sense of their learning experiences engaging in the learning-oriented leadership model and their experiences with adaptive teaching challenges. While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to consider how development diversity, or one’s way of
knowing, relates to teacher of EL students’ experiences with adaptive teaching challenges, the pillar practices, and the influences of cultural background, presenting the adult development theory here will provide a framework for hypothesizing about how future research might include this lens.

One of the defining features of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) is its emphasis on the importance of leaders attending to developmental diversity. Like other forms of diversity, developmental diversity is an important concept for school leaders because within any school organization there are varying developmental levels, or ways of knowing, and because these ways of knowing represent different systems of meaning-making, school leaders need to consider the developmental diversity of their teachers when designing professional learning spaces. The four pillar practices in the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) help leaders facilitate the internal capacity building that aids individuals in growing to meet technical as well as adaptive challenges because the practices both honor and challenge adults’ existing ways of making meaning.

**Ways of knowing.** Drago-Severson (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) defines the ways of knowing, or developmental levels, typical in adult development by exploring the relationship between the subject and object of one’s knowing. “Constructive-developmental theory invites those with an interest in transformational learning to consider that a form of knowing always consists of a relationship or temporary equilibrium between the subject and the object in one’s knowing” (Kegan, 2000, p. 53). In constructive-developmental theory, what one is able to hold out as object and examine helps to define how he or she makes meaning. At the same time, what one is subject to also defines his or her way of knowing. Kegan (1994, 2000) names six distinct
systems of thought, or ways of knowing (Drago-Severson’s term), defining them by what individuals are subject to and what they can hold as object. Table 3 displays four ways of knowing, three that are common in adulthood: instrumental, socializing, self-authoring and one level beyond: self-transforming. These ways of knowing differ in important ways, one of which is the complexity and expansiveness of the form itself (Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2000). Adults can understand the world in increasingly complex ways, and they grow in their capacity to differentiate what the conscious mind is subject to and what it can hold as object (Kegan, 1982, 1994). Each way of knowing grows in complexity and expansion of the form, or meaning-making system, so the theory is hierarchical. Each way of knowing incorporates the earlier ways of knowing, hence the self-authoring knower has the developmental capacity of self-authoring, socializing, and instrumentation. It is critical, however, to note that constructive-developmental theory does not privilege or value one way of knowing over another. Rather, the constructive-developmental approach encourages us to look at goodness-of-fit between the challenges in the environment and the individual’s way of knowing. If work or family life requires one to have a more complex system for making sense of experience, then a more expansive, complex way of knowing is called for in order for the individual to better manage these complexities (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). Consider Table 3, which shows the different ways of knowing and describes the system each uses to make meaning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Way of Knowing</th>
<th>Underlying Thought Structure</th>
<th>Self Definition (SD) &amp; Guiding Questions (GQ)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subject (S): What a person is identified with</td>
<td>O: What a person can reflect on and take perspective on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>S: Needs, interests, wishes</td>
<td>SD: Orients to self-interests, purposes, and concrete needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O: Impulses, perceptions</td>
<td>GQ: “Will I get punished?”, “What’s in it for me?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socializing</td>
<td>S: The interpersonal, mutuality</td>
<td>SD: Orients to valued others’ (external authorities’) expectations, values, and opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O: Needs, interests, wishes</td>
<td>GQ: “Will you (valued other/authority) still like/value me?”, “Will you (valued other/authority) approve of me?”, “Will you (valued other/authority) still think I am a good person?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Authoring</td>
<td>S: Authorship, identity, psychic administration, ideology</td>
<td>SD: Orients to self’s values (internal authority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O: The interpersonal, mutuality</td>
<td>GQ: “Am I maintaining my own personal integrity, standards, and values?”, “Am I living, working, and loving to the best of my ability?”, “Am I achieving my goals and being guided by my ideals?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Transforming</td>
<td>O: Authorship, identity, psychic administration, ideology</td>
<td>SD: Orients to multiple self-systems; open to learning from other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S: Inter-individuality, inter-penetrability of self-systems</td>
<td>GQ: “How can other people’s thinking help me to enhance my own?”, “How can I seek out information and opinions from others to help me modify my own ways of understanding?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Adapted from Drago-Severson (2004b, 2007, 2009).

In this study, I will not be assessing participants’ ways of knowing because it is beyond the scope of the dissertation study; regardless of the limitations of this study, teachers of EL
students do have different ways of knowing that impact how they experience the context of schools. Drago-Severson (2009) explains:

In the context of education, our way of knowing shapes the way we understand our role and responsibilities as a teacher, principal, superintendent, or learner and the way we think about what makes a good teacher or a good superintendent. A person’s way of knowing is not random; it is stable and consistent for a period of time and reflects a coherent system of logic. A way of knowing might feel more like the way we are rather than something we have (Drago-Severson, 2004a, Kegan, 1982, 1994; Kegan et al., 2001a). (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 39)

In the context of school, teachers of EL students, according to constructive-developmental theory, will experience professional spaces differently in ways that are tied to their ways of knowing. Within the context of Drago-Severson’s learning-oriented leadership model (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), school leaders attempt to attend to the developmental diversity within their teams by learning about constructive developmental theory and using that understanding to support teachers with different ways of knowing. Supports and challenges provided by school leaders will be experienced differently by adults with different ways of knowing, as displayed in Table 4 and detailed in each subsection below. I describe how, according to constructive-developmental theory, adults with different ways of knowing might experience the supports and challenges of the pillar practices differently to inform the analysis of my second research question relating to how teachers of EL students experience the pillar practices. While I will not be assessing the developmental level of teachers in the study, knowing how one’s developmental level, or way of knowing, might impact their experience of the pillar practice will help me hypothesize about future research including the lens of developmental level.

In proceeding subsections, I briefly describe the attributes of each knower’s system for making meaning as well as what happens as learners transition from one level to the next. The ideas within these subsections on the four ways of knowing all stem from Drago-Severson’s
work with school-oriented leadership (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). To avoid extensive citations within the text of these four subsections, I only cite Drago-Severson directly when using quotations.

**Instrumental knowers.** Instrumental knowers make meaning in a school setting by seeking to learn the “rules” of the job. They have a dualistic way of thinking in that they believe there are “right” and “wrong” answers. As is evident in Table 4, they find leadership supportive when principals share explicit and clear goals, rules, and step-by-step procedures for teaching. They tend to ask: “What do you have that can help me?” or “Will I get punished?” Instrumental knowers feel supported and “comforted by concrete, more tangible expressions of support” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 44). Because they are unable to make generalizations from one situation to another and do not think abstractly, they tend to express their concerns and needs in concrete terms, hence Drago-Severson’s characterization of instrumental knowers as making meaning as a “rule-bound self.” Instrumental knowers also tend to organize their experiences by attributes, events and sequences; noticeable actions and behaviors; and their own individual point of view, needs, interests, and preferences. They may say things like: “I am good at my job”; “Good teachers follow the rules, work hard, and do things the ‘right’ way”; “If I do this assigned work, I will have a better chance of getting a better evaluation”; and “Other teachers are helpful or obstacles to my work.” Understanding what constructive-developmental theory has to say about how instrumental knowers make sense of their learning experiences will help to inform my analysis of how teachers of EL students describe and understand their experiences with adaptive teaching challenges and with the opportunities for growth provided by their engagement in the pillar practices.
Socializing knowers. Socializing knowers make meaning within their work lives by reflecting on their actions and the actions of others. Drago-Severson (2004b, 2009) labels these knowers “other-focused self” because they orient their questions and define themselves in relation to others. Socializing knowers think abstractly and reflect on how they impact others and are viewed by others. They may ask themselves: “What does my principal think I should do?”; “Will my teammates still like me if I disagree with them?”; or “Am I meeting expectations that others have for me?” Socializing knowers may ask others: “What do you think?” or “What should I do?” As shown in Table 5, they can be supported to share their own ideas first before turning to another for guidance or the answer. This kind of support can feel frustrating for socializing knowers because it does not directly answer their questions or affirm their sense of self which is defined by others. Socializing knowers will look outside themselves for definition to ideas and people they value (partners, family, boss, religion, political ideology, societal expectations). Socializing knowers can think concretely like instrumental knowers, but in this expanded way of knowing, they do not have to because they can make meaning in ways that allows them to subordinate their perspective and needs to those of others; hence, they have developed enhanced empathy for others as well as enhanced capacity for reflection, making generalizations, and thinking about thinking. As with instrumental knowers, understanding how socializing knowers make sense of their learning experiences will help to inform my analysis of how participants describe and understand their experiences with adaptive teaching challenges and with the opportunities for growth provided by their engagement in the pillar practices.

Self-authoring knowers. This knower has a “reflective self” as Drago-Severson (2009) puts it in that self-authoring knowers can “hold, prioritize, and reflect on different perspectives and relationships” (p. 37). The self creates a system of values, assertions, and priorities that can
both reflect larger societal values and concerns (socializing) and reject the ideas of others. Self-authoring knowers are self-regulating and become the authors of their relationships and the values external to the self rather than being subject to them. Rather than asking what others think, they ask: “Am I maintaining my own standards? Am I competent? Am I achieving my goals and living by my ideals?” Self-authoring knowers can reflect on the multiple roles they play as citizens, educators, leaders, partners, parents and can make sense of their work obligations and feelings in light of the responsibilities and values embedded in these different roles. Unlike socializing and instrumental knowers, self-authoring knowers can hold opposing viewpoints and feelings without being torn apart; instead, they author a way of understanding themselves and the world that allows for these conflicts. They may want others to “think with” them, but ultimately see themselves as the sole authority of what course of action is best for them. They tend to hold tightly to their own belief and meaning-making systems, noting differences in opposing viewpoints rather than considering possible interrelationships in meaning-making with others presenting opposing views. Table 4 highlights some of the supports and challenges for these knowers. As with instrumental and socializing knowers, understanding how self-authoring knowers make making of their experiences will help to inform my analysis of how participants describe and understand their experiences with adaptive teaching challenges and with the opportunities for growth provided by their engagement in the pillar practices.

**Self-transforming knowers.** While less typical as a way of knowing in adults, the demands of 21st Century professional and personal life present such complex challenges that more adults are growing into self-transforming knowers who can “see through their systems” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 49). Self-transforming knowers are able to see the interrelationships between themselves and others who present opposing points of view. The system of thought that
a self-transforming knower generates “is available to him or her for attention and constant judgment” (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009), but he or she is no longer subject to it. Instead, the self-transforming knower seeks out others with different self-systems or different points of view to help him or her better examine contradictions and paradoxes in the life. These knowers can engage with other points of view even when dealing with adaptive challenges that seem paradoxical; rather than feeling threatened by challenges to their self-system for making meaning they seek the self-work or mutual work of others to confront these challenges. They are oriented to their own growth and hunger to learn from others. Self-transforming knowers experience a kind of freedom to let others express their points of view because they are not shaken by these differences; rather, they view conflict as natural to life and a driver of growth. Self-transforming knowers do well in working within multiple and diverse communities, and “they are also able to understand and manage tremendous amounts of complexity” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 50). They may ask: “How can other people’s thinking help me to enhance my own?” or “How can I seek out information and opinions from others to help me modify my own ways of understanding?” Table 4 shows some of the supports and growing edges of these knowers. As with other ways of knowing, understanding how self-transforming knowers make making of their experiences will help to inform my analysis of how teachers of English learners describe and understand their experiences with adaptive teaching challenges and with the opportunities for growth provided by their engagement in the pillar practices.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Way of Knowing</th>
<th>Supports (provided by leaders/peers)</th>
<th>Challenges/ Growing Edge (provided by leaders/peers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Instrumental   | • Set clear goals and expectations.  
• Provide step-by-step procedures for dialogue and working with other colleagues.  
• Share examples of rules, purposes, and goals—and how to share them with others.  
• Engage in dialogue that provides specific advice, skills, and information about practice.  
• Invite this detail-oriented person to read policy/procedure and then report on it.  
• Collect reflections and give positive feedback/praise.  
• Give clear, concise written and oral feedback.  
• Offer concrete advice and feedback.  
• Clarify the purpose of reflective writing. | • Provide opportunities to learn about multiple perspectives through dialogue.  
• Create tasks that demand abstract thinking and scaffold knower through the process.  
• Encourage movement beyond “correct” solutions and toward other perspectives.  
• Discuss how multiple perspectives could build abstract thinking and increase perspective broadening.  
• Encourage this learner to expand beyond information given.  
• Provide the opportunity to take on a leadership role in planning a grade-level assembly.  
• Use teamwork such that this person encounters situations where one must consider another perspective.  
• Give permission and encourage “thinking outside of the box” and being “constructively critical.”  
• Encourage reflective writing. |
| Socializing     | • Ensure that learner feels known and accepted.  
• Beliefs are confirmed by authorities.  
• Supervisors and valued colleagues and/or loved ones show acceptance.  
• Provide opportunities to share perspectives in pairs or smaller groups before sharing with larger groups.  
• Ensure that interpersonal relationships are not jeopardized when differences of opinion arise.  
• Affirm performance  
• Work with collaborative learning teams. | • Provide opportunities to develop own beliefs, becoming less dependent on others’ approval.  
• Encourage this knower to construct own values and standards, not co-construct them.  
• Support the acceptance of conflicting points of view without feeling threatened.  
• Support this learner in separating own feeling and responsibilities from another person’s.  
• Support this knower in distinguishing own perspective from need to be accepted.  
• Provide this knower the opportunity to become a facilitator.  
• Ask open-ended questions that call for a person to voice own views. |
<p>| Self-           | • Provide opportunities to learn | • Challenge knower to let go of own |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Way of Knowing</strong></th>
<th><strong>Supports</strong> (provided by leaders/peers)</th>
<th><strong>Challenges/Growing Edge</strong> (provided by leaders/peers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoring</td>
<td>about diverse points of view. • Provide opportunities to analyze and critique ideas and explore own goals. • Ensure that learning from the process takes place. • Support learning about and demonstrating own competencies. • Emphasize competency. • Invite demonstration of competencies and dialogue. • Encourage dialogue. • Make time for sharing feedback on performance and goals. • Encourage self-evaluation. • Value the person’s ideas. • Validate the person’s critical thinking and willingness to challenge the status quo. • Provide leadership opportunities with plenty of time for dialogue with the principal.</td>
<td>perspective and embrace diametrically opposing alternatives. • Support this knower’s acceptance of diverse problem-solving approaches that differ from own. • Challenge knower to set aside own standards for practice and open up to other values. • Support critique of own practices and vision. • Encourage the acceptance of diverse ways to explore problems. • Encourage critique of own ideas. • “Know when to hold them and when to fold them.” Encourage person to practice “wait time” and to self-regulate. • Invite learner to assume a leadership role among staff (e.g., to clarify confusions, facilitate discussions, and dialogue at a staff meeting). • Expose person to people with opposing points of view and encourage learner to withhold decisions until all points of view, especially opposing ones, are considered. • Discuss differences in opposing perspectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Transforming</td>
<td>• Provide opportunities to grow from supporting others and having deepening relationships with self and others, especially in diverse contexts. • This knower learns, contributes, and grows from self, others, and the larger social system. • Learning from complex projects emphasizes co-creation and intimacy, with a focus on learning about self, others, and processes. • Another person is present as this learner explores deepening relationships and a sense of intimacy with self and others.</td>
<td>• Someone is present as the person makes sense of the paradoxes of life and the tensions generated by inner contradictions. • Situations, and work, involve others with diverse perspectives such that there is an openness to exploring tensions, incongruity, and synergy. • Offer recognition of the challenges this adult experiences (i.e., that there are limits to what the self can learn and how the self can know, that inspiring a system to transform itself is really tough). • Offer a way to make sense of frustrations that this knower confronts when (a) the limitations of others’ and one’s self slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Way of Knowing</td>
<td>Supports (provided by leaders/peers)</td>
<td>Challenges/Growing Edge (provided by leaders/peers)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• A coach, mentor, and/or system is in place such that deeper meaning can be made in the midst of complexity to which this learner is capable of responding.</td>
<td>the process of transformation and (b) one’s good intentions for effective expansive, systematic change in both work and personal contexts encounter barriers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Adapted from Drago-Severson (2009).

**Transitioning from one way of knowing to another.** Growth from one way of knowing to the next is “gradual and incremental” and it rides along its trajectory at an unpredictable pace (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 54). Kegan (1982) presents the trajectory of growth from one developmental level, or way of knowing, as a helix with multiple transitional stops between each way of knowing. Most adults make meaning within these transitional places or phases (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009). During one’s journey to a new way of knowing, the new way of knowing will gradually take over as the self works to maintain a coherent system of meaning-making. Once that coherence cannot be maintained any longer because of new experiences and information, the new way of knowing will become the dominant way of knowing (Drago-Severson, 2004a, 2004b, 2009). Much like Piaget’s (1954) assimilative learning process in child development. Once the form has been changed to assimilate the information and experiences, one’s way of knowing has changed and transformational learning has occurred. Participants in my study may be solidly rooted in one way of knowing or may be part-way between two ways of knowing, so understanding the transition process within the constructive-developmental framework will be part of my analytical framework during the data analysis process.

Transitions can take as little as a year and can last indefinitely depending on the holding environment of the individual—the supports and challenges in the environment (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009; Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2000). For the transition to self-transforming, adults
can experience a philosophical crisis or pain which is common to developmental change as they rethink what was previously taken for granted and previously the way of knowing to which the person was subject. In that transition, the “person can experience a sense of loneliness and dissatisfaction with his or her self-system” that will eventually lead to that knower’s new ability to “see through their system” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 49). Because the person has invested so much in developing the self-system, reaching the next level of development, or way of knowing, can be both negative (as described above) and positive as it can free a person to develop a freer and more playful sense of self (Kegan 1982).

**Connecting the concepts of ways of knowing and professional learning spaces for teachers of EL students.** Understanding the characteristics of each way of knowing as well as the transition process between the different ways of knowing is important for informing the analysis of my first and second research questions relating to how teachers of EL students experience adaptive teaching challenge and the pillar practices. Teachers’ developmental levels will not be assessed because of the limited scope of this study, but still developmental levels might influence teachers’ experience of the pillar practice and will inform the analytical framework used during data analysis. Questions within the interview protocols aligned to my first and second research questions may illicit responses because of the developmental orientation of the interview questions. During data analysis, I may be able to notice helpful patterns that will lead to potential hunches on further areas to explore in subsequent research after the dissertation. Looking through the lens of constructive-developmental theory to uncover teachers of EL students’ descriptions and understandings of the professional learning spaces they engage in through the learning-oriented leadership model, may help to guide future research.
In the next section, I review the pillar practices in greater depth as they play a central role in the second research question pertaining to the pillar practices. Understanding how each pillar practice offers a robust holding environment for capacity building among teachers of EL students will help in the data analysis process, as I will be using Drago-Severson (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) and Kegan’s (1982, 1994, 2000) theories to guide my analysis of how teachers describe and understand their experiences with the pillar practices.

**The Pillar Practices**

In this section, I first give a detailed definition of the concept of holding environment because each pillar practice is robust enough to serve as a holding environment for internal capacity building for teachers of EL students. I describe the concept of holding environment from Kegan’s constructive-developmental theory and its relationships to developmental diversity because holding environment is a pivotal concept for understanding how the pillar practices of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) are robust enough to support the internal capacity building of teachers in the face of adaptive teaching challenges. This is important in my research because I will select school sites where principals have learned about the learning-oriented leadership model with Drago-Severson, including learning about the concept of holding environment and how essential it is to the context of the teachers engaging in the pillar practices. I then go on to describe what each of the pillar practices is and how each practice serves to support the growth of teachers across the spectrum of developmental diversity. These descriptions of the pillar practices will serve as important aspects of the analytical framework I use during data analysis.

**Holding environment.** The concept of holding environment from constructive-developmental theory is critical for understanding the pillar practices. A holding environment is
a specific context with high supports and challenges which serves three functions (1) are met at their developmental level, or way of knowing and accepted for who they are, (2) are stretched, when ready, toward a more complex way of knowing through encountering alternative perspectives, and (3) are provided with a growth environment with continuity and stability as they grow to demonstrate their new way of understanding their experiences and the world (Drago-Severson, 2009; Kegan, 1982). For teachers working in a school context, providing “developmentally appropriate supports and challenges” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 57) through the pillar practices supports internal capacity building.

In discussing how each of the pillar practices of Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented leadership model provides appropriate developmental challenges for teachers to grow in the subsections that follow, I will also explore different types of holding environments—relationship with one person, situations, and organizations themselves (Drago-Severson, 2009). But in a more general sense, a school that acts as a holding environment for adult growth is well described by Drago-Severson (2009):

A developmental challenge presents a person with helpful, stretching sorts of questions and alternative perspectives—over time and when he or she is ready—to gently push or stand at the edges of his or her thinking, feeling, and knowing. This growth-promoting engagement raises the bar just a little bit—enough to give the person something to strive for while standing beside the person to spot his or her reach. (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 57)

This role of simultaneously standing beside one while raising the bar of developmental challenge is a critical experience for teachers of EL students to have as they strive to grow over time to better meet the adaptive teaching challenges in their work.

**Teaming.** Teaming takes diverse forms: “Team teaching, pairing veteran and new teachers, forming school leadership teams, examining student work and/or teacher practice, or working collaboratively on reform or improvement issues” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 72).
Teams may also have a variety of purposes including leadership work, day-to-day teaching, curriculum alignment, student work, inquiry, and professional development (Drago-Severson, 2009). While the member, types, and purposes of teaming will vary across contexts, teaming in general provides a set of experiences that support adult growth. Teachers give and receive feedback, learn from multiple perspectives, make shared decisions, alter practice based on the feedback of others, make recommendations and suggestions to others, develop an awareness of the assumptions underlying thinking and practice, take on different roles within teams, question own and others’ philosophies on education, reflect on the meaning of the school’s mission, and meet to set and assess professional learning goals (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming).

Teachers with different ways of knowing will experience these teaming opportunities differently. A facilitator of teaming who can account for these differences will ask different kinds of questions of teams in an effort to attend to these developmental differences. Attending to these differences helps adults with certain ways of knowing feel supported. Attending to developmental differences also helps adults work toward their growing edges as they transition to new ways of knowing. In a team project focused on instructional practice, for example, a facilitator may ask the group to consider several questions: “What does high-quality instruction look like?” (for the instrumental knowers); “What’s an example of quality instruction in your practice?” (for socializing knowers); “What are high-quality practices would you like to adopt from others and develop in our practice? Why?” (for the self-authoring knowers), and “What are the barriers to high-quality instruction and how can we confront them together?” (for self-transforming knowers). Within Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented model of leadership, school leaders actively construct holding environment contexts
through the pillar practices. This example of a team engaging with questions meant to challenge and grow learners with different ways of knowing demonstrates the choices a team facilitator might make to create a holding environment context for all adults (Drago-Severson, 2009).²

Mentoring. This pillar practice allows teachers to have one more mentoring relationships within the context of school that serve as a safe and robust holding environment for professional growth. As Drago-Severson (2009) states: “the mentoring relationship provides a safe context for broadening perspectives, taking risks, engaging in dialogue through reflective practices, examining assumptions (our own and other people’s) and behaviors over time, possibly reframing them” (p. 220). These mentoring relationships can occur between student-teachers and supervising veteran teachers, between teachers new to a building and teachers familiar with the school context, between new and veteran teachers, between administrators and teacher leaders, as well as other configurations. In providing supports and challenges these mentoring relationships that help teachers’ growth both personally and professionally (Drago-Severson, 2009).

Teachers with different ways of knowing will experience mentoring relationships differently. Mentees with an instrumental way of knowing will ask mentors for clear guidelines and rules, look for “right” and “wrong” answers, and want step-by-step procedures. They are making sense of their work as teachers within the system of a “rules-bound self” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 43). Instrumental knowers as mentees will be challenged by making sense of multiple perspectives offered by a mentor; similarly, they will have a hard time with tasks that require abstract thinking if they are not scaffolded through the process by their mentor. Mentees

² As I describe each of the pillar practices and how adults with different ways of knowing experience the supports and challenges of pillar practices, I borrow heavily from Drago-Severson (2009). At the end of these paragraphs, I site once indicating that ideas from the entire paragraph came from this source.
with a socializing way of knowing will tend to need mentors who show care for their feelings and validate the mentee’s way of thinking. A socializing knower as a mentee may tend to avoid conflict or take risks without being sure the mentor will accept his or her point of view. A self-authoring knower as a mentee will expect a mentor to listen to his or her point of view and will want to think with the mentor about different ways to approach a problem or task. A self-authoring mentee will also want to determine his or her goals, often seeking independence and acceptance as a competent, independent teacher; he or she may struggle with remaining open to the mentor’s ideas when they conflict with his or her ideas and deeply held beliefs. Self-transforming knowers in a mentoring relationship will want to show their own competencies while learning about others’ competencies and points of view. While seeking other points of view and benefiting from constant questioning of their own self-systems alongside a mentor, the self-authoring knower may struggle to remain open to feedback from others, especially if he or she does not feel that the relationship is “mutually beneficial or growth-enhancing” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 229). It is also important to that how a mentor experiences mentoring depends on his or her way of knowing and how the mentee does or does not provide the developmentally appropriate supports to what the mentor needs and expects from the relationship (Drago-Severson, 2009).

**Providing leadership roles.** Providing leadership roles to teachers within and outside of a school can encourage growth by broadening teacher perspectives; heightening awareness of assumptions one makes; and providing opportunities for self-authorship, risk-taking, and reflection with colleagues. The leadership role itself can serve as the holding environment for teacher growth when the individual is operating in a transitional space between two ways of knowing or when the adult is ready to engage in the difficulties and ambiguities of assuming a
new leadership role. As Drago-Severson (2009) states: “these roles enable us to experience the complexities of exercising leadership to become more aware of our and other people’s assumptions, values, and perspectives” (p. 122). As with other pillar practices, how adults make sense of the challenges and opportunities for growth in assuming leadership roles depends on how they make meaning, or their way of knowing (Drago-Severson, 2009).

Instrumental knowers tend to approach leadership roles in a task-oriented way and be rules-oriented in how they complete tasks, hoping to be rewarded after getting the job done the “right way.” Whereas instrumental knowers will seek out authority help to provide step-by-step directions for task completion, socializing knowers approach leadership roles wanting authorities or valued others to offer approval, guidance, and confirmation of their leadership decisions. Socializing knowers taking on leadership roles tend to experience conflict and disagreement among colleagues as a threat to the self and may tend toward emphasizing group loyalty and shared understanding as a way to move away from conflict. By comparison, self-authoring knowers tend to have a learning-oriented approach to conflict and difference in opinion when taking on leadership roles; they tend to see difference as a way to gain self-understanding and improve their own leadership. Self-authoring knowers also tend to lead by encouraging dialogue, listening to ideas, attending to new ideas, and identifying solutions that include many points of view while driving the team towards its goals. Self-transforming knowers in leadership roles will be noticeably different from self-authoring knowers in the way they can have perspective on themselves and their own meaning-making systems. Self-transforming knowers tend to bring an elevated sense of collegiality, collaboration, and creativity to their work in leadership roles. They will also tend to show more of a tendency toward strategic thinking, long-term planning, and appreciation for the politics of an organization. Given that each way of knowing demands a
different set of supports and challenges that are developmentally appropriate, or different holding environments, this pillar practice is similar to teaming and mentoring in that it requires a learning-orientation to leadership to help teachers grow (Drago-Severson, 2009).

**Collegial inquiry.** Collegial inquiry in schools is a collaborative reflective practice that often occurs as one or more of the following processes: writing, dialogue, decision making, and helping or advising others. As a process of writing, teachers may experience this pillar practice as journal writing, freewriting, goal-setting, completing self-evaluations, and proposal writing for grants or conference presentations. Through the invitation by leaders to write as part of collegial inquiry, teachers are able to articulate their thoughts, feelings, assumptions, and beliefs. As dialogue, collegial inquiry in schools takes place in grade-level and cross-grade meetings focused on inquiry about student work and/or instruction, in book groups where teachers apply theory to practice, in learning walks, in the school quality review process, in faculty meetings where meaningful conversation is focused on reform or instructional issues, in curriculum development teams, in the processes of conflict resolution, or in small group settings dedicated to inquiry. When dialogue is introduced to the collegial inquiry practice, teachers afforded the opportunity to give and receive feedback, critical for growth. As decision making, the pillar practice of collegial inquiry can include shared inquiry that involves teachers in decision-making “about schoolwide goals, dilemmas and challenges, and alignment of mission and practice” (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 188). Collegial inquiry as helping and advising others often occurs when teachers or teacher leaders in the school serve on inquiry teams or action research teams to examine student achievement data or learn about models or programs in other schools. As part of the collegial inquiry, team members become the experts and serve as the internal resource for other teachers in the school. Indeed, the ways that school leaders imagine the pillar practice of
collegial inquiry are numerous and diverse. Underlying all of these variations is the idea that teachers reflect on practice together—with at least one other colleague (Drago-Severson, 2009).

As with the other three pillar practices, how a teacher experiences collegial inquiry as enhancing or inhibiting his or her growth depends on his or her way of knowing and the supports and challenges in the holding environment of the collegial inquiry. Instrumental knowers will feel supported by step-by-step procedures and descriptions of the “right” way to complete tasks, and they will be stretched by leaders who scaffold their collegial inquiry experiences to require these teachers to think differently, think abstractly, and consider multiple points of view. Socializing knowers will evaluate their collegial inquiry work based on what authorities, experts, or “valued others” (Drago-Severson, 2009) express, and they will express concern about differences of opinion if they disrupt or threaten interpersonal relationships. Socializing knowers in collegial inquiry work are best supported by opportunities to develop and voice their own thoughts, feelings, and ideas in a safe space. In the context of collegial inquiry, self-authoring knowers will want to design, critique, and evaluate proposals and ideas. Leaders or colleagues who challenge their deeply held belief and help them become less invested in the self-authoring knower’s own system for making meaning will support growth through collegial inquiry. Finally, the self-transforming knower will provide others engaged in collegial inquiry with a strategic vision, a harmonizing effect on group conflict, and a respect for hearing diverse opinions. This knower may also struggle with collegial inquiry work when others are not capable of managing conflict or are not oriented toward reaching group goals within a practical time frame. Given the diversity of possible responses to the pillar practice of collegial inquiry, it is important to keep developmental diversity in mind (Drago-Severson, 2009).
Bringing the pillar practices together within the learning-oriented leadership model.

While each pillar practice represents a distinct set of learning activities for adults, it is important to note that one pillar practice will not support the edifice of transformational learning in schools. As Drago-Severson points out: “it is important to note that as adults, we need more than one source of support for development. In fact, schools as learning centers can also be mentoring communities in which adults share in reciprocal mentoring relationships or networks of support” (2009, p. 211). The model of learning-oriented leadership highlights these four pillar practices to inspire leaders to commit to transformational learning in schools so that teachers and leaders might better meet the complex, adaptive teaching challenges they confront. Through the pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, providing leadership roles, and collegial inquiry, schools can be centers for adult learning and growth (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), including teachers of EL students, and thus it is critical to answer the second research question in my study which asks teachers of EL students to reflect on their experiences within the model with the pillar practices.

Cultural Dimensions of Professional Learning Spaces for Teachers of EL Students

In this final section, I review literature that pertains to the cultural dimensions of professional learning spaces for teachers of EL students, linked directly to my third research question that explores the potential influences of teachers of EL students’ cultural background on their experiences with instructional decision making; relationships with students, colleagues, and families, and the pillar practices. My study points a spotlight on English learners by focusing on the experiences of their teachers, and any study that explores the experiences of teachers of English learners must consider the cultural dimensions of their work. English learners and their families come to American schools with a wealth of experiences, values, and beliefs that are
influenced by languages other than standard Academic English, and language is learned and spoken embedded within specific cultural contexts. Teachers of English learners, thus, must contend with the complex, fluid, and meaningful cultural contexts of their students. My dissertation would miss a fundamental aspect of the experiences of teachers of EL students if it did not explicitly focus on cultural dimensions of their work in schools.

In this section, first I look broadly at the professional learning for teachers in terms of existing professional development models and how, if at all, they to align to and can inform the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). I make an explicit connection between the learning-oriented leadership model and professional development opportunities for teachers of EL students. Next, I present what I have discovered from my literature review pertaining to the professional learning opportunities for teachers of EL students. In this subsection, I make connections to the learning-oriented leadership model where appropriate to demonstrate where the literature supports using certain pillar practices to support the professional learning of teachers of English learners. Finally, I briefly explore several studies from the multicultural and bilingual education fields to make the argument that culture and language play a central role in teaching EL students and thus must be considered in developing appropriate learning spaces for teachers of EL students. I explore all of these areas with this section of the literature review, primarily, for three reasons: 1) to make my assumptions about the cultural dimensions of teachers of EL student’s work explicit, 2) to lay the foundation for the analytical framework I will construct to answer my third research question on the potential influences of cultural background, and 3) to justify the linking of the pillar practices of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) to prior research on professional learning spaces for teachers of EL students.
Current Context for Professional Learning for All Teachers

Recent research by the National Staff Development Council (NSDC), which recently changed it’s name to Learning Forward, on professional development in the United States (Wei et al., 2010) defines “high quality” or “effective” professional learning as “that which results in improvements of teachers’ knowledge and instructional practice, as well as improved student learning” (p. 1). Professional learning activities include school-based coaching, mentoring, lesson study, and workshops as well as externally provided workshops, institutes, and conferences (Wei et al., 2010). While Wei et al.’s (2010) study “affirmed the common sense notion that professional development that is short, episodic, and disconnected from practice has little impact” (p. 1), their report for NSDC found that there has been a decline in the intensity of professional learning for teachers in all areas other than the subjects primarily taught by teachers. Further, they found an increasing U.S. investment in the least effective models of professional learning, those that are short-term workshops (Wei et al., 2010).

There are many models in existence for teacher professional development. I use Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) research on the different models for professional development in schools. In addition to the findings of Wei et al.’s (2010) study underscoring the need for professional development that is sustained over the long-term, Drago-Severson (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) reviews the literature on professional development models for teachers to advocate that professional development learning opportunities for teachers also be job-embedded (school-based) and informed by constructive-developmental theory. Table 6 highlights which models are short-term and which are long-term where the models towards the top of the table tend to be carried out in single-shot or over shorter durations and those in the lower part of the table tend toward longer-term durations. At the bottom of Table 6, Drago-
Severson’s pillar practices as part of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) are compared to the current models of professional development: training, observation/evaluation and feedback assessment, involvement in an improvement process, inquiry/collaborative action research, individually guided or self-directed, and mentoring (or coaching).

Table 6  Characteristics of Professional Development Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defining Characteristics</th>
<th>Focus: Target of Development</th>
<th>Methods: Types of Initiatives</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Mode of Delivery</th>
<th>Underlying Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Information, increasing knowledge, and skills development</td>
<td>Most in-service, some coursework, Hunter model</td>
<td>Improved student achievement, enhanced teacher knowledge and skills</td>
<td>Are mostly single-shot or “drive by” experiences.</td>
<td>Techniques and skills are worthy of replication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation/ Evaluation &amp; Feedback Assessment</td>
<td>New or improved teaching methods through skill development</td>
<td>Peer coaching, clinical supervision, teacher evaluation</td>
<td>Improved student achievement through improved teacher performance</td>
<td>Several conferences and/or meetings occur over a period of time.</td>
<td>Colleagues’ observations and feedback will enhance reflection and performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in School Improvement Process</td>
<td>Increased knowledge and skills needed to participate effectively in decision making</td>
<td>Curriculum development, research into better teaching, assessment of student data, improvement processes</td>
<td>Improved classroom instruction and curriculum</td>
<td>Longer term—may span several years.</td>
<td>Adults learn most effectively when faced with a problem to solve; that is, issues of practice that are meaningful to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry/ Collaborative Action Research</td>
<td>Improved decision-making skills, collegiality, collaboration, communities of practice</td>
<td>Collaborative action research, collaborative research, study groups, roundtables</td>
<td>Improved teaching practices and greater student learning.</td>
<td>Variable—depends on context and current problems, issues, and dilemmas.</td>
<td>Process is self-managed and nonhierarchical; teachers have knowledge and expertise that can be brought to the inquiry process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Directed</td>
<td>Increased self-direction, pursuit of self-defined interests.</td>
<td>Self-directed learning, journal-writing, evaluation with teacher setting goals</td>
<td>Improved collegiality and opportunities for reflection</td>
<td>Variable—depends on context and current problems, issues, and dilemmas.</td>
<td>Adults are capable of judging their own learning needs; adults learn best when they are agents of their own development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining Characteristics</td>
<td>Focus: Target of Development</td>
<td>Methods: Types of Initiatives</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring/Coaching</td>
<td>Psychological development of self through the context of the interpersonal relationship</td>
<td>Supportive, longer-term interpersonal relationship</td>
<td>Psychological development of self</td>
<td>Usually longer term—may extend over several years.</td>
<td>Development occurs in the context of a relationship, a constellation of relationships, or a team; mentoring skills can be taught to adults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillar Practices</td>
<td>Cognitive, affective, interpersonal, and intrapersonal development of self through the context of pillar practices</td>
<td>Teaming, mentoring, providing leadership roles, collegial inquiry</td>
<td>Cognitive, affective, interpersonal, and intrapersonal development of self</td>
<td>Longer term—extends over several years.</td>
<td>Development is enhanced or inhibited by context and increases in cognitive, affective, interpersonal, and intrapersonal capacities enable self to better manage the complexities of teaching, leading, learning, and life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Adapted from Drago-Severson (2004b, 2009).

In addition to duration of time, Table 6 also highlights the underlying assumptions and goals of each model as well as the typical methods. It is important to note that only the pillar practices carry assumptions from constructive-developmental theory. Other models are certainly informed by theories in adult development, but there is an explicit link to this theory in the pillar practices. Further, consider that Wei et al.’s (2010) study’s findings suggested that professional learning be designed to engage teachers in active learning so that they can make sense of their learning in meaningful ways and develop their capacity to teach. Wei, Darling-Hammond, and Adamson’s (2010) study for Learning Forward (formerly known as the National Staff Development Council) on the trends and challenges of professional learning for K-12 educators included an in-depth review of research on effective professional learning practices. Wei et al.’s (2010) report analyzed data from three sources: the national Schools and Staff Surveys from 2000, 2004, and 2008 using quantitative methods to explore various composite variables and a
professional development access index within and across states; the Met Life Survey 2009 including purely descriptive data; and the first Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) that allowed the researchers to compare professional learning conditions in the U.S. to conditions in other countries. Major findings in the study clustered around participation in professional learning, opportunities for teacher collaboration, highest priorities for future professional learning, and induction supports for new teachers, variation in professional learning opportunities across states (Wei et al., 2010).

Wei et al.’s (2010) finding that professional learning should be designed to engage teachers in active learning so that they can make sense of their learning in meaningful ways and develop their capacity to teach underscores the points made by Kegan (1982, 1994, 2000) and Drago-Severson (2004b 2009) that adults are actively constructing meaning in the workplace, and that professional development that recognizes and promotes this helps to develop teachers’ internal capacity. According to Wei et al. (2010), this can be done through a variety of professional learning activities including discussion, reflective writing, collaborative planning, and other collegial inquiry activities. These learning activities are all foundational activities meant to enhance adult learning and growth within Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented leadership model. While Wei et al.’s (2010) study did not focus specifically on the cultural aspects of professional learning for teachers of EL students, I make the link between Wei et al.’s findings that suggest long-term, deep, and active professional learning opportunities are preferred to teachers of EL students because they suggest that all teachers should have these opportunities.

Current Context for Professional Learning for Teachers of EL Students
Casteel and Ballantyne (2010) in their review of professional learning for teachers of EL students for the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs name five core principles for professional learning. The first centered on professional learning that builds on the foundation of skills, knowledge, and expertise (informational learning). The second is centered on engaging participants (teachers) as learners. The combination of these two principles into new models that include ongoing, site-based, collaborative learning among teachers is evident in research focused on professional learning for teachers of EL students that include elements of coaching, mentoring, collaborative inquiry, or reflective practice. For example, Victoria Hunt (2009) in her study of transformative leadership in three bilingual schools in New York City focuses on the work that school leaders do to establish professional learning communities for teachers of EL students and other learners in the school. Hunt (2009) emphasizes reflection and collaboration as critical elements of the on-site training and learning that teachers engaged in to transform their schools. Across the literature, it is often the individual school leader who decides to commit to improve the learning and achievement of EL students through a collaborative and reflective process that includes ongoing, site-based professional learning that aims to build the foundational knowledge and skills of teachers while making teacher learning an engaging, reflective, and collaborative process (Archibeque, Castellón, Kibler, & Alonzo Vaughan, 2010; Hunt, 2009; Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999; Pardini, 2006).

Collaborative research by Maria Torres-Guzmán, Victoria Hunt, and teachers from PS 165 in New York City (Torres-Guzmán, Hunt, Torres, Madrigal, Flecha, Lukas, & Jaar, 2006; Torres-Guzmán, 2010) shows the promise of leadership practices that open spaces for teachers to develop professionally and intellectually through collaborative study groups. Torres-Guzmán
(2010) explores how embracing language development, professional development, and intellectual development as freedoms empower teachers and teacher teams to grow both personally and professionally in support of bilingual learners. Torres-Guzmán’s (2010) six-year case study of an urban K-8 school explores the school and leadership context for school transformation where spaces are opened for bilingual student and bilingual teacher learning. This case study combined with other recent studies on the professional learning of teachers of EL students have raised concerns about the historical dominance of this top-down informational learning approach to professional learning (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Heiligenstein, 2010; Johns, 2009; Musanti, 2005; Pardini, 2006; Santos, 2009; Torres-Guzmán, 2010; Torres-Guzmán et al., 2006). Johns’ (2009) study of a high school peer coaching professional learning program using culturally relevant pedagogy, for instance, outlines an approach to professional learning for teachers of EL students that is also site-based, ongoing, collaborative, and focused on problem-solving tasks where the teachers are at the center of the learning. The peer coaching study explicitly lays out a framework that embraces a “new paradigm for professional development” (Johns, 2009, p. 27) oriented away from the top-down, centralized approach to delivering workshops, courses, and large-group presentations focused on presenting research-based strategies and knowledge. These new models include research-based strategies and the knowledge base necessary to be a highly effective teacher, but increasingly studies are being conducted that do so with a more developmentally-appropriate approach using site-based methods that focus on adult learning and internal capacity building rather than solely focusing on informational learning.

While research is beginning to reflect a change in professional learning for teachers of EL students toward site-based, collaborative, teacher-centered learning, little has been written about
building a developmental model of professional learning spaces for teachers of EL students. Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented leadership model shows promise as a professional learning model to support the growth of teachers across a spectrum of developmental diversity. But nothing has been written about the experiences of teachers of EL students with transformational learning supported by the pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, providing leadership roles, and collegial inquiry. My study addresses this by focusing on the experiences of teachers of EL students, particularly asking teachers to describe the 1) adaptive teaching challenges in their work, 2) their experiences of the pillar practices which are designed and employed by their principals to explicitly encourage the internal capacity building of teachers of EL students, and 3) the potential influences of cultural background on their work as teachers and in their experiences within their professional learning spaces.

My professional experience as a teacher of EL students and a coach of teachers of EL students, I have found that teaching EL students in a K-12 setting presents adults with an array of cognitive, affective, interpersonal, intrapersonal demands that can feel overwhelming. In a literature review published for the journal *Education and Urban Society* on the state of America’s mentoring programs for urban bilingual teachers K-12, Torres-Guzmán & Goodwin (1995) identified four competency areas critical for adults teaching in bilingual settings: 1) language and instruction, 2) culture and instruction, 3) language and cognitive development, and 4) educational for social justice and transformation. While they discuss these areas of teacher competencies in light of the complexities of mentoring relationships in urban bilingual schools (e.g., peer evaluative assessments and mentoring roles) I found these areas to be helpful for illuminating some demands in the “curriculum” of the professional life of teachers of EL students because of my research interest the adaptive teaching challenges that teachers of EL
face in urban school contexts. Torres-Guzmán & Goodwin (1995) note a few of critical questions for bilingual teachers to consider as they develop the competency of language and instruction:

- What do I teach in what language? How do I teach in two languages? What children do I teach in what language? For teachers to discover how to go about doing this within their own circumstances and classrooms, they need more than pedagogical theory… Even when the teacher is clear and his or her practices are consistent, there are many other aspects to consider: subject matter and student composition, linguistic heterogeneity, and district policies. (Torres-Guzmán & Goodwin, 1995, p. 57).

Developing this competency as a bilingual teacher requires an individual to grow cognitively as well as interpersonally as he or she considers how best to answer these questions pertaining to classroom, school, and district language policy in light of pedagogical theory and the actual students learning in the classroom. Torres-Guzmán and Goodwin (1995) suggest that mentoring relationships can help teachers navigate the complex waters of these questions common to teachers of EL students. Mentoring is one of the four pillar practices of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), and I describe Torres-Guzmán and Goodwin’s (1995) research on mentoring relationships for bilingual teachers to support my assertion that the learning-oriented leadership model’s pillar practices will provide important professional learning spaces for teachers of EL students.

As a part of Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented leadership model, mentoring plays a critical role for supporting teacher growth, so it is not surprising to find research on professional development for teachers of EL students to point to mentoring as a promising model. Beyond employing mentoring as a strategy to help bilingual urban teachers learn the core competencies of bilingual classroom teaching, Torres-Guzmán and Goodwin (1995) suggest that building bridges between bilingual language programs and mainstream programs through mentoring relationships including teachers across both programs would serve to support the learning of English learners more broadly. Specifically they argue
that an interactive model of mentoring that allows for reciprocity between mentor and mentee and simultaneous giving and receive of support that would serve to build bridges between teachers and the bilingual students they serve as well as between mainstream and bilingual teachers.

Similar to Drago-Severson’s (2009) discussion of the developmental benefits of mentoring for both the mentor and mentee, Torres-Guzmán and Goodwin (1995) recommend redefining mentoring roles in bilingual contexts so that both teachers approach the relationship as simultaneous learners and instructors. The potential synergy of applying constructive-developmental theory principles—as Drago-Severson (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) does to schools and educational leadership generally—to the existing research suggesting the benefits of mentoring and other pillar practices to the growth of teachers in bilingual settings and other programs supporting English learners is important. My work is poised to deepen the connections between Torres-Guzmán and Goodwin’s (1995) research on mentoring relationships for bilingual teachers, Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) learning-oriented leadership model, and my assertions that the learning-oriented leadership model has the capacity to provide transformational learning spaces for teachers of EL students.

Several other studies of professional learning for teachers of EL students spotlight another form of mentoring: coaching (Casteel & Ballantyne, 2010; Pardini, 2006). Rather than an implicit hierarchical relationship between expert and novice assumed in the mentoring model, coaching presents a slightly different spin on mentoring where the coach sits at the elbow of the teacher as a critical friend and reflective partner. Coaching in many ways overlaps with mentoring in terms of how the terms are used in the literature, though mentoring usually refers to a more long-term relationship that “often has an emotional dimension” (Drago-Severson, 2009).
Coaching models often focus an individual or group of individuals within an organization that would benefit from the support of a coach who can help the coachee, or client, work through a process to reach a desired professional result.

One example of coaching for teachers of EL students in an urban public school context is presented by Pardini (2006). Pardini (2006) describes the coaching model employed by an urban district in Minnesota working to reduce the achievement gap between EL students and native English speakers in their schools. Pardini’s (2006) article published by Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council) is based on a 2006 report released by the Council of Great City Schools, which conducted a city-by-city analysis of student performance on state test achievement gaps. The school district reshaped its professional learning spaces for teachers of EL students by in a number of ways. First, mainstream teachers attending summer institutes alongside teachers of EL students to receive informational trainings; in the past teachers of EL students alone would receive those trainings (Pardini, 2006). Second, the district provided “resource teachers” who acted as coaches across the schools in the district. These coaches worked directly with teachers of EL students doing site-based coaching tailored to teachers’ needs, and the coaches worked with leadership and teaching teams on specific concerns to the schools as they addressed the achievement gaps among EL students and mainstream students in their schools (Pardini, 2006).

The school district hypothesized that in order to raise student achievement of English learners, they would need to transform their curriculum and their approach to instruction for EL students, and the district decided to do so using a collaborative leadership approach with coaching at the foundation. As mentioned above, professional development in the form of workshops and trainings were refocused to develop collaborative coaching relationships between
mainstream teachers and specialized teachers of EL students. District leaders in Saint Paul, Minnesota refer to their work as “authentic, site-based professional development” (Pardini, 2006, p. 25). This example of coaching from Pardini (2006) highlights the benefits to both English learners in terms of achievement and teachers of English learners in terms of the on-site collaborative spaces created to help them solve problems of practice relating to educating English learners. Pardini’s (2006) article supports my claim that the pillar practice of mentoring (or developmental coaching) can serve as a professional learning space for teachers of EL students that help them grow to better meet the challenges in their work.

In other studies that provided university-designed coaching and mentoring—as opposed to the St. Paul district-based approach described above—to teachers of EL students in California, Kansas, and Alabama, results were mixed (Casteel & Ballantyne, 2010). In the Alabama mentoring program, the authors concluded that: “traditional mentor training is insufficient for transforming teachers, even caring and dedicated teachers, into teacher mentors—especially for the mentoring of veteran colleagues. Rather, optimal conditions can nurture collaborative mentoring and, in turn, generate on-site PD” (Casteel & Ballantyne, 2010, p. 31). While the authors measured varying degrees of success, all noted the need for mentoring and coaching programs to deliver more intense work on-site.

The Pardini (2006) study of professional learning for teachers of EL students also focused collaboration and collaborative inquiry as critical to transforming educational opportunities for English learners through transformation of instruction. Olsen and Jaramillo’s (1999) review of educational leadership practices to promote program improvement for EL students also centered on important roles of sustained, ongoing collaborative inquiry within professional learning opportunities for teachers. Archibeque et al. (2010) point to reflection
through writing and through a school improvement process as central to the leadership work and learning that helped principals become more aware of unique needs of EL students and their teachers. Heiligenstein’s (2010) study of in-service staff development designed to promote teacher growth “in knowledge, skills and dispositions to effectively teach culturally and linguistically diverse students” (i) concluded with findings indicating the crucial role of contextual tools for teacher reflection in promoting growth. All of these studies leave the impression that reflective practice done in the presence of colleagues—namely, collegial inquiry—is an important and promising practice for supporting the growth of teachers of EL students.

Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) model of learning-oriented leadership shows significant overlap with existing research in the field of professional learning for teachers of English learners with regard to mentoring and collegial inquiry. Little has been written about the two pillar practices of providing leadership roles and teaming within the literature on the professional learning for teachers of EL students. Overlaying Drago-Severson’s (2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) model and existing research on mentoring and collegial inquiry as meaningful and growth-enhancing professional learning spaces for teachers of EL students is exciting, unexplored territory.

Central Role of Culture and Language in Teaching English Learners

Findings from multicultural and bilingual education research underscore the critical role culture plays in instruction for all children (Banks et al., 2001; Macias, 1988; Nieto, 1999, 2010), especially English learners in diverse American schools. Further, because the context of American schools more often than not present cultural, linguistic, and/or community discontinuities for English learners, teachers must serve as the bridging relationship that counters
and lessons these discontinuities for children and must be able to reflect on their own cultural background and the ways in which their personal cultural backgrounds impact their teaching of diverse learners (Nieto, 1999, 2010). Thus, strengthening teachers’ capacity to link concepts of cultural identity and student achievement is critical for developing teachers’ capacities to engage and teach English learners (Torres-Guzmán & Goodwin, 1995). Transforming instruction for EL students in American schools will require that all teachers expand their capacities in core cultural competencies because of the diversity of America’s English learner population. Such capacities include understanding the connections between teaching and learning and the language, culture, and sociopolitical contexts of language and culture; seeing the discontinuities that EL students and families experience between home and school cultures; reflect critically on biases within oneself and within educational institutions; and embracing personal responsibility for working to address discontinuities through using culturally-responsive instructional strategies in all aspects of teaching (Banks et al., 2001; Nieto, 2010). A comprehensive list of these underlying cultural competencies for teachers related to instruction for EL students are summarized in Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Competencies</th>
<th>Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand the connections between language and culture and teaching and learning in educational settings, including the increasing cultural and ethnic gaps between American teachers and students</td>
<td>Nieto (2010) Banks et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts of language and culture (including knowledge about the histories and cultures of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups in the nation and in the school) and the effects of these contexts on student learning and achievement</td>
<td>Nieto (2010) Banks et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the implications of linguistic and cultural diversity for classroom practices, school reform, and educational equity and translation into the use of culturally responsive instructional strategies in the classroom</td>
<td>Nieto (2010) Banks et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to reflect critically on personal classroom practices as well as larger institutional policies related to linguistic and cultural diversity</td>
<td>Nieto (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Competencies</td>
<td>Source(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand ethical and political responsibilities to work together with students,</td>
<td>Nieto (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colleagues, and families for a more socially just classroom, school, and society</td>
<td>Banks et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(equity pedagogy work)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to reflect upon and identify personal attitudes toward racial, ethnic,</td>
<td>Banks et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language, and cultural groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cultural competencies represented in Table 7 come from studies conducted in the fields of multicultural and bilingual education. As EL students become an increasing presence in American classrooms, more teachers must expand their capacities to develop these competencies. Interestingly in a recent study by Gates and Robinson (2009) on teacher collaboration, investigators found that the work teachers struggled to define solutions for (adaptive teaching challenges) centered on work with English learners. Gates and Robinson (2009) used pedagogical problems of practice involving the increasing numbers of English learners in mainstream, non-specialized (in terms of language pedagogy) high school classrooms as a typical adaptive teaching challenge:

These conversations exposed much confusion over exactly what problems they were dealing with. Language difficulties, overcrowding, instructional pacing and strategies, assessment techniques, expectations, and transcripts were named at various times. The complexity of issues appeared overwhelming, and teachers wanted to defer to an authority for answers or in some way to simplify the problem. Focusing on resolving the technical question of grading rather than the more complex issue of supporting student learning suggests such intent. (Gates & Robinson, 2009, p. 157).

This example from the research points to the emerging need to define the common adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners in American classrooms.

My preliminary coding list (Appendix F) for data pertaining to my third research question focused on the potential influence of teachers’ cultural background on their experiences teaching and engaging in the pillar practices is informed by Nieto (2010) and Banks et al.’s (2001) research as represented in the cultural competencies outlined Table 7. Further, analysis of pilot
study data (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011) confirms that when asked about adaptive teaching challenges related to teaching English learners, teachers refer to many of the cultural competencies in Table 7 when discussing how their own personal cultural backgrounds influenced how they made instructional decisions and/or related to students and colleagues.

**Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I began with the first literature review topic of adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners. I first reviewed Heifetz’s (1994) concept of adaptive challenge, providing key definitions and relating those definitions to the context of education and educational leadership. I then related Heifetz’s (1994) concept of adaptive challenge specifically to teaching EL students. I continued this section by describing the theory and research used to derive the concept of adaptive teaching challenges involving teaching English learners central to my study. The section concluded a list of eight adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners that I expect to see in the findings pertaining my first research question on the topic of adaptive teaching challenges involving EL students. In the third section of the chapter, I addressed my second research questing relating to teachers of EL students’ experiences engaging in the pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry with in learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). I described the leadership model in detail, then looked at the concept of developmental diversity and how it relates to teachers of EL students and their experiences with the pillar practices. I finished the third section by examining the concept of holding environment and the pillar practices to help provide context of the analytic framework that will be used in analyzing data pertaining to my second research question on the pillar practices. In the fourth and final section of the literature review I explored the cultural dimensions of professional learning spaces for
teachers of EL students, relating directly to my third research question on the potential influences of teachers’ cultural background on their experiences teaching and with the pillar practices. I discussed professional learning spaces for teachers broadly in terms of existing professional development models and how they to align to the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). I made explicit connections between the leadership model and professional development opportunities for teachers. I then outlined findings from literature pertaining to the professional learning spaces for teachers of EL students. I concluded the section by exploring several studies from the multicultural and bilingual education fields to make the argument that culture and language play a central role in teaching EL students and thus must be considered in developing appropriate learning spaces for teachers of EL students.

Throughout the chapter I described the alignment between my preliminary coding scheme (Appendix A) and the studies reviewed for the four areas of this literature review. In my third chapter, I describe the qualitative methodology I plan to use in my study.
Chapter III
METHODLOGY

In the introduction and literature review, I presented the bodies of literature and theory that inform my research questions for this study of the experiences of teachers of EL students engaging in the pillar practices of learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). In this chapter, I begin by reviewing the study’s research questions. In following sections, I present my rationale for the use of qualitative methodology, site selection, participant selection, data collection methods, analytic methods, and validity.

Research Questions

Given the research problem and purposes presented in the introduction, I propose the following questions to guide the study:

1. What do 16 teachers of English learners from two urban schools name as the adaptive teaching challenges they face in their teaching? How do they describe and understand these adaptive teaching challenges?

2. How do 16 teachers of English learners describe and understand their experiences participating in the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) that compose the learning-oriented model? In what ways, if any, do they describe how participating in the pillar practices has helped them to better meet the adaptive teaching challenges they face? How so? What kinds of learning do they name from participating in these practices?
3. In what ways, if any, do participants describe how their cultural background influences their instructional decision making, how they relate to students, and how they relate to colleagues? How, if at all, do participants describe influences of their cultural background on their participation in the pillar practices (i.e., teaming mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry)?

In the next section I describe my choice to design a qualitative multi-site case study.

**Rationale for Qualitative Methodology**

In my study, I chose to use a qualitative multi-site case study approach and drew heavily from Merriam (1998), Maxwell (2005), Creswell (2007), and Yin’s (2009) work to inform this decision. Qualitative inquiry focuses on meaning making in context, allowing the researcher to gather and interpret data that reflect how people make meaning of key experiences as well as the effects of a particular context on participants' actions and understandings (Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 1998). I am interested in how teachers of English learners make meaning of their experiences within the context of the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming); hence, I chose to design a qualitative multi-site case study that would allow me to interpret how participants make meaning of key experiences and how their particular contexts may affect their actions and understandings.

The three areas of inquiry in my study (1) adaptive teaching challenges; 2) the pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry; and 3) potential influences of cultural background) all focus on how teachers of English learners make sense of their lived experiences, and I seek to understand those lived experiences of participants and the meaning they make of their experiences (Yin, 2009) rather than the relationships between variables, so I chose a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach (Maxwell, 2005).
More specifically, I chose a multi-site case study approach to strengthen my analytical methods and thus enhance the external validity and generalizability of my findings by offering both cross-case and cross-site analysis (Merriam, 1998). Because my study seeks to understand the lived experiences of participants and the meaning they make of their experiences rather than the relationships between variables, I chose a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach (Maxwell, 2005). In the next section, I describe my rationale for using the case study approach in my study.

**The Case Study Approach**

The case study approach, as Yin (2009) and Merriam (1998) suggest, allows a researcher to explore “how” and “why” questions by providing a thick, rich description and analysis of a phenomenon that is bounded by one or more cases. In my study, I seek to understand the experiences of teachers of EL students within the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). A case study approach will allow me to collect and analyze more concrete, contextualized, and well-developed data pertaining to this referenced population (Merriam, 1998). The teachers I am interested in studying represent a unique case and possess knowledge we do not yet have access to; using a case study approach to studying the experiences of teachers of English learners within such a new model of school leadership will allow me to gather concrete, contextualized data relating to their experiences relating to adaptive teaching challenges, the pillar practices, and the potential influences of cultural background (Merriam, 1998). Next, I describe my rationale for choosing to conduct a multi-site case study.

**The Multi-Site Case Study**

I chose a multi-site case study approach because I want to make comparisons across sites in addition to across cases. Using a multi-site case study approach can strengthen my analytical
methods and thus enhance the external validity and generalizability of my findings by offering both cross-case and cross-site analysis (Merriam, 1998). In choosing a multi-site case study approach, I plan to work toward internal generalizability within the cases chosen so that I might produce findings that lead to a tentative hypothesis about the experiences of teachers of EL students within the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) that might help to structure future research and yield understanding that might affect and improve practice (Merriam, 1998). Internal generalizability within the setting or group studied is essential for attaining descriptive, interpretative, and theoretical validity for the conclusions I plan to draw from this research project (Maxwell, 2005). By choosing to include multiple cases across two sites, I will enhance my ability to generalize across the sample.

Additionally, the multi-site case study approach will allow me to analyze both the site as context and the individual cases within each site, providing in-depth understanding of the site context and meaning for the individuals involved (Merriam, 1998). On this topic, Maxwell states:

The teachers are treated not as a sample from some much larger population of teachers to whom the study is intended to generalize, but as a case of a group of teachers who are studied in a particular context (the specific school and community). The selection of this particular case may involve considerations of representativeness (and certainly any attempt to generalize from the conclusions must take representativeness into account), but the primary concern of the study is not with generalization, but with developing an adequate description, interpretation, and explanation of this case. (Maxwell, 2005, p. 71)

Employing an approach of investigating two sites, each with multiple participants, allows me to study the two sites as case studies, as Maxwell notes above, as well as the experiences of each participant as individual cases. Studying each site and the experiences of each site will provide the fullest understanding of the phenomenon possible (Merriam, 1998).
In the next section, I explain my methodological decisions regarding site selection. Following in the qualitative methodology tradition, I describe my methods for using purposeful sampling to select sites (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990) that will produce information-rich cases where the most can be learned from participants (Merriam, 1998).

**Rationale for Site Selection**

In this section I describe the criteria I will use for selecting the two school sites for this study. The two sites will be chosen based on several criteria for accessing the target population of research participants (Berg, 2009; Maxwell, 2005), as described below.

**Site Selection**

This study rests on the assumption that when principals use the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), then teachers have the opportunities to build internal capacities through the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) to be able to better meet the adaptive teaching challenges they face in their work to grow in their professional context. In my study, I seek to explore the experiences of teachers of English learners who work in urban schools; therefore, it is essential that each site be located in an urban context. My study is also focused on the experiences of teachers of English learners; hence, it is important to choose sites that have ample numbers of these potential research participants. Thus, I will use three selection criteria to select:

2. School located in urban context
3. Ample numbers of teachers of English learners

Gaining access to the site locations through gatekeepers is an important concern for choosing a site for my study (Berg, 2009), so site selection will be made based on professional
relationships between myself, Eleanor Drago-Severson, and the school leaders. Prior to interviewing teachers, I plan to collect and analyze schedule, memo, email, and staff handbook documentation of regular opportunities for all teachers of EL students to engage in the pillar practices weekly. These data sources will be used only for site selection purposes and thus will not be part of formal data analysis.

I am still in the process of determining how many sites meet the three selection criteria. If more than two sites meet the criteria, I plan to use the following criteria to choose the two sites for my study:

1. Number of potential participants (teachers of EL students)
2. At least one semester learning about learning-oriented leadership model with Drago-Severson

First, I will gauge the number of teachers of EL students eligible to participate in the study. I will be asking for 3-5 hours of each teacher’s time for the study, scheduled as three separate interviews. Having larger numbers of potential participants will help me ensure that I can reach my goal of recruiting 8 teachers at each site to participate in the study. If there are still selection decisions to be made after looking at site location and number of potential participants, I will consider the length of time the school site’s principal has engaged with Drago-Severson professionally, thus allowing for a longer time for the learning-oriented model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) to develop the robustness of pillar practices and for teachers to experience the pillar practices and their potential of internal capacity building over a longer period of time.

**Selection of Site: Principal Using Learning-Oriented Leadership Model with Teachers of English Learners**
Because I explore the context of schools where principals employ the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) with teachers of English learners, my first selection criterion for sites relates to the principal at the site and his or her use of the learning-oriented leadership model with teachers of English learners. At each site, principals will need to satisfy the two following criteria:

1. The principal has at least one semester of professional learning experience with Drago-Severson relating to engaging the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming).

2. The principal has secured space for teachers to participate in the four pillar practices (i.e. teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, collegial inquiry) regularly (weekly) in order to build their internal capacities.

I have designed my study to explore the experiences of teachers of EL students who work within the context of schools where they can engage in the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming) because of the opportunities the learning-oriented leadership model provides for internal capacity building. These set of site selection criteria are essential for the success of this study because they help me determine whether or not the site provides a context where teachers do regularly engage in the pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry. I set the first criterion relating to learning with Drago-Severson for at least one semester because it is more typical for principals to have the experience of working intensively with Drago-Severson for one semester or more as part of course work and leadership programs at the university level. It is typical for principals themselves to learn about the learning-oriented leadership model from Drago-Severson and then use the pillar practices with their teachers; thus, I have chosen to use this criterion for selecting
sites where principals have learned about the learning-oriented leadership model directly from Drago-Severson for at least one semester.

For my second criterion, I chose to define “regular” as weekly opportunities to engage in the pillar practices because of my professional experience working within schools where leaders attempt to use the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming), and weekly engagement in the pillar practices seems to be a reasonable expectation for expecting all teachers of EL students to engage in mentoring, teaming, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry. I expect that many teachers will describe daily opportunities to engage in the pillar practices. Because I will be measuring this criterion based on document analysis prior to interviewing teachers, I expect to find schedule, memo, email, and staff handbook documentation of regular opportunities for all staff to engage in the pillar practices weekly.

**Selection of Site: School Located in Urban Context**

In my study, I seek to explore the experiences of teachers of English learners who work in urban schools; therefore, it is essential that each site be located in an urban context. I define urban context in terms of population numbers and density. The U.S. Census defines an urban area to be more than 50,000 people in a densely settled area (1000 people per square mile) and defines an urban cluster to be a densely settled area (1000 people per square mile including 5,000 to 50,000 people. Schools serving students living in urban area or urban clusters will be eligible to participate in my study.

**Selection of Site: Ample Numbers of Teachers of English Learners**

My study is focused on the experiences of teachers of English learners; hence, it is important to choose sites that have ample numbers of these potential research participants.
Because I am planning to select 8 participants from each site, having at least 20 teachers of English learners at each site should allow for a large enough pool to select participants willing to participate in the study. In my next section on sample selection, I provide a detailed explanation of my selection criteria for teachers of EL students in the study.

My site selection criteria and process demonstrate a purposeful, qualitative approach to site selection. In the next section, I explain the rationale and criteria for selecting the participant sample.

**Rationale for Sample Selection**

In this section, I describe my rationale and criteria for selecting the participant sample of teachers of English learners. It is important to note that the criteria used for site selection, as described in the preceding section will help to ensure that I can select participants who have had the opportunity to engage in the pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry because they will be drawn from sites where principals have learned about and employ the pillar practices.

**Sample Selection**

Within the two sites, I plan to use ongoing criterion-based sampling (Creswell, 2007) to identify 16 participants for the study. Participants will be selected on a volunteer basis. My study asks participants to give 3-5 hours of their time, scheduled as three separate one-hour interviews during the 2011-2012 school year. I plan to visit each site and attend faculty meetings to ask teachers to participate in the study. I will pass out an introductory letter and sign-up sheet for interested teachers and collect the sign-up sheet at the meeting—rather than asking the principal to help screen or select teachers. I will to follow up with interested teachers who meet the criteria described in the two subsections below. If more than 8 potential participants meeting these
criteria are identified, I will choose participants to achieve maximum variation (Berg, 2009; Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 1998), including demographic factors such as: age, race/ethnicity, gender, first language, and second language.

I have two criteria for selecting teachers within each site:

1. At least one year of teaching experience at school site
2. At least one EL student on the teacher’s roster

The first of my sample selection criteria will allow me to confirm that each participant has at least one full year of experiences engaging in the learning-oriented leadership model (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012 forthcoming). This criterion will help to ensure that participants have had sufficient time to experience the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry) and reflect on their experiences during the interviews. My second sample selection criterion allows me to confirm that each participant is a teacher of English learners. By having at least one student in the classroom who is an English learner, I can discern that each participant is eligible for the study. I will conduct my study during the second half of the 2011-2012 school year (March-June 2012), so I will ask potential participants to confirm that they taught at least one English learner during both the 2011-2012 and 2010-2011 school years when soliciting potential participants prior to interviewing. Because my study explores teachers of English learners’ experiences within the learning-oriented leadership model, it is crucial for each participant to have ample time engaging in the learning-oriented leadership model, defined as at least one year working at the school site where the principal employs the pillar practices.

In the following section, I explain my data collection methods. In my study, I plan to explore the experiences of teachers of English learners engaging in the learning-oriented leadership model through collecting and analyzing in-depth interview data.
Data Collection

In this section, I describe the data collection methods used to answer my research questions. I discuss the data collection of my primary data source: three interviews with each of 16 participants, totally approximately 48 hours of in-depth interview data. Eight participants will be selected from each of the two sites, totaling 16 participants. In addition to interview data, I plan to communicate with participants via email after each interview to provide interview transcripts for member-checking and for the purpose of asking any remaining follow up questions after the final interview. Appendix A displays my timeline for data collection and analysis. Table 7 displays the data collection plan, including hours of data collection anticipated, for each participant across the two sites.

Table 7 Participants and Anticipated Data Collection Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site A Participants</th>
<th>Interview 1</th>
<th>Interview 2</th>
<th>Interview 3</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant 1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 4</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 6</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 7</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 8</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Site A Total Hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site B Participants</th>
<th>Interview 1</th>
<th>Interview 2</th>
<th>Interview 3</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant 9</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 10</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 11</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 12</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 13</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 14</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 15</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant 16</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Site B Total Hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As noted in the preceding section on participant selection, I will also attend school meetings to communicate with potential participants about the study. Prior to interviewing teachers, I also plan to collect and analyze schedule, memo, email, and staff handbook documentation of regular opportunities for all staff to engage in the pillar practices weekly as part of the site selection process. These data sources will be used only for site selection purposes and thus will not be part of formal data analysis. Additionally I plan to conduct observations for the sole purposes of building relationships and trust with potential participants and understand the context of the site; this data source will not be used for analysis purposes.

Next, I focus on the data collection procedures I plan to use for interviewing teachers of EL students, my primary data collection method.

**Interviews with Teachers of EL Students**

As described above, I plan to interview a total of 16 teachers of EL students, 8 teachers from one site and 8 teachers from a second site. I will interview each of those teachers 3 times. Interview topics will include: 1) adaptive teaching challenges involving EL students, 2) experiences with the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry), and 3) potential influences of cultural background on experiences related to teaching and the pillar practices. Protocols for each interview are in Appendices C, D, and E (Interview Protocol 1, Interview Protocol 2, Interview Protocol 3, respectively). My research questions informed each of the three interview topics, but I plan to ask interview questions, rather than my research questions, when interviewing participants in order to gain a greater understanding of my participants’ understanding of their experiences (Maxwell, 2005). I plan to
use main questions, probes, and follow up questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). My purpose is using qualitative methodology is to gain insight related to my research questions by gaining access to participants’ experiences, perceptions, and understands; thus my main questions translate “the research topic[s] into terms that the conversational partner can relate and discuss” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 135). Further, I chose to conduct a three-part interview series because in-depth interviewing is a strategy used by qualitative researchers who have “an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (Seidman, 2006, p. 9). In-depth interviewing serves as a strategy for giving more context to the participants’ responses (Seidman, 2006). While each of the three interviews does focus on a separate research question, interviewing in a three-part series does allow for a beginning, middle, and end structure for the participant and interviewer (Seidman, 2006). Additionally, a one hour is a standard unit of time that I have chosen because of the limited time that teachers have during the school year to schedule additional activities outside of the demands of teaching.

While I am not using Seidman’s (2006) approach to interviewing, his research has guided my methodology as I have designed an in-depth interview series that matches the constraints of my study. Seidman (2006) notes that alternatives to the standard method he outlines exist. For instance, Seidman (2006) suggests spacing interviews within a series three days apart, but he also relates a number of successful in-depth interview studies where that timing procedure was not adhered to because of study constraints. For my purposes, I plan to schedule one interview with all of the 16 participants first, focused on the topic of adaptive teaching challenges involving EL students. I have scheduled these first interviews with each participant for March and April 2012 across both sites. I plan to conduct interviews at both sites simultaneously to accommodate
teacher schedules as best as I can. As I note in my data analysis selection below, I plan to begin analysis of the first interviews on adaptive teaching challenges as the interviews are transcribed. Reading those transcripts and beginning the data analysis process for that first set of interviews on the topic of adaptive teaching challenges before starting the second set of interviews will allow me to get a broader sense of the sample’s responses as well as each individual’s responses before conducting the second set of interviews, thereby allowing me to make adjustments to the second interview protocol that may be useful to apply to all participants (Seidman, 2006). It is important to also note that in the event that too few potential participants are identified at the beginning of the study, I will have to allow for participants to be identified after the first set of interviews are completed. My plan, however, is to cluster the first, second, and third sets of interviews in three waves: March-April 2012 for interview 1, April-May for interview 2, and May-June for interview 3 (see Appendix A Data Collection and Analysis Timeline).

**Interviews: Topics and Protocols**

Each of the three interviews aligns to one of my research questions. The first interview aligns to my first research question with the topic of adaptive teaching challenges experienced by teachers of EL students. The second interview aligns to my second research question with the topic of experiences with the pillar practices of teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry. The third interview aligns to my third research question with the topic of cultural background, instructional decision making, relationships, and the pillar practices. Below I describe each of the three interviews. It is important to note that at the start of the second and third interviews, I provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on their responses from the preview interview(s). Seidman (2006) points out that one key advantage of the three-part, in-depth interview series is the ability to give participants multiple opportunities to reconstruct and
reflect as they tell their stories. In addition to giving participants time to reflect on prior interviews, I will also provide copies of the protocol before each interview to allow time for participants to reflect on the questions.

**Interview one: Adaptive teaching challenges involving EL students.** The first interview with teachers will last approximately 60 minutes. My purpose for this interview is to develop rapport and get a sense of the interview process while also investigating my first topic in connection with my first research question on adaptive teaching challenges involving English learners. I ask warm up questions about participants’ history and positive experiences teaching as a way to help participants begin talking. I also ask questions after the warm up pertaining to the challenges teachers face in the classroom, specific challenges involving EL students, and specific challenges for which there are no ready-made or easy answers. Based on pilot study conducted for this dissertation project (Benis Scheier-Dolberg, 2011), I found that also asking about situations where teachers felt torn or angry because of the difficulties at work elicited responses from participants regarding adaptive teaching challenges, so I ask about these instances as well. At the interview, I will ask participants to complete short form that provides demographic information to be used during analysis. My interview protocol for this interview (Appendix C) represents a plan for each interview, but I also plan to allow the interview to unfold in unexpected ways as I try to respond to and understand what each participant shares as the interview proceeds (Seidman, 2006). Topics for this interview include challenges faced in one’s work as a teacher, challenges for which there are no easy or ready-made answers, and what might help teachers better meet the challenges.

**Interview two: Pillar practices.** The second interview will last approximately 60 minutes. I will use Interview Protocol 2 (Appendix D) to help teachers reflect on their
experiences engaging in the pillar practices to understand how they may have developed internal capacities through the professional learning spaces provided by the pillar practices. After the first interviews, I may adjust the protocol in light of what I have learned during analysis of the first interviews. My purposes for this second interview are to allow participants to reflect on the first interview session, to help me member-check the transcripts, to check my interpretations, and to explore the second topic related to my second research question on the pillar practices (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry). I plan to warm up by asking participants to reflect on what they shared during the first interview. I will then move into the primary focus of the interview by asking participants to reflect on their experiences engaging in the pillar practices; what, if anything, they feel they have learned as a result; and how, if at all, their experiences with the pillar practices helped them to better meet adaptive teaching challenges involving EL students. I also plan to provide participants a copy of the transcript from the first interview to review and check for accuracy. Topics for this interview include reflecting on experiences, learnings, and potential connections to better meeting adaptive challenges through each of the pillar practices.

**Interview three: Influences of cultural background.** The third interview with teacher will also last approximately 60 minutes (Interview Protocol 3: Appendix E). In this final interview, my purposes are to allow participants to reflect on what they shared in the first two interviews, member-check the transcript for the second interview, to check my interpretations, and explore the third and final topic relating to my third research question on the potential influences of cultural background. I plan to begin by asking participants to reflect on what they shared during the first and second interviews. I will then move into the primary focus of the interview by asking participants to reflect on the potential influence that their cultural
backgrounds may have on their experiences with instructional decision making, relationships with students and colleagues, and the pillar practices. I also plan to provide participants a copy of the transcript from the second interview to review and check for accuracy. After the third interview is transcribed, I plan to send this transcript via email for participants to check for accuracy and to provide a final opportunity for participants to reflect on what they shared during the third interview. Topics for this interview include class background, ethnic and racial background, and potential effects of cultural background on instructional decision making, relationships, and the pillar practices.

In this section on data collection, I have described my selection of data analysis methods and explained how those methods align to my three research questions. I also explained my primary data collection method of in-depth interviewing. In the next section, I describe my data analysis methods which were iterative (Maxwell, 2005) and began simultaneously with my data collection methods.

Data Analysis

In this section, I describe my data analysis methods, which involved an iterative, ongoing, and systematic process (Creswell, 2007; Drago-Severson, 2004b, Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). I have carefully selected strategies for qualitative data analysis that provide a robust, structured process that is both systematic (emphasis on the science) and open (emphasis on art and interpretation). Acknowledging that multiple stories can be told from the same data set, I strive to articulate clearly my methodological decision-making as I outline the data analysis steps for my in-depth interview data below. Appendix A outlines my timeline for data analysis.
Below, I describe my analysis process in step-by-step detail. Throughout the data analysis process, I will write analytic notes and memos. After each interview, I will take reflective notes. Also, after all the interviews have been completed and data collection is finished, I will continue to write reflectively. Corbin and Strauss (2008) stress how critical it is to scrutinize key concepts throughout data analysis to address threats to interpretive validity. Throughout the data analysis process, I will interpret the data by writing in-depth analytical memos and discussing possible findings with a dissertation study group of graduate student researchers and my advisors. While coding I will be drafting an analytic framework and writing analytic memos to help me build the analytic framework (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I will also write summary analytic memos answering the research questions for the study (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2004c, 2009; Maxwell & Miller, 1998). In each of the steps listed below I note where I include analytical memo-writing specific to the data analysis step.

**Step One: Analytic Notes—Writing Reflectively after Interviews**

The first step of my data analysis begins with writing analytic memos after each interview (Drago-Severson, 2009). After finishing each interview, I will take notes on possible themes and connections to the research questions. Writing reflectively after each interview allows me to help identify and record issues pertaining to research bias and reactivity while also recording my initial impressions as ideas emerge and evolve regarding possible themes and relationships to answering research questions (Maxwell, 2005).

**Step Two: Transcribing Interviews and Reviewing Transcripts**

In this second step of data analysis, I plan to digitally record each interview and hire a reputable transcriber to create a transcript of each digitally recorded interview to help insure descriptive validity (Maxwell, 2005). As suggested in Maxwell (2005) and Maxwell and Miller
(1998), I will read this first interview transcript and listen to the interview recording to ensure descriptive validity. Transcribers are unfamiliar with specific school contexts and may not be familiar with specific terms or may misunderstand participants. I will share each interview transcript with the participants to member-check for accuracy.

Prior to coding, I will use data reduction techniques (Miles & Huberman, 1994) such as segmenting the data in each transcript according to what is of interest to the study by identifying key relationships that a) connect data in a narrative flow and b) eliminate data that is unhelpful to answering the research questions (Maxwell & Miller, 1998). This data reduction strategy will be used before uploading the data to a computer-based data analysis program, HYPER Research. Also as I review transcripts I will also take notes, write memos about initial answers to my research questions (as noted above), and revise the preliminary coding scheme developed prior to the start of interviewing (see Appendix F: Preliminary Coding Scheme).

I will write analytical memos during this step to help me reflect on the transcription recording and reviewing process as well as the segmenting process to help me insure that I am attending to descriptive validity threats (Maxwell, 2005).

**Step Three: Preliminary Coding**

The preliminary coding process will include both open coding (emic) and theoretical coding (etic) (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2004c, 2009). Preliminary coding will involve a several step process: 1) reading a section of the transcript and recording mega-themes afterward; 2) re-reading the section and underlining one-, two-, and three-word phrases that stand out for me as regards one research question (invivio coding); 3) re-reading the section a third time and recording themes in the margins (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This process will then allow me to revisit my preliminary coding scheme (Appendix F), make needed
adjustments, and then use the revised coding scheme to code each transcript using the computer-assisted program HYPER-Research (Yin, 2009). While coding transcripts, I also plan to cross-check codes across interviews and with other researchers at least three times (Maxwell, 2005; Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2004c, 2009) and write analytical memos weekly (Maxwell, 2005) to help identify and address issues of interpretative validity.

Step Four: Categorization

In this fourth step of the data analysis process, I plan to code interview transcripts from the first set of interviews in one batch in order to group data according to similarities and differences to find patterns in the data (Maxwell & Miller, 1998) relating to my first research question relating to adaptive teaching challenges involving EL students. To do this, I will reduce and segment data (Maxwell & Miller, 1998) according to this first research question. I will look at data one interview at a time, and then create matrices and visual displays to help me begin to make cross-case and cross-site comparisons (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2004c, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009). I plan to repeat these steps with interview two and interview three. During this time, I will continue revising the analytic framework and writing in-depth narrative summaries and memos (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Maxwell, 2005).

Step Five: In-Depth Narrative Summaries

After each participant completes the interview series, I will write an in-depth narrative summary for each case (Maxwell, 2005; Maxwell & Miller, 1998). I will craft a coherent narrative using both the participants’ words and my own interpretation (Maxwell & Miller, 1998). The purpose of using this strategy is to maintain a coherent narrative for each case to ensure that the within-in case context remains intact while other data analysis strategies aim to reassemble the data across cases to find similarities and difference relating to emerging themes.
and the research questions (Maxwell & Miller, 1998). I will continue analytical memo-writing during this step to help insure that I am attending to issues of interpretive validity (Maxwell, 2005).

**Step Six: Within-Case and Across-Case Analysis**

My final data analysis step involves completing within-case and across-case analysis once all interviews and my analytical framework have been completed. I will create displays for cross-case analysis within each site and within the entire sample to help me understand my findings and answer my three research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to present in my findings chapters. I will organize findings into three chapters, each focused on a separate research question. Each findings chapter will first describe findings across the sample (both sites), then describe findings at each of the two sites. I plan to also use my analytical framework for an additional step of data analysis once all findings have been generated to look for patterns of similarities and differences according to demographics and according to potential emerging relationships among the data gathered to address each research question. This final step in the data analysis process will yield a comparison of data across research, concepts, themes, and sites using detailed narratives, visual displays, and word tables (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2004c, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009). I will also write summary analytic memos answering the research questions for the study (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2004c, 2009; Maxwell & Miller, 1998) during this final data analysis step.

**Validity**

The field of qualitative research presents the researcher with multiple ways to attend to validity threats. Acknowledging the researcher assumptions, study limitations, and conceptual framework in preceding chapters is an important part of the approach advocated by Maxwell
(2005) to address validity threats in qualitative research. “Any view is a view from some perspective, and therefore is shaped by the location (social and theoretical) and ‘lens’ of the observer” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 39). I do my best to present my assumptions, prior experience, and literature reviewed in attending to validity threats. Below I more systematically discuss critical issues concerning the validity threats to this study: researcher bias, reactivity, descriptive validity, interpretive validity, and theoretical validity (Maxwell, 2005).

**Researcher Bias**

Researcher bias is one of the two critical validity threats relating to study design. First, I contend with researcher bias, meaning how might my expectations, values, and experiences influence how I conduct the study and draw conclusions (Maxwell, 2005). I will address this validity threat by writing analytical memos (Maxwell, 2005) about my identity, experiences at each site, and reactions to participants, and by working with other graduate students and my advisors to review my methodological assumptions and selection of data that “stand out” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 108). While I can not claim to be wholly objective or indifferent as a researcher, I will address my own subjectivity and be mindful of my own assumptions in my writing and design by making my assumptions clear and by stating my research hypotheses, so that others may judge to what extent researcher bias seems to affect data collection and analysis (Maxwell, 2005).

I also heed Becker’s (1970) warning of researcher bias in terms of “the hierarchy of credibility” that comes with being at an upper position in an organization with more information and an elevated vantage point, or the bias that comes from sympathy for the subordinates held in that organization whose voices are not valued in the same way as superiors. As a researcher, one must "satisfy the demands of our science by always making clear the limits of what we have
studied, marking the boundaries beyond which our findings cannot be applied" (Becker, 1970, p. 133). Becker instructs the researcher to simply say: *I studied this from that point of view.* I have taken a side, and these are the "theoretical and technical resources [used] to avoid the distortions" (Becker, 1970, p. 134) that are inevitable. I hope to uphold Becker’s standard of understanding how the “hierarchy of credibility” influences the researcher’s reflexivity while collecting and analyzing data.

**Reactivity**

Researcher reactivity—all visible and invisible characters I bring to the study and how they may influence the setting or participants—is a second validity threat I have considered while designing my study (Maxwell, 2005). I plan to address this again by writing analytic memos and through discussions with other researchers about how I might be influencing the data during interviews. In my protocols, I will also acknowledge my presence and past experiences at the start of interviews and give participants a chance to raise questions or concerns regarding my past experiences or present role as researcher. I will provide participants with clear descriptions of the study’s purpose and intended use of research data (IRB protocols), and I will outline confidentiality procedures for data collected in interviews and reported in the dissertation.

**Descriptive Validity**

I plan to address descriptive validity threats—the accuracy of what I see and hear—through the use of digital voice recorders and transcription services for interviews (Maxwell, 2005). I add an additional strategy for addressing descriptive validity threats regarding transcription. I will listen to all interview recordings and check the prepared transcript for accuracy after a professional transcriptionist has completed the transcript. I will also conduct
observations prior to starting interviews with participants to become more acquainted with the setting and build trust and rapport with participants.

**Interpretive Validity**

To address interpretative validity threats, throughout the study I plan to ask myself: *how might I be wrong?* During the data analysis phases, I will crosscheck codes with other researchers and conduct member-checks to get feedback on my interpretation of participants’ words and cross-check codes with other researchers to address the question of: *How might I be wrong with respect to interpreting the data?* (Maxwell, 2005).

**Theoretical Validity**

In terms of theoretical validity, I will look for discrepant data, potential outliers, and contrary findings or alternative explanations throughout the data analysis process (Maxwell, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2009). Additionally, as I try to explain why things are happening, designing a qualitative multi-site case study project provides the advantages of “intensive, long-term involvement” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 110) and can collect “rich” data that will allow me to see the larger picture of what is happening both in terms of individual participants and in terms of the context of the site itself (Maxwell, 2005). I should be able to generalize within the setting and group of participants studied; Maxwell (2005) refers to this as *internal generalizability.* While I do not plan to write findings with *external generalizability* outside of the site I study, I do hope that other researchers might start similar projects and use the findings from my study to inspire and shape their own studies of other settings, using a variety of methodological approaches.
References


## Appendix A: Data Collection and Analysis Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 2012-March 2012</td>
<td>IRB Approval Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2012-April 2012</td>
<td>Site observations and document analysis. Presentations to staff asking for participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2012-August 2012</td>
<td>Participants identified and interviews conducted as participants are identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2012-April 2012</td>
<td>Interview one conducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2012-May 2012</td>
<td>Interview two conducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2012-June 2012</td>
<td>Interview three conducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2012-June 2012</td>
<td>Researcher writes field notes and analytic memos after observations, document analysis sessions, review of demographic indexes, and interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2012-July 2012</td>
<td>Interviews are transcribed by hired transcriptionist. Researcher reads interviews for accuracy, and data reduction strategies applied before sending to participants for member-check and before uploading to HYPER Research data analysis software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2012-July 2012</td>
<td>Researcher codes each case using open coding and theoretical codes as represented in preliminary coding list (Appendix F). Preliminary coding list revised as necessary. Researcher cross-checks codes with graduate study group members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2012-August 2012</td>
<td>Researcher writes case descriptions and in-depth narrative summaries for each case. Researcher writes analytic memos as necessary and data matrices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2012-October 2012</td>
<td>Researcher conducts cross-case data analysis: data matrices and visual displays for analysis within each site and within the entire sample according to analytic framework (conceptual framework) and emerging themes. Revises conceptual framework and writes analytic memos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2012</td>
<td>Researcher drafts findings chapters. Researcher writes summary analytic memos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2012</td>
<td>Researcher drafts analyses chapters including implications, conclusions, and recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2012</td>
<td>Researcher completes draft of entire dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2012</td>
<td>Editor reviews document and researcher completes edits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2013-March 2013</td>
<td>External review of draft (advisors, peers), feedback, and revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2013</td>
<td>Final editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2013</td>
<td>Submission to committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2013</td>
<td>Present initial findings at AERA conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2013</td>
<td>Defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2013-May 2013</td>
<td>Complete suggested revisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Informed Consent

Teachers College, Columbia University

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Principal Investigator:
Sarah Benis Scheier-Dolberg

Research Title:
Teachers of English Learners and Their Experiences within the Learning-Oriented Leadership Model

Research Description:
You are invited to participate in research study for my Doctoral Dissertation work at Teachers College, Columbia University. The focus of my research is to learn from you. I am very interested in learning how you define and experience challenges in your work that are adaptive problems (problems for which there are no easy or ready-made answers). I am also interested in learning about your experiences with the pillar practices of the learning-oriented leadership model (i.e., teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, collegial inquiry) and how, if it all, they may help you better meet those adaptive challenges in your teaching. Finally, I am interested in learning about your experiences with the potential influences of cultural background on your work with English learners and the pillar practices.

This study is necessary because little is known about the experience of teachers of English learners who are now facing extraordinary and complex challenges in their professional contexts. Your participation in my study will help me to better understand the challenges teachers of English learners face in their professional lives and how they grow to meet those challenges within the learning-oriented leadership model.

Participation involves three one-hour, in-depth interviews within a four-month period. With your permission, I will record the interview digitally. Transcriptions will be kept in a locked file cabinet at the my home office to ensure that only I will have access to these items; digital audio files will be kept on my password-protected computer. I, Sarah Benis Scheier-Dolberg, will conduct the research, and the interviews will take place at the location of your choosing.

Risks and Benefits:
There is minimal risk involved participating in this study. All identifying data will be removed, so it is unlikely that his data could be used to prejudice others against participants. As the researcher, I will ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants. The risk assumed shall be the same as ordinary risk assumed having conversations about professional work. There is no penalty or consequence for not participating in this study. There are some benefits associated with this study, including a complimentary professional consultation on technology from the researcher, Sarah Benis Scheier-Dolberg, and the contribution of knowledge to the field.
of professional development and learning spaces for teachers of English learners.

Data Storage to Protect Confidentiality:
You will not be personally identified in any report or publication resulting from this research. The school will be given a pseudonym as well. Any data shared for the purposes of coding and confirmability will be coded with a pseudonym as well. No names will appear on any of the digital audio records. All digital audio records will be labeled by number and will be stored on a password-protected computer.

All documents in digital and paper form will be kept by me on a password-protected computer or in a locked cabinet in my home office to which only I will have access. Records will not be maintained once the dissertation process is complete. All forms of personal identification will be erased and eliminated. I will maintain the data in locked cabinets in the coded form only for any post-dissertation research.

Time Involvement:
The research process, which should span four months, will take a total of approximately 3-5 hours of your time in the form of three one-hour interviews.

Compensation:
I appreciate your voluntary participation in this study, as it will be adding to the body of knowledge on the topic of professional development and learning spaces for teachers of English learners, particularly from the perspective of teachers. No payment is implied or provided for your voluntary participation other than a complimentary technology consultation offered to all participants by me, Sarah Benis Scheier-Dolberg.

How The Results Will Be Used:
I will use the results of the study for my doctoral dissertation. In addition, I may present what you share with me at conferences and meetings, publish in journals or articles, or use the information for educational purposes. In these venues you will not be identified as a research participant.

Participant’s Rights:
• I have read and discussed the Research Description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.
• My participation in research is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time.
• The researcher may withdraw me from the research at her professional discretion.
• If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
• Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be
voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.

- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. The investigator's phone number is (617) 834-3501. Her faculty advisor, Ellie Drago-Severson, at Teachers College, Columbia University, and can be reached at (212) 678-4163.

- If at any time I have comments, or concerns regarding the conduct of the research or questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact the Teachers College, Columbia University Institutional Review Board /IRB. The phone number for the IRB is (212) 678-4105. Or, I can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY, 10027, Box 151.

- I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.

- If digital audio taping is part of this research:
  I (___) consent to be audio taped.
  I (___) do NOT consent to being audio taped.

- The written, audio taped materials will be viewed only by the principal investigator and members of the research team.

Participant's Signature: ___________________________  Date: ________________

Name: _________________________________________
Appendix C: Interview Protocol 1

Name of Interviewee: ____________________________
Date: _______________________________________________________________________
Duration of Interview: _______________________________________________________________________

Section I: Context

1. Appreciation
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. I appreciate you taking the time today.

2. Overview of Study’s Purpose and Goals
I want to tell you about the purposes and goals of the study, as well as the purpose of this first interview. My hope for this research is to learn more about your experiences as a teacher of English learners. During our conversation today, I will ask you questions to help me understand the challenges you face in your professional context. I am very interested in learning how you define and experience challenges in your work that are adaptive problems (problems for which there are no easy or ready-made answers). In my work as a teacher of English learners in Massachusetts and my work as a coach and mentor teacher in Massachusetts and New York City, I have observed just how complex and difficult the challenges that teachers of English learners face each day in their work as teachers in urban schools. I have designed this study to investigate a model of leadership, the learning-oriented leadership model, that your principal uses to help support teachers grow to better meet the complex challenges in their work. Every person has a different way of thinking about things, and I want to understand how you think about things. There are no right or wrong answers. This interview will take approximately 60 minutes. We will follow up the interview with a second interview next month on the topic of your experiences with the professional learning spaces in your school for learning, including teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry. I will ask you about your experiences with those professional learning spaces and how, if at all, they have helped you to better meet the challenges of engaging English learners. In the third and final interview the following month, we will focus on your reflections on your own cultural background and how, if at all, that might influence your teaching decisions and relationships with students and colleagues. In each interview after this first session, you will also have an opportunity to review the preview interview transcript and help me to ensure that I have understood your perspective accurately.

3. Confidentiality
As a researcher, I will write about what you tell me. When writing about your experience, I will not use your real name nor the school’s name or the neighborhood in which the school is located. Everything you say will be kept private. I will never identify to anyone the names of any of the people who are helping me learn about teacher growth and learning unless a participant has given me his or her permission. I may quote things that you say in anything I write, but I will never use your name. You do not have to answer any question that you do not want to answer.
4. **Taping**
To make sure that I can listen to you well and so that I can review what you have said, I will be digitally recording our conversation. I want you to know that no one other than the professional transcriber or me will have access to the tape. I will never identify who said what to me to anyone, and this includes everyone at your school and within the school district where you work. The material will be transcribed, but no one will see the transcript except for me. I will send you a copy of the transcript to check for accuracy.

5. **Questions**
Do you have any questions before we begin? If you have any questions at any time during our conversation, or if you do not understand something I have said, please let me know.

**Section II: Warm Up**

We will begin with some warm-up questions about your background as a teacher. In case it is helpful for you, I will start by sharing some information about my own background as a teacher.

1. How many years have you been teaching?
2. How long have you been teaching at your current school?
3. How many English learners do you currently teach?
4. How many years have you been teaching English learners?
5. How do you self-identify in terms of race and ethnicity?
6. What language(s) do you speak at home?
7. What other languages have you learned?
8. Can you tell me how old you are?

**Section III: Adaptive Teaching Challenges**

9. Having been a teacher, I know the rewards of teaching. I also know that as teachers that we all face tremendous challenges in our work. It seems that recently those challenges have increased for teachers. Could you tell me about the challenges you face in your work as a teacher?

   Probes: In the classroom? Most important ones? Can you please explain? Examples? In your work with other adults in the school or school community? Most important ones? Can you please explain? Examples?
10. If someone were to ask you about the challenges you face as a teacher who supports the learning and achievement of English learners at your school, what would you name? What are the biggest ones? Of those challenges you face, what are the challenges for which there are not easy answers or ready-made solutions?
   Probes: Were you trained for these?
   What helped you? What would have helped you?
   Think of things where there are no trainings or professional development sessions available to help you tackle these challenges?
   Think of problems where there are no known solutions.

11. Let’s focus on the hardest challenge you have named so far. Which one is it? Could you describe that experience for me?

12. Suppose I wanted to make a list of these kinds of challenges that you have faced as a teacher of English learners, what would you suggest I put on the list?
   Probes: Such as?
   Could you give me an example?
   Can you tell me more about that?

**Section V: Wrap-Up**

13. Do you have any questions for me? Is there anything you need to know about me, my work, or why I want to learn from you? Is there anything else you would like to add to what we have talked about so far?

Thinking ahead to our next interview session, what time, day, and venue would be best for your schedule? (We will plan to meet approximately a month from today’s date.)

Between now and our next interview, I will have your interview transcribed, read it for accuracy while listening to the audio recording, and then send the transcript to you via email for review. At the start of our next interview, we spend the first 10 minutes discussing the transcript to make sure it is accurate, and I will share a few of my learnings from the transcript with you for us to discuss before moving to the second topic of this study: your experiences with the pillar practices of mentoring, teaming, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry.

Thank you for your time and your thinking.
Appendix D: Interview Protocol 2

Name of Interviewee: _________________________
Date: _________________________
Duration of Interview: _________________________

Section I: Context

1. Appreciation
Thank you again for agreeing to participate in this study and for taking the time today to talk with me.

2. Overview of Interview 2
We will start today by reviewing the transcript of our last interview, the one I emailed to you. I have a copy here for you to look at as well if it is helpful for you to have while we talk. First, I will ask you to verify that the transcript is accurate. You are welcome to make any edits to the document that you feel will better convey your experiences. In this first then minutes of the interview as we review the transcript, I will also share a few of my learnings from the transcript with you for us to discuss. After ten minutes, because your interview time is limited, we will then move onto focus on the second topic of this study: your experiences with the pillar practices of mentoring, teaming, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry. I also want to remind you of something I said in the first interview, every person has a different way of thinking about things, and I want to understand how you think about things. There are no right or wrong answers. This interview will take approximately 60 minutes.

3. Confidentiality, Taping, and Questions
For this interview I will maintain the same procedures for confidentiality and taping used during our first interview. Is this okay?

Do you have any questions before we begin? If you have any questions at any time during our conversation, or if you do not understand something I have said, please let me know.

Section II: Warm Up and Follow Up Questions for Interview 1
Review transcript and share researcher’s learnings from Interview 1 along with any follow up questions from researcher or participant.

Section III: Professional Learning Spaces (Pillar Practices)

Teaming
1. Let’s begin with one of the pillar practices: teaming. Please tell me about your experiences with teaming at your school.
   Probes: Such as? Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?

2. Staying with your experiences with teaming. What kinds of learning, if any, have you experienced through some of the teaming experiences we have discussed?
   Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?
   What experiences stand out as the most pivotal for your learning?

3. Reflecting on some of the challenges we discussed in the first interview, do you see any connections between your experiences with teaming and your being better able to meet these challenges?
   Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?
   What experiences stand out as the most pivotal for your learning?

Mentoring

4. Next, let’s move to mentoring. Please tell me about your experiences with mentoring at your school.
   Probes: Such as? Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?

5. Staying with your experiences with mentoring. What kinds of learning, if any, have you experienced through some of the mentoring experiences we have discussed?
   Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?
   What experiences stand out as the most pivotal for your learning?

6. Reflecting on some of the challenges we discussed in the first interview, do you see any connections between your experiences with mentoring and your being better able to meet these challenges?
   Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?
   What experiences stand out as the most pivotal for your learning?

Assuming Leadership Roles

7. Next, let’s move to assuming leadership roles. Please tell me about your experiences with assuming leadership roles at your school.
   Probes: Such as? Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?

8. Staying with your experiences with assuming leadership roles. What kinds of learning, if any, have you experienced through some of the assuming leadership roles experiences we have discussed?
Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that? What experiences stand out as the most pivotal for your learning?

9. Reflecting on some of the challenges we discussed in the first interview, do you see any connections between your experiences with assuming leadership roles and your being better able to meet these challenges?
   Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?
   What experiences stand out as the most pivotal for your learning?

Collegial Inquiry

10. Finally, let’s discuss collegial inquiry. Please tell me about your experiences with collegial inquiry at your school.
    Probes: Such as? Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?

11. Staying with your experiences with collegial inquiry. What kinds of learning, if any, have you experienced through some of the collegial inquiry experiences we have discussed?
    Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?
    What experiences stand out as the most pivotal for your learning?

12. Reflecting on some of the challenges we discussed in the first interview, do you see any connections between your experiences with collegial inquiry and your being better able to meet these challenges?
    Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?
    What experiences stand out as the most pivotal for your learning?

Section V: Wrap-Up

13. Do you have any questions for me? Is there anything else you would like to add to what we have talked about so far?

Thinking ahead to our final interview session, what time, day, and venue would be best for your schedule? (We will plan to meet approximately a month from today’s date.)

Between now and our next interview as before, I will have your interview transcribed, read it for accuracy while listening to the audio recording, and then send the transcript to you via email for review. At the start of our next interview, we spend the first 10 minutes discussing the transcript to make sure it is accurate, and I will share a few of my learnings from the transcript with you for us to discuss before moving to the final topic of this study: your reflections on your own cultural background and how, if at all, that might influence your teaching decisions and relationships with students and colleagues.

Thank you for your time and your thinking.
Appendix E: Interview Protocol 3

Name of Interviewee: ________________________
Date: __________________________
Duration of Interview: ______________________

Section I: Context

1. Appreciation
Thank you again for agreeing to participate in this study and for taking the time today to talk with me for all three of these interviews.

2. Overview of Interview 3
We will start today by reviewing the transcript of our second interview, the one I emailed to you. I have a copy here for you to look at as well if it is helpful for you to have while we talk. First, I will ask you to verify that the transcript is accurate. You are welcome to make any edits to the document that you feel will better convey your experiences. In this first then minutes of the interview as we review the transcript, I will also share a few of my learnings from the transcript with you for us to discuss. After ten minutes, because your interview time is limited, we will then move onto focus on the second topic of this study: your reflections on your own cultural background and how, if at all, that might influence your teaching decisions and relationships with students and colleagues. I also want to remind you of something I said in the first interviews, every person has a different way of thinking about things, and I want to understand how you think about things. There are no right or wrong answers. This interview will take approximately 60 minutes.

3. Confidentiality, Taping, and Questions
For this interview I will maintain the same procedures for confidentiality and taping used during our first interview. Is this okay?

Do you have any questions before we begin? If you have any questions at any time during our conversation, or if you do not understand something I have said, please let me know.

Section II: Warm Up and Follow Up Questions for Interview 2
Review transcript and share researcher’s learnings from Interview 2 along with any follow up questions from researcher or participant.

Section III: Cultural Background, Instructional Decision Making, Relationships, and the Pillar Practices

1. In our first interview, I asked you some warm up questions about your teaching background as well as your cultural background. Today I wanted to begin by asking one more question about your cultural background connected to social-economic status. I ask this question...
because in my experiences as a White woman raised in a rural town with English as my first language, I found that my experiences growing up in a family from a lower middle-class background allowed me to better understand the experiences of my students and families as I began working as a teacher. I see experiences with class as an important influence on how teachers work in urban schools, particularly with students living at or below the poverty line. Would you be willing to share with me information about your class background?

2. How would you describe your cultural background?
   - Probes: language, ethnicity/race, education, other
     Can you tell me about where you grew up and went to school?

3. In what ways, if at all, do you see your cultural background affecting your work as a teacher of English learners?
   - Probes: Specific examples?
     Consider: instructional decisions, relationships with students and families, relationships with colleagues

4. Are there any instances that come to mind where your culture and/or the culture of your students or families played a major role in your work as a teacher?
   - Probes: Specific examples?
     Consider: instructional decisions, relationships with students and families, relationships with colleagues

5. What do you think about the potential role teachers’ cultural backgrounds might play in influencing teachers’ experiences engaging in professional development activities in the school (such as teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, and collegial inquiry)? What have been your experiences with your own cultural background and how it does or does not influence your experiences teaming, mentoring, assuming leadership roles, or collegial inquiry?
   - Probes: Such as? Could you give me an example? Can you tell me more about that?

Section V: Wrap-Up

6. Do you have any questions for me? Is there anything you need to know? Is there anything else you would like to add to what we have talked about so far?

This is our final interview session. In the next two months, I will be transcribing your third interview, reading it for accuracy while listening to the audio recording, and then sending the transcript to you via email for review. May I follow up over email or phone after sending the transcript to make sure it is accurate and to share a few of my learnings from the transcript?

What is a good time, date, and venue for us to schedule your technology consultation, my very small token of appreciation for your time and all that you have shared?

Thank you for your time and your thinking.
Appendix F: Preliminary Coding Scheme

RQ #1 ADAPTIVE TEACHING CHALLENGES

Label 1: Diagnosing Learning Issues
Definition:
Teacher is trying to diagnose specific learning issues she or he needs to address with each individual child and/or appropriate interventions; may be sited in RTI context (Dorn & Henderson, 2010; Rinaldi & Samson, 2008; Ysseldyke, Burns, Scholin, & Parker, 2010). Teacher is seeking to differentiate between common learning challenges and language learning challenges using informal or formal (RTI or data-analysis protocol) processes
Description:
Code addresses RQ 1 in that is provides an example of an adaptive teaching challenge specific to teaching English learners because it relates to a complex challenge originating in teaching the English language in a general education or language program K12 context.
Indicators:
Differentiating between disability/special education concerns or developmental concerns AND language learning concerns; RTI; data-analysis

Label 2: Family Communication
Definition:
Teacher is trying to engage families of English learners (Hiatt-Michael, 2007) and/or build meaningful relationships (Ferguson, 2007) in the context of cultural, linguistic, and/or community discontinuities (Nieto, 2010); teacher expresses need for more or different resources to support family outreach (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007).
Description:
Code addresses RQ 1 in that is provides an example of an adaptive teaching challenge specific to teaching English learners because it relates to a complex challenge originating in teaching the English language in a general education or language program K12 context.
Indicators:
Talking to or working with parents

Label 3: Teacher Collaboration
Definition:
Teacher is dealing with other teachers, specifically bilingual teachers able to teach in more than one language who may be full teachers, aides, or other support personnel (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007); teachers do not have time for collaboration during school day because of limited resources (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007); coteaching models present challenges for teachers including: sharing ideas, classroom resources, skills, physical space; identification of teacher roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes, and common view of
executing coteaching model(s) (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010; Roache et al., 2003); description of micropolitical processes including conflict stances, border politics, ideology, and organizational change and learning (Achinstein, 2002); teachers working to collaborate as distributed leadership experience (Gates & Robinson, 2009)

**Description:**
Code addresses RQ 1 in that is provides an example of an adaptive teaching challenge specific to teaching English learners because it relates to a complex challenge originating in teaching the English language in a general education or language program K12 context.

**Indicators:**
Closing achievement gap, catching up to peers, focus on achievement, parity with native English speaking peers, more advantaged peers, need for more and different resources to teach EL students

**Label 4: Low Expectations**

**Definition:**
Teacher is trying to help students close achievement gap with native English speaking peers and/or more economically-advantaged peers that includes more and/or different resources (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007)

**Description:**
Code addresses RQ 1 in that is provides an example of an adaptive teaching challenge specific to teaching English learners because it relates to a complex challenge originating in teaching the English language in a general education or language program K12 context.

**Indicators:**
Closing achievement gap, catching up to peers, focus on achievement, parity with native English speaking peers, more advantaged peers, need for more and different resources to teach EL students

**Label 5: Curriculum**

**Definition:**
Teacher is trying to support biliteracy through developing and/or using a bilingual curriculum (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007); teacher is trying to support noncognitive goals such as navigating US culture (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007); teachers need appropriate instructional materials (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007)

**Description:**
Code addresses RQ 1 in that is provides an example of an adaptive teaching challenge specific to teaching English learners because it relates to a complex challenge originating in teaching the English language in a general education or language program K12 context.

**Indicators:**
Native language use/support; bilingual curriculum development or use; need for more resources

**Label 6: Assessments**
Definition:
Teacher is trying to help student attain and maintain basic proficiency in English language arts for reclassification to FLEP or general education status (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007); new assessments measuring academic content and not solely command of English are being developed in alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards (Linquanti, 2011); teachers describe adopting or creating a range of formative and summative assessment strategies for demonstrating task mastery (Banks et al., 2001)

Description:
Code addresses RQ 1 in that is provides an example of an adaptive teaching challenge specific to teaching English learners because it relates to a complex challenge originating in teaching the English language in a general education or language program K-12 context.

Indicators:
Meeting state or district proficiency standards

Label 7: Student Characteristics

Definition:
Teacher describes changes that must be made depending on student characteristics such as: family background, number of years in the U.S., student age and grade level, native language proficiency, initial English proficiency (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007); teacher describes difficulties in the social and/or cultural contexts of teaching and learning and/or use of culturally responsive activities, resources, and strategies for instruction (Banks et al., 2001)

Description:
Code addresses RQ 1 in that is provides an example of an adaptive teaching challenge specific to teaching English learners because it relates to a complex challenge originating in teaching the English language in a general education or language program K-12 context.

Indicators:
Programming lacks enough and/or right resources; additional time (longer school day/year)

Label 8: Programming

Definition:
Teacher expresses the need for more or different resources to support instruction including longer day and/or school year, computers, libraries spanning multiple grades and languages, communication strategies for reaching families (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007); teachers describes need for flexible programming and appropriate staffing based on student characteristics (Gándara & Rumberger, 2007);

Description:
Code addresses RQ 1 in that is provides an example of an adaptive teaching challenge specific to teaching English learners because it relates to a complex
challenge originating in teaching the English language in a general education or language program K12 context. 

Indicators:
Programming lacks enough and/or right resources; additional time (longer school day/year)

RQ #2 PILLAR PRACTICES

Label 1: Teaming
Label 2: Mentoring or Coaching
Label 3: Assuming Leadership Roles
Label 4: Collegial Inquiry
Label 5: Supports to Learning

RQ #3 CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Label 1: Cultural Competencies
Label 2: Race/Ethnicity
Label 3: Language
Label 4: Socio-economic Status
Label 5: Educational Background
Label 6: Instructional Decision Making
Label 7: Relationships with Students
Label 8: Relationships with Colleagues