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A Case Study of the Implementation Process: The Translation of Policy

into Programming

by

Anna Clybur. $\copyright$

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in

partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of

Philosophy

in

Educational Administration

Department of Educational Policy Studies

Edmonton, Alberta

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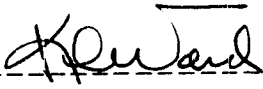
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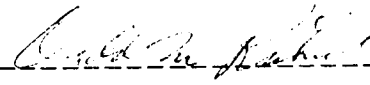
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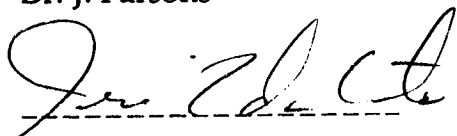
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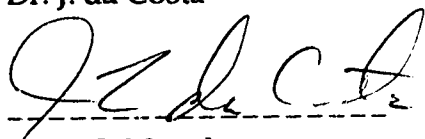
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Abstract

The policy implementation phase involves putting policy into action. Three levels of policy players comprising two policy makers, four administrators, and twelve teachers were the source of data in this descriptive case study. The way in which they interpreted the *Foundations for adult learning a ... pment policy* (1991) was investigated. As they interpreted the policy st... the study's participants were influenced by the roles they pl... the policy environment.

The n... re of the policy and its context played an important role in determining whether the policy would be effectively implemented and also whether it would benefit those for whom it was intended. It was found that dysfunctional communication networks and a lack of a shared understanding impeded the policy's implementation. The theoretical conclusions that emerged from the study led to several the development of six recommendations.

A major recommendation was that if policy is to be successful and beneficial it must be adaptable to the context of both the policy makers and the implementer. As well, policy makers must treat the development and implementation of policy as a process. This process should be incremental. All those in the policy system must share an understanding of the policy which promotes their respective goals. Policy makers must be more thoughtful in developing and designing policy that makes a positive difference.

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A Case Study of the Implementation Process: The Translation of Policy into Programming

Chapter 1

Introduction and Background to the Study

Introduction

Policy implementation is the process of policy being put into practice. It incorporates what Dunn (1981) classifies as the "interrelationships among three elements: public policies, policy stakeholders, and policy environments" (p. 46). These interrelationships are reflected in how organizations implement mandated policy. Most organizations and in particular, educational ones, face the problematic task of coordinating various policies, inevitably creating integration problems. Decisions made at the local implementation stage are supposed to integrate and interpret policy and, at the same time, to benefit implementers and policy makers.

For any organization that is challenged to implement policy, many factors constrain and complicate matters. McLaughlin (1987) pointed out that "local factors such as size, intra-organizational relations, commitment, capacity, and institutional complexity molded responses to policy" (p. 172).

Changes that affect actors in both policy and its environment may create adjustment and adaptation problems. Various factors may influence how policy becomes translated into practice, in other words, into viable and workable programmes. In addition, Berman and McLaughlin (1976) stated that "the bridge between a promising idea and its impact on students is implementation, but innovations are seldom implemented as planned" (p. 349). This is doubly difficult when as McLaughlin (1987) discovered "it is incredibly hard to make something happen, most especially across layers of government and institutions"(p. 172). Burger (1989) found that "divergent perceptions of the rationale for policy adoption between policy makers and

implementors may result in misunderstanding of the intents of policy by implementors"(p. 28). In other words, whenever policy is handed down from one level of stakeholders to another there are always differing perceptions and interpretations of policy intent that occur.

In full-time, adult, English as a Second Language programmes, the policy arena is complex with many actors and stakeholders involved both in the management and funding of programmes. Fifteen different departments in different Alberta provincial government ministries are involved in administering and regulating the activities in the area of English as a second language. Ho (1989) described the reality of funding in E.S.L. (English as a second language) programmes in Alberta:

> Four funders, two federal and two provincial
> authorities participated in this study. None of them...
> accepted the role of coordinator of planning and
> programming of the whole.... Each funder is
> concerned with one particular type of funded
> programme (a pluralistic response), therefore none is
> charged with addressing the gaps between them....
> With such fragmentation, ... no one authority can be
> held responsible to provide a coordinated response
> to the actual range of needs in the community. (pp.
> 80-81)

Ho (1989) described the nature of this policy system and how it affects programming goals in that "this means that adult education programmes themselves must adapt, like learners, to the changing needs of an integrated, multi-ethnic society" (p. 83). Then, how do administrators of institutions offering E.S.L. to adult immigrants develop and operationalize programmes to meet the criteria mandated by governmental policies and at the same time satisfy the needs of the policy environment and stakeholders? Berman and McLaughlin (1976) pointed out that this question is valid in that "the crucial stage is the implementation stage when the [policy or programme] confronts the

reality of its institutional setting and project plans must be translated into practice" (p. 349).

This transformation of policies into programmes at the local level of the institution was investigated through a descriptive case study of the implementation process as it relates to programme development decisions and deployment by the teaching staff. The study serves to analyse how policy is understood and placed into practice by focusing on full time E.S.L. programmes for adult immigrants in Alberta.

The Purpose of the Study

The study's main purpose was to investigate how policy directives are interpreted by those who develop policy and those who are entrusted in translating it into viable programmes. The vehicle used to discover this phenomenon was the full time programme in ESL training of adult immigrants in an Albertan adult education institution. Various factors of the policy system which often compel and constrain the organization in making decisions of a certain nature were explored and so too were the perceptions and interpretations of policy by the local-level practitioners as they understood their roles in the implementation process.

Teachers, administrators, and policy makers' goals differ and therefore each individual and group comes to the policy arena with perspectives which sometimes differ or match depending on whether there are common understandings of the major constructs used in the policy statements. Ho (1989) describes the differing goals of two policy stakeholders:

> E.S.L. programmes and settlement agencies relate to
> specific learner goals while those made by adult
> education programmers relate to programme goals.
> The fact of such diverse starting points alone create
> the potential for conflicting views of issues....such as
> recognition of competence and acknowledgement of
> diversity within the learner population. (p. 37)

To distinguish between the two sorts of goals is important in that the decision-making process used determines the characteristics of the programme in question. How well a programme integrates all the policies which regulate and fund E.S.L. for adult immigrants depends on the goals and values held by the stakeholders who implement policy into practice. Trir (1980) described the purpose of E.S.L. teachers' goals for learners as

> [taking] into account the development of the whole
> man, serving the personal and social development
> of the learner....[and to] render the learner not only
> able to communicate effectively....[but also] become
> more self-aware, more insightful into the problems
> of language and its use, more self-reliant and
> purposive as a learner, capable of continuing to learn
> independently. (p. 10)

On the other hand, adult education programmers' goals are aimed at producing immigrants who can attain employment (Ho, 1989). These decisions depend upon the values held by those who create programmes. Often these values differ from those held by the practitioners who must implement them. Hodgkinson (1978) stated that "the intrusion of values into the decision making process is not merely inevitable, it is the very substance of decision" (p. 59)."Values are concepts of the desirable with motivating force or, concepts of the desirable which tend to act as motivating determinants of behaviour" and to grasp the origins and assumptions behind these will lead to an understanding of how well practitioners understand and implement policies (p. 36). In order to comprehend the values themselves, it is important to come to know the context in which this process takes place.

A comprehensive description of the context and its members is needed. Ultimately, it is important to study the organization itself. Van Horn and Van Meter (1977) point out that "the formal and informal

attributes of the organization responsible for implementation affect its ability to carry out the policy's standards. No matter what the attitudes of its personnel, certain features of the agencies' staff, structure, and relations with other officials and units of government will tend to limit or enhance the prospects for effective implementation" (113). Van Horn and Van Meter (1977) go on to point out that there are many reasons for the compliance and non-compliance of policy directives. The main reasons are highlighted as the communication process -- "how well the intents of policy makers are understood; the capability problem, the organization and its members "capacity" to implement the policy as outlined; and lastly, the dispositional conflicts, in other words, how disposed the implementers are in putting the policy into action" (p. 105).

Often, those who implement will interpret both policy and programme goals into their own rendition of the two at the classroom level. Because the implementors are teachers there is an added consideration in the interpretive process: the fact that teachers operate on their own in what Mintzberg (1979) described as "teacher autonomy." Being that the institution in question can be delineated as a "professional bureaucracy" where teachers, as "professionals of the operating core ...control their own work, but they also seek collective control of the administrative decisions that affect them" (Mintzberg, 1979 ,p. 358). In addition to the teacher as professional, the institution being researched is typical of many like it in that as Back and Lane (1983) stated

> each individual and every department is basic to the operation of the higher education organization in a sense that is paralleled in no other type of organization, valid tasks for decision-making and implementation still remain, especially in higher education systems characterized by a low degree of autonomy.(p. 10)

In considering the policy stakeholders' values and goals, the researcher is able to understand the evolutionary and interpretive process that policy sets into action. McLaughlin (1987) stated that,

> implementers at all levels of the system effectively negotiate their response, fitting their action to the multiple demands, priorities, and values operating in their environment and the effective authority of the policy itself. Further, this bargaining or negotiation is a continuous process, proceeding over time as policy resources, problems, and objectives evolve and are played against a dynamic institutional setting. (p. 175)

An analysis of how policy is understood and interpreted gave insights into the process of implementation. E.S.L. programmes in adult education served as a channel by which this policy study served to explore the various "passages" and interpretations policy goes through before it reaches its final form in workable programmes (Berman, 1978). This research has implications for educational policy makers and programme planners alike. Not only does it reveal all the factors involved in how policy is interpreted, but, it will also demonstrate the evolutionary nature of the implementation process itself and the considerations that must be met before policy is to be effectively implemented so that it can benefit all those involved.

Statement of the Problem

General Research Question.

How are macro-policies that regulate full-time English as a Second Language programmes for adult immigrants in Alberta understood and interpreted into an adult educational institution's programmes?

Subsidiary Questions.

1. Which factors and constraints appear to influence the decisions made in interpreting macro-policies as they are integrated and transformed into workable programmes?

2. How do the different stakeholders' goals aid or impede macro-policies' intent to bring about a change?

3. How are policy goals reflected in programme goals?

4. How do policy goals become reinterpreted into workable programmes that fit institutional objectives and the individual goals of the practitioners implementing the policy?

5. What are the problems presented by the policy in question at the interpretation stage; and, ultimately how do these problems influence the decisions made in developing the appropriate programmes?

Importance of the Study

English as second language programmes for adult immigrants in Canada have existed for quite some time, yet very little policy (implementation) research has been conducted in this area. The programmes have been sponsored and funded by various levels of government. These programmes have been provided as a result of a large influx of immigrants to Canada and as a need to satisfy the goals of the present immigration policy which are aimed at integrating immigrants into Canadian society by providing English language training and general living and coping skills.

The Federal and Provincial Governments believed that these new immigrants required a functional level of English to increase their capability to attain employment and to integrate successfully into Canadian society. Therefore, it was important that government provide programmes which v on¹ , in a relatively short period of time, make these immigrants employable. Ho (1989) elaborated on immigrants entering Canada:

> actual immigration levels since 1976 have fluctuated
> between a low of 84,300 and a high of 149,000. The
> announced planning levels for 1988 of 125 - 135,000
> were slightly higher than those of the previous years
> "in response to a number of policy
> recommendations on family-related
> immigration."(p. 8)

The complex nature of the policy system that controls and provides funding for these programmes leads to a re-interpretation of policy as it is understood and managed in practical terms at the operational level. Berman (1978) stated that the number of 'passages' policy must pass through prior to implementation leads inevitably to re-interpretations of that policy. Bosetti (1990) points out that ultimately "as policy passes through and is implemented sequentially by various organizational levels the output of one implementation organization becomes the input of the next organizational level, and the end result at the classroom level is the implementation of a policy that has been adapted to meet the needs and characteristics of individuals at the various le els" (p. 12).

To better understand the interpretive process used to transform macro-policies into operational ones at the micro-level a thorough investigation of an institution (context) and how the players understand their roles needed to be undertaken. What the policy means to them as implementers also determines whether they choose to implement it as it was intended by those who developed the policy or to change it to suit their understanding of it.

The study's findings reveals how macro-level policy is
understood and put into practice at the local level. Policy as it is
interpreted into programming and its subsequent delivery reflects the
outcomes of the interrelationships between all the elements of what
Dunn (1981) called the "policy system." Dunn (1981) goes on to describe
them as follows:

> Policy systems co . 'ain processes which are dialectical
> in nature, meaning that objective and subjective
> dimensions of policy making are inseperable in
> practice. Policy systems are subjective human
> products created by the conscious choices of policy
> stakeholders; policy systems are an objective reality
> manifested in observable actions and their
> consequences; policy stakeholders are products of
> policy systems. (p. 46)

After all a policy system is complex in nature and made up of
three elements -- public policies, policy stakeholders, and policy
environments. Each element is affected when a new policy is
introduced and adjustments have to be made to accommodate the
change. In addition, the study provides policy makers with
information about how to deal with the tensions created by the
interaction of all these elements particularly when one of the
elements' goals is perceived to be or actually is in contradiction with
the beliefs, values and/or goals of another. It is therefore important to
understand how these elements of the system interact and in turn
generate factors that influence policy outcomes. These outcomes are
sometimes very different from what the policy makers' intended and
may not benefit those whom the policy was designed to benefit. In
addition it is equally important to look at the values and goals of those
people involved in the policy system.

Definitions

There are various terms used throughout the study that require defining. These terms are borrowed from the literature on implementation and other sources.

1. **Implementation:** "consists of the process of putting into practice an idea, program or set of activities new to the people attempting or expected to change." (Fullan, 1982, p. 54)

2. **Operationalization Phase:** the operationalization phase is the stage of policy implementation when policy is actually put into practice in a workable form (programmes). Sumner and Zellman (1977) further define this as the "phase [that] coincides with the period of project implementation, which begins when the project first becomes operational. The operationalization phase covers the period during which the project must adapt to the realities of its institutional setting" (p. 10).

3. **Macro-implementation problem:** This problem is created when a level of government (macro-level) imposes a policy or group of policies on a group of people or organization (micro-level). The problem is to get the local or the micro-level to carry out the initiatives and policy directives imposed by the macro-level. Berman (1978) defines the problem as one where "government must execute its policy so as to influence local delivery organizations to behave in desired ways" (p. 164).

4. **Micro-implementation problem:** This problem is encountered at the local level (micro-level) occurs when the macro-level (the government) imposes policy directives on it. A solution to the problem is for the local level to create its own policies or programmes satisfying the directives and guidelines for action imposed on it by the macro-level. Berman (1978) explains that

"in response to federal actions, the local organizations have to devise and carry out their own internal policies" (p. 164).

5. **Newcomers or immigrants:** "refers to persons who have been granted permanent admission into Canada and have not as yet acquired Canadian citizenship, exclusive of young persons in regular attendance at schools" (C.I.L.T. Agreement, 1953, p. 1).

6. **Policy:** "is the output of the policymaking system: the cumulative effect of all the actions, decisions, and behaviors of the millions of people who work in bureaucracies. It occurs, takes place, and is made at every point in the policy cycle, from agenda setting to policy impact. As such policy is an analytic category." (Guba, 1984, p. 69).

7. **Policy content:** is everything that fits in the definition of policy that is tangible in the form of written down directives. In particular, content for the purposes of this study are the directives for action and the responses to them (programmes) that result from the whole policy and implementation cycle. Ultimately, policy content is the range of permissible tools for action" (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1979, p. 188).

8. **Policy Goal:** A policy goal is "an aim or purpose which is broadly stated, formally defined, unspecified as to time and target groups, and unquantified" (Dunn, 1981, p. 214).

Delimitations

Because of the many institutions and policy which are involved in the teaching of English as a second language full-time programmes for adults there are several delimitations set into place to make the project manageable and more specific.

1. The study is delimited to one organization - a vocational college located in a large urban centre.

2. It is delimited to one policy document - the Alberta provincial government's -- *Foundations for Adult Learning and Development Policy* (November 1991). The policy is the focal point of investigation.

3. The study is delimited to one subject area that is affected by the above stated policy - the full time adult English as a second language programme for newcomers to Canada.

4. The study is delimited to a case study methodology in order to investigate the implementation process. The actors in the institution being studied and the respective policy stakeholders were observed and interviewed.

5. The study is delimited to three types of respondents. Only those who are entrusted with translating the policy into action -- the teachers and administrators of the organization, and those who make the policies -- the policy makers were studied.

6. The amount of time for collecting the data were delimited to a ten-week intake period. This period reflects the time from when new students begin their programme until when it ends.

Limitations
1. A time limit of ten weeks was set for the data collection. The purpose of the time limitation was to collect the data from only one term of courses. The ten-week period is one term of a 20 week intake period set up at the beginning of the intake. There was no need to repeat the data collection period for the other term because the teachers remain contracted for a ten-week period and most often

they are retained unless there is a decline in the number of students in the intake. This is a reality which exists for this type of programming. In addition the administration gave its approval for the study to be conducted over the ten-week period. It was felt by all those concerned that this time period would be less disruptive to the daily operations of the institution in general. Despite the fact that teachers are contracted for ten to twenty-week periods, some people who have retained employment for as long as eight years. The administrative staff confirmed that in the following term, staff would not change considerably with the exception of four or five staff members who would not return because they were hired only to cover summer vacations.

2. A limited number of participants were willing to participate in the interview and observation process required to collect the data -- twelve teachers, four administrators, and two policy makers.

3. The study may be limited by the skill of the researcher to conduct semi-structured interviews and non-participant observations.

Assumptions

1. It is assumed that the findings of this study may not be generalizeable to any other institution. Rather, it is hoped that the comprehensive descriptions of the context will provide enough information for those reading the study to see similarities to their organizations and make use of the knowledge for their own situations.

2. It is assumed that most of those who implement the policy are willing and able to participate in the study.

3. It is assumed that the methodology, the mode of collecting and analysing data are appropriate to the study's purpose.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

Policy and its Implementation

The process of implementation of policy is referred to by Dunn as "policy in action." As a process, Dunn (1981) def es it as "the administrative, organizational, and political activities a d attitudes that shape the transformation of policy inputs into outputs and impacts" (p. 333). Policy stakeholders have a key role in the transformation of policy into action. Not only do they interpret it into programming at the local level but they also determine how successful policy will be in affecting those it is supposed to benefit.

The degree of participation of these stakeholders in the process allows for the interpretation of policy into meaningful programmes significant to those implementing them. Fullan (1991) pointed out that "shared meaning" of policy is important among the key players of a policy system. He goes on to discuss how intended policy outcomes must have relevance and value to those they serve. In other words, Fullan (1991) stated that "the problem of meaning is one of how those involved in change can come to understand what it is that should change and how it can best be accomplished, while realizing that the what and how constantly interact and reshape each other" (p. 5). The problem of understanding is further compounded "when large numbers of people are involved" (p. xi).

The system in which policy is played is a complex one. Dunn (1981) describes it as "the overall institutional pattern within which policies are made, [and it] involves interrelationships among three elements: public policies, policy stakeholders, and policy environments" (p. 46). The system is connected and interconnected through communication networks otherwise referred to as linkages. Each linkage in the system has a key player or a number of key players concerned with making decisions on and directing information into

and out of the units which they manage. In addition, at each point where linkages are created within the policy system there is the potential for changes to occur that may affect how another linkage operates. In fact, Dunn (1981) looked at policy systems as containing "processes that are *dialectical* in nature, meaning that objective and subjective dimensions of policy making are inseparable in practice ... [in that] objective reality [is] manifested in observable actions and their consequences" (p.47).

Decisions on policy changes made at each linkage point in the policy system create constraints at another linkage point. The local level of implementation is impacted the most by any changes that are made at the different linkage points in the system. Here, any problems encountered in the flow of information to those who interpret policy into programmes and practice results in a multitude of problems for programme development. Information flow can sometimes alter implementors' perceptions about whether the policy is necessary or not. Bosetti (1990) pointed out that "policy standards and objectives must be communicated with sufficient clarity to implementers to enable them to know what is expected" (p. 26). Too many variations in understanding what is meant by policy terminology can occur between individuals and the various levels that policy goes through as it reaches those who implement it. Often the language and concepts used in policy has a different meaning to those who must understand it at the practitioner's level. Tushman (1977) pointed out that "inherent conceptual and linguistic differences act as a communication impedance or as a communication boundary hindering the free flow of information [and] the greater the differentiation, the greater the communication impedance (p. 591). What was intended by policy makers may not be what occurs in practice at the practitioners' level when it comes to policy implementation.

Other factors affect how effectively policy intentions re communicated or understood. Often, policy is not supported by those whose role it is to make it accessible to practitioners. In this case, there

is either non-implementation of the policy or else it becomes misinterpreted into programmes which vary from what the policy was intended to do. Those whose roles are to interpret effectively and pass policy information to the implementors are either not doing it successfully or refusing to do it at all. Reasons for this behaviour are often a result of personal values and goals which conflict with what they perceive as the underlying values and goals expressed by policy makers in the policy document. These individuals are what Tushman (1977) described as 'gatekeepers' or "key nodes in the innovating system's communication network [who] convey information from external domains into the internal communication network" (p. 591). Bohac (1989) pointed out how meaningful it is that "policy makers ... be aware of the power associated with the management of formal and informal communication networks" (p. 7).

Successful implementation and non-implementation of policy is largely determined by how implementers perceive the policy. Whether policy is perceived to be a problem-solving or opportunistic venture will impact on how motivated implementers will be in participating to build successful programmes. Berman and McLaughlin (1976) describe these two types of policies as "contrasting motivations that ... continued to play a pervasive role in the implementation and thus in the outcomes of the innovations" (p. 351). The two motivations are different in that programmes "generated essentially by opportunism seemed to be a response to available funds and were characterized by a lack of interest and commitment on the part of local participants ... [where] participants were often indifferent to project activities and outcomes, and little in the way of serious change was ever attempted - or occurred" (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976, pp. 351-352). On the other hand, policies identified as problem-solving are described by Berman and McLaughlin (1976) as those which "emerged in response to locally identified needs [and government] ... funds were viewed as a way to support the local solution -- one which often broke new ground in local educational practice" (p. 352).

Policy stakeholders' agendas and objectives are equally important in how well-accepted policy is and how effectively it will be implemented. Teachers are motivated by different goals than are those who develop policy. Firestone (1989) described what is significant to teachers in their everyday lives:

> Winning consists of seeing students learn or getting through the day, depending on the motivational level of the individual.... The crucial inputs include students, textbooks, and guidance in what constitutes "learning" through the curriculum and sometimes the testing program.... Policies and programs are an even smaller part of this game. They are assessed on how they help or hinder the everyday process of teaching students. This is not to say that teachers are uninterested in educational policy issues, but the high drama of passing an omnibus reform package is far from their lives.(p. 19).

On the contrary, policy makers often have different motivations and rationalizations for their actions than those who put policy into practice. Firestone (1989) described these differences as resulting from

> the downward flow of resources and regulation from legislature to classroom and the upward flow of demands from educators as well as the general public [and these] discontinuities come because of what flows into any given game arrives from several sources [and ultimately] policies take on different meanings in different arenas. (p. 19)

Equally important to the type of motivation for this policy is the amount of involvement local implementors have had in the planning and decision-making process of both the policy and programme planning stages. Fullan (1982) describes involvement in the planning process as resulting in

> a specific, high-quality, needed innovation, or in a
> broad-based flexible program whose general direction
> is compatible with the needs of the [organization], it
> will have been a sufficient start. More important for
> change in practice, however, is *implementation-
> level participation* in which decisions are made
> about what does work and what does not. (p. 65)

All these factors are significant to understanding policy as it results in action or non-implementation.

Implementation Constraints

Berman and McLaughlin (1976) pointed out that implementation constraints may come in many forms such as "economic, political, and organizational pressures and constraints ...[that determine] the innovation's future" (p. 350). Many factors that can be found in each of the three policy system elements influence how policy is translated into operational programmes. How the three elements public policies, policy stakeholders, and the policy environment interact with each other ultimately determine how significant policy and its implementation will be to those whom the policy affects. In addition, these interactions will determine if the policy in question will effect any change in improving practice at the local level.

For effective implementation to occur there has to be commitment to convert to the policy's cause on the part of those who are to implement the change. This commitment must be followed by a change in the beliefs and behaviours of both those who implement policy and those affected by it. At the same time that there are changes in beliefs and behaviours, policy and programme goals must be achieved. Both, policy makers and implementers must create effective and meaningful changes to educational practices. As Berman and McLaughlin (1976) note the following gauges can be used to determine whether policy can achieve its objectives or not:

1. Perceived success: the relative extent to which
project participants believed that goals were
achieved.
2. Change in behavior: the type and extent change
in teacher and administrator behavior as
perceived by participants.
3. Fidelity of implementation: the extent to which
the project was implemented as originally
planned. (p. 350)

A detailed study of factors that affect the implementation of a policy
and/or programme can determine conditions that must be met before
there can be any significant impacts on the needs of the people policies
are designed to serve. Factors such as time, stakeholders, political
interests of individuals or groups, and the policy's design influence
how a policy will be integrated and interpreted into a local level
programme. Weiss (cited in Rist, 1984) described the complex nature of
the policy system in that there is

fragmentation of authority across multiple
bureaus, departments, and legislative committees,
and the disjointed stages by which actions coalesce
into decisions.... which opinions are considered,
and what set of advantages and disadvantages are
assessed, may be impossible to tell the interactive,
multiparticipant, diffuse process [that] ... often
defies neat compartmentalization. (p. 155)

Other major factors affecting the policy system are the values
and goals that policy creators bring into the policy arena. All policies
when developed carry with them a set of values that to some degree
reflect those held by the policy makers and are designed to effect the
kind of change that is believed to be important to these select few.
McDonnell and Elmore (1987) stated that "different policy instruments
carry different assumptions about problems and solutions. Once
specified, these assumptions tell us a good deal about the fit between

problem and policy and about the basic conditions for successful implementation" (p. 140). Berman (1978) described what often happens at the local level:

> Within the local system, the process of micro-
> implementation consists of the mutual adaptation of
> the local policy ... and local organizational
> characteristics. This complex adaptive process
> inevitably creates uncertainty in how policy will be
> implemented; the uncertainty cannot be eliminated
> without removing the local flexibility that is
> necessary if policy is to work.(p. 156)

For the policy process to be meaningful to those it serves, the policy environment and its stakeholders must be linked closely to provide an environment where there can be clarity in understanding as to what the policy is aimed at achieving. This "shared meaning" of the policy directives is important in affecting how the policy will be put into action (Fullan, 1982; Fullan & Steigelbauer, 1991). Everything that happens in the implementation stage affects and changes everything else that surrounds the policy, and the policy itself takes on a new meaning. McLaughlin (1987) expressed this notion of an ever-evolving situation in the following:

> Because implementation takes place in a fluid
> setting, implementation problems are never
> "solved." Rather they evolve through a multistaged,
> iterative process. Every implementation action
> simultaneously changes policy problems, policy
> resources, and policy objectives.... New issues, new
> requirements, new considerations emerge as the
> process unfolds. (p. 174)

Basically, there are a number of ways that implementers react to deal with these constraints as they attempt to implement policy. Three approaches -- the mutual adaptation, muddling-through, and fidelity

models -- are the main ways in which policy becomes implemented (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976, Leithwood, 1985, Leithwood, 1986).

Mutual Adaptation, Muddling-Through and the Fidelity Model of Implementation

The three main approaches to implementation are the mutual adaptation, muddling-through and the fidelity models. According to Berman & McLaughlin (1976) the mutual adaptation model is one of the most successful at ensuring that implementation is continued and at the same time effective at bringing about meaningful change for all stakeholders involved in the process.

Knight (1991) described mutual adaptation as occurring when "the design and goals of the innovation are adapted to comply with local circumstances or needs, and the recipients adapt to the demands of this mutating innovation" (p. 3). This form of implementation can only occur if the policies that mandate a particular programme are flexible enough to allow this sort of adaptation to occur. Berman (1980) distinguishes this adaptive strategy of implementation from the other school of thought "called *programmed implementation*" whereby it is "[assumed] that implementation problems can be made tolerable if not eliminated, by careful and explicit preprogramming of implementation procedures" (p. 205).

Instruments chosen by the policy makers as they formulate policies will invariably determine how closely implementers will comply with and follow the mandates and also if the process will be a successful one (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987; Levitt, 1980). It is important to ensure that the implementation strategies chosen by policy makers have what Berman (1980) described as

> [the ability] to recognize different types of situations intrinsic to the context within which a policy is implemented ... [and] to learn to match strategies to the situation. (p. 206)

This ability to recognize what is already occurring in the implementation arena and the context in which it is situated determines how the policy is interpreted into viable programming at the local level.

The other two alternative approaches to implementation are described by Leithwood (1985) as "the 'muddling through' alternative, ... and the 'fidelity' alternative" (p. 9). The fidelity model of policy formulation demands that specific guidelines be adhered to. The way in which these controls are monitored is through rewards and punishments in the form of funding whereby compliance is more important than whether any social benefits are garnered from the process (Levitt, 1980). As Leithwood (1986) pointed out the fidelity model "is highly optimistic about achieving predetermined goals through the use of systematic, rational processes" (p. 99).

Often the intent of policy objectives driven by the fidelity approach is thwarted even though financial constraints bind the implementers to abide and comply closely to the policy directives. Ingram (1977) in her study of American federal grants-in-aid found that "federal grant support can have an important role in strengthening the interests within states that share federal objectives, but it would be unrealistic and perhaps destructive to insist that states submissively do the federal government's bidding for a fee" (p. 526). Her study suggests that fidelity through the use of funds does not always achieve the policy makers' intentions for the policy itself; in fact, what develops is a bargaining situation between those implementing and those who designed the policy itself. Valuable information about the outcomes of the process of implementation is often withheld or interpreted via linkages that exist between all those involved (Ingram, 1980).

The final strategy to implementation is that of muddling through. Leithwood (1986) described this strategy as the

> the most conservative ... [and] premised, ... a
> pessimistic estimate about the value of planning and
> about the likelihood of people acting systematically
> and rationally toward realizing a set of
> predetermined outcomes... [It] sees implementation
> as a political process, stressing the negotiation of
> change among those with different vested interests....
> [where] one is moving away from a problem rather
> than toward a goal.(p. 99)

This approach is also characterized as one which results from a
complete disregard by policy makers of the context in which the policy
is to be implemented. Specifically, muddling through results when, as
McLaughlin (1987) put it, "externally induced practices inconsistent
with local routines, traditions, or resources are likely to be rejected in
time, despite early apparent 'compliance' (p. 175).

In conclusion, these last two approaches to implementation are
not as successful in impacting effectively and with beneficial results on
the policy environment. Failing to reach positive ends happens
because those who implement have not been able to participate
actively in the decision making process. Participation improves the
policy, and its outcomes. It also benefits all stakeholders involved in
the process. Ultimately, as McLaughlin (1987) stated for
implementation to be successful

> implementors at all levels of the system effectively
> negotiate their response, fitting their action to the
> multiple demands, priorities, and values operating
> in their environment and the effective authority of
> the policy itself. Further, this bargaining or
> negotiation is a continuous process, proceeding
> overtime as policy resources, problems, and
> objectives evolve and are played against a dynamic
> institutional setting. (p. 175)

This negotiation and bargaining of meanings and considerations of all
aspects of the policy environment not only allows implementers and

policy makers to understand each other but also in the end creates policies and programmes that benefit those for whom it is designed. The dialectical interaction that occurs between all those involved ultimately results in an adaptation and reinterpretation of policy as it fits in with the needs of those for whom the policy is intended.

Factors in the Interpretation of Policy at the Implementation Stage

For programme planners translating policy into action depends on two factors -- the nature of the policy itself and the context in which implementation takes place. These two combined determine how policy will be interpreted into programmes and implemented at the local level.

First, the nature of the policy may or may not allow policy to be adapted to the local environment because of the way in which implementers are bound to the goals and objectives of that policy. Here, mutual adaptation of the policy may or may not occur depending on how much compliance is demanded of those putting policy into play. For example, the policy may be controlled by a centralized authority and to deviate from the set guidelines may result in penalties such as funding cutbacks. These funding cutbacks may force the institution to cancel the programme. Therefore, the actors who implement policy are forced to adhere to the guidelines and follow the fidelity model of implementation, so they can retain the programme. McDonnell and Elmore (1987) describe these funding ties as

> *inducements*, [that] assume (a) that, in the absence of additional money, one would not expect certain valued things to be produced, or to be produced with the frequency or consistency prescribed by policy; and (b) that individuals and agencies vary in their ability to produce things of value and the transfer of money is one way to elicit performance. (p. 142)

This form of compliance to policy directives often does not allow implementers to adapt the policy into viable and workable

programmes for their institutions and clients and can lead to ineffective implementation. This type of policy does not motivate those implementing policy to comply with policy directives nor does it allow them to make significant decisions in the process. Frymier (1987) examined how "centralizing significant decisions and decentralizing routine decisions *minimizes* participants' motivation" (p. 14). The opposite scenario of centrally controlled policy happens when policy initiatives and guidelines are so flexible and ambiguous as to require that programme planners must formulate their own interpretation of it and operational plans. This is a common scenario in government-led policy.

The complex and ambiguously written policy with its multi-participants regulates E.S.L. programmes for adult immigrants in Alberta. The nature of this policy and the envrionment it exists in demands that programme planners coordinate and create their own programmes with little direction from the policy writers. Coordination is another problem for administrators of adult education institutions when it comes to the interpretation and integration of the multi-policy mandates that regulate, sponsor, and fund E.S.L.

Efficient and effective coordination of the many policy stakeholders is required before changes can be made to existing programmes. Inter- and intra-organizational linkages are important in assisting with information flow between all levels of government regulating programme implementation and development (Ratsoy, 1980). Elmore (1978) stated that:

> Where more than one agency is involved in the implementation process, the lines of authority are much more blurred. It is not uncommon for implementors of social policy to be responsible to more than one political jurisdiction - to the federal government for a general declaration of policy and certain specific guidelines, and to a state or local unit for myriad administrative detail. (p. 197)

For example, the lack of one central authority in the area of E.S.L. for adult immigrants requires that implementors at the local levels determine their own plans to fulfill the mandates meant to direct them. Before it reaches the local level of implementation, the policy has been interpreted and changed to a new form as is the case in the provincial government's own reinterpretation of federal guidelines as they apply to adult education. Berman (1978) suggested that policy generally goes through "passages:"

> That is, the policy passes through and is
> implemented sequentially by various organizations,
> so that the output of one implementing organization
> becomes the input for other organizations. The final
> implemented program, and hence the policy's
> outcome, depends on these passages. (p. 166)

Berman (1978) further pointed out that these passages in the policy process "[do] not in fact proceed in a step-like fashion" (p. 167).

In many organizations, the policy implementation process is based on a priority ranking system rather than a carefully thought out rational and logical "step-like fashion." This system of establishing priorities as to how to approach policy implementation occurs most often in areas where many different policies have jurisdiction over a particular programme. Whichever policy takes precedence at a particular time over another determines the decisions made about programme planning and its ultimate operationalization.

While the first factor for the interpretation of policy is dependent on the nature of the policy, the second factor is dependent on the context in which the implementation process is to occur. The relationships and structures that exist between the various organizations which create and oversee these policies are complex. Ratsoy (1980) describes the relationships and their structures as

> when two or more organizations exchange resources
> such as money, physical facilities, clients, or staff
> services. The actions of the cooperating
> organizations are interdependent, usually for the
> purpose of achieving a goal that is unachievable by
> these organizations functioning independently.
> Administrative arrangements having varying
> degrees of formalization, centralization and
> complexity are adopted. These form the structural
> dimensions of the relationship. (p. 2)

The various levels of ⸱ment maintain the structural linkages
through what Burlinga. escribes as the "common device for
bureaucratic control ... t ⸱ p. 444).

The total depender ⸱ault educational institutions on
funding from the various government bodies make it difficult to effect
any programme changes which would impact significantly on language
training in general. The need to involve various levels of government
along with other policy stakeholders at any stage of programme
development is a constraint. Even though this involvement is a
constraint, Ratsoy (1980) asserts that "the implications for policy are
that implementation effectiveness will be higher if the linkages
between policy makers and policy implementers are strong and regard
is given for the problems and practicalities of implementation at the
policy formulation stage" (p. 5).

Any change or development at each level of the
implementation process and particularly at the local level is
incremental in nature with decision-making shifting toward
conservatism, which results in maintaining the status quo (Ho, 1989).
This conservative stance exists in professional organizations who tend
to maintain and uphold traditional ways of doing things and at the
same time to proceed cautiously (Mintzberg, 1979; McLaughlin, 1987).
The implications of this scenario are far-reaching and create a static
policy environment where it is impossible for learning or feedback
mechanisms to operate. With no channels for learning, programmes

become quickly outdated and cannot adapt to changes in the policy system. It is important that organizations and policy makers alike consider how difficult it is for a static model of implementation to operate in an ever-changing environment. Instead, Pressman and Wildavsky (1979) advocated that:

> If change - altered relationships among participants leading to different outcomes - is the idea behind implementation, the continuous adjustment of objectives is called for just as much as modification of instruments for attaining them. Implementation ceases being static; it becomes dynamic by virtue of incorporating learning of what to prefer as well as how to achieve it. (p. 176)

Both the static and the dynamic models of implementation rely heavily on the implementers' roles in deploying policies. Without their support and enthusiasm, implementing and developing programmes become useless exercises of blind action.

Pressman and Wildavsky (1979) pointed out to individual implementers the important roles that they themselves play in the policy process because "at each point we must cope with new circumstances that allow us to actualize different potentials in whatever policy ideas we are implementing. When we act to implement a policy, we change it" (p. 191). Hjern (1982) stated that, for policy implementation to occur, programme developers and government policy makers must consider "how well the body politic links good representation of societal aspirations ('politics') with their efficient and effective realization ('administration')" (p. 302).

Significance of the Literature Reviewed

In summary, many factors and other considerations influence how policies are interpreted into operational programmes. Two factors, the nature of a policy and the context in which it is implemented, regulate the amount of decision-making power given to implementers

and programme planners as they attempt to interpret policy. The programmes they develop and the process they choose to follow must serve the policy goals, their own personal goals, and those of their institutions as they are all a part of the policy system (Dunn, 1981). Differing values and goals of the policy makers, programme developers, and implementers influence the types of decisions made at the local level -- in this case study, the adult educational institution (Fullan, 1991). In addition the type of policy will determine which of the three implementation approaches it will follow: the muddling-through, fidelity or the mutual adaptation model of implementation (Leithwood, 1985; Leithwood, 1986; Berman & McLaughlin, 1976).

To understand fully all the factors that constrain and influence programme development and deployment, a plan of research into the interpretation of policies as they relate to practice is necessary. The advice given by Van Horn and Van Meter (1977) is useful in analysing the implementation process: "implementation research may also lead ... to explanations for observed impacts and point to variables that may be manipulated to improve the delivery of public services" (p. 117).

One key variable is how the policy is communicated to the policy players and to what extent the organizational structures they operate in impede or facilitate the implementers in their work (Bosetti, 1990; Fullan, 1991; Berman, 1980). Berman and McLaughlin (1976) suggest that there are three gauges which can determine how successfully a policy has achieved its objectives -- perceived success, change in behaviour and fidelity of implementation (p. 350).

To conclude, this case study of an organization's efforts to develop viable and workable programmes helps clarify how the implementation process itself is understood.

Chapter 3

The Context : A Description of the Institution and the Policy

The Institution : Background and Historical Development

In this study, the type of institution investigated has a long history in Alberta's education of adults. The institution was created to fulfill a role in the community which it has served in the past and continues to serve. It began as an institution in 1939 aimed at responding to a growing need for skilled workers in the workplace.

The newly created Division of Vocational Education in the Alberta Department of Education guided the institution to ensure that adequate short-term skill-training programs operated in various centres located around the province. Originally, these programs were under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Vocational Training Program which in 1965 was renamed the Alberta Vocational Training Program.

In 1965 three training centres were established in major centres in the province, to formalize further the programming of vocational training. In 1970, a fourth centre was opened. These centres were vocational training institutions until 1991 when they were renamed vocational colleges.

In 1970, the governmental body responsible for these centres -- the Department of Education -- decided that the institution's role required redefinition. A mission was drafted and is still operational today. The mission stated that vocational colleges would be regarded as " ...special purpose institutions to meet the education needs of socio-economically disadvantaged adults." In addition, the mission statement stated that there should be an "... emphasis ... placed on the provision of programs of an upgrading or short, skill-training nature" (Institutional E.S.L. Staff Handbook, 1988, p. 57).

It was not until 1971 that the responsibility for the centres was shifted to the newly formed ministry -- Alberta Advanced Education -- which would assume handling all adult education programmes. This

move required a more comprehensive mandate than the one which existed up to this point and was formalized initially in an institutional mission statement.

Institutional Mission and Mandate

The Mission Statement.

The mission statement is what drives an institution's programme development and dictates decision-making. Dennison and Levin (1989) point out the importance of institutional missions:

> The college's goals, missions, and functions suggest a balance between individual and community needs, with an emphasis on upward social and economic mobility for community members. (p. 13)

In general, all colleges whether they be vocational or academically-oriented share the same purpose of bettering students' lives by providing them with an education suited to their basic needs. The vocational colleges' mission statement itself defines the type of clientele the institution is to serve and also the types of programmes it is to offer. In order for an institution to be recognized by the community for its functional value it must reflect that function in everything it does. This type of college is unique, in that it reflects what McGrath and Spear (1989) described as "colleges [that] have been variously understood as extensions of high school, as community centers, as somewhat unusual versions of traditional colleges, and as a distinctively new educational experiment" (p. 141).

In 1971, Alberta Advanced Education, broadened the mission statement by stating that the college's goal is

> to ensure that the quality and accessibility of its
> specified services are developed and maintained to
> provide: educational, skill training and service
> initiatives responsive to local, regional and
> provincial needs. Specifically the [institution] focuses
> on training requirements of persons with special
> needs and therefore will endeavour to: Provide
> programs and services designed to enhance the
> capabilities of adult Albertans to participate in the
> social and economic development of the
> Province.(Institutional Development Plan, 1988, pp.
> 1-2)

It is this mission statement that provides the basis for the college's
mandate.

The Mandate .

The mandate given to the college indicates that there are five
critical services that the institution must provide in order to fulfill its
mission. These five critical services are as follow: Basic Education, High
School Education, Skill Training, Personal Development, and finally
English as a second language. After all, English as a Second Language
programmes are designed for disadvantaged newcomers who lack
adequate language skills in English. These courses allow these
immigrants the opportunity to learn the language of their new country
so that they too can contribute to the "social and economic
development of the Province." Broadly, the English as a second
language (E.S.L.) service is geared:

> to provide a variety of language training courses for
> adults whose first language is not English. The goal
> of these courses is to allow students to participate in
> society according to individual needs, and to develop
> skills which will help them realize their potential
> over the long term. (Institutional Development
> Plan, 1988, p. 2)

Institutional Organization
Five Critical Services.

The five critical services have led to a unique organization of three instructional divisions. Each one of these divisions houses departments which are responsible to develop and implement programme offerings. The divisions consist of the Vocational Division, the Continuing Education Division, and the Academic Upgrading Division which oversees the E.S.L. department. In this particular department the institution has "designed [programmes] to improve communication skills of adults whose first language is other than English" (Institutional E.S.L. Staff Handbook, 1988, p. 58).

Institutional Governance.

Institutional governance is complex with many departments each controlled by various administrators who are each in turn accountable to the senior position. The institution, which is one of four that exist in the Province, is a "line operation of the Alberta Department of Advanced Education with the college's President reporting directly to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Field Services" (Institutional E.S.L. Staff Handbook, 1988, p. 58). All four colleges of its kind are unique in the province in that they are not board-governed but rather they are provincially-administered. In other words, the colleges' Presidents are directly accountable to the Ministry of Advanced Education for any fundamental changes in operations or programming.

The Academic Upgrading Instructional Division's positions govern the full-time E.S.L. programmes. The Department of E.S.L. is located within this Division. The positions directly involved in the E.S.L. programme are those of the Chairman, Dean of Academic

Division, Vice-President Instruction, and the President of the College. The institutional organization is demonstrated in a drawing drawn by the researcher to show the institutional roles (Figure I).

Figure I

Institutional Organization

Academic Upgrading Division

```
            ┌─────────────────────┐
            │      President       │
            └─────────────────────┘
                       │
            ┌─────────────────────┐
            │    Vice President    │
            │     Instruction      │
            └─────────────────────┘
                       │
            ┌─────────────────────┐
            │   Dean Academic      │
            │     Division         │
            └─────────────────────┘
                       │
            ┌─────────────────────┐
            │      Chairman        │
            │       E.S.L.         │
            └─────────────────────┘
```
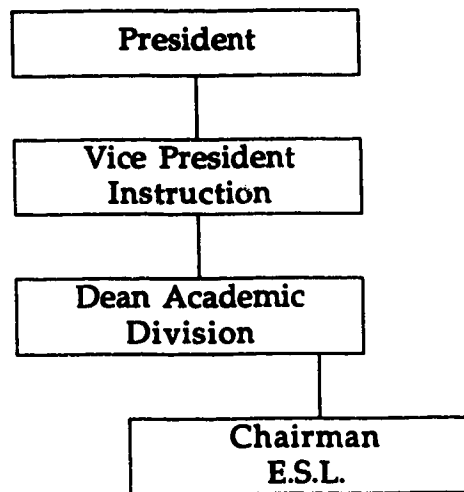
The Chairman's role is to manage the Department's procedures in staffing, programming, and budgeting. The Institutional E.S.L. Staff Handbook lists his responsibilites:

- Recommendations to Dean
- Policy for E.S.L. Department
- Administration of E.S.L. Department
- Student Activity Fund
- Summative Appraisals of Staff
- Professional Development
- Serious student problems
- Budget
- Future intake projections
- Personnel supervision
- Project initiatives
- Staff meeting agendas
- Manager of the Curriculum Renewal Project
- Renovations. (1988, p. 4)

He is directly accountable to the Dean of the Academic Upgrading Instructional Division.

The Dean, conversely, is more concerned with global and institutionally-based matters relating to the general administration of the college. His role is to oversee new developments in E.S.L. courses and to operate the Department. Virtually, his tasks as Dean are:

- institutional policy planning and administration
- personnel administration
  - contract renewal
  - grid placement
- final decision on hiring. (Institutional E.S.L. Staff Handbook, 1988, p. 4)

Both positions, that of Dean and Chairman, are accountable to the Vice-President of Instruction and to the President of the College whenever major decisions are made regarding the college's function and purpose.

The President and Vice-President of Instruction are in the chain of command directly accountable to the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Alberta Advanced Education. These roles are less involved in the task of programme coordination and more involved with the college's institutional and general administrative concerns.

Campus Operations
Campus Location and Features.

At present the institution described in this study is located in a large urban centre. There are three campuses each housing different departments. The main campus is located centrally so that students can easily access the facilities. This modern facility houses the bulk of students attending the college and caters mainly to students of all levels and programmes with the exception of the full-time day programme of E.S.L.

In 1986, the administration, felt that the Department of E.S.L. was large enough to warrant its own facility so arrangements were made to acquire space in an alternate campus. The full-time E.S.L. programme is now housed in this facility which has classrooms, a Learning Resource Centre, a language lab, a cafeteria, staff workrooms, and administrative offices. The facility itself is located in close proximity to the main campus and is large enough to accommodate the fluctuating student population. Here, the staff is divided into six different types of job roles.

Staff Organization.

Staff is organized into the following job descriptions -- Chairman, Assistant Chairman, Senior Instructor, Student Advisor, Nurse, teachers and clerical staff. Each role has its own responsibilities within the institutional department. For this study only those roles directly involved with the administration and teaching of the programme were researched.

Many of the positions are semi-permanent or temporary and are based on ad hoc budgeting, a budget that relies on an unstable source of income that fluctuates from ten-week period to ten-week period. The few permanent positions are those of the Chairman of the E.S.L. department and his Assistant Chairman. The Senior Instructor, on the other hand, is considered a semi-permanent employee in that he or she is guaranteed at least twenty weeks employment at a time.

For the rest of the staff temporary employment is the standard. They are hired on a short-term employment basis consisting of ten weeks at a time creating a temporary and unstable environment that is constantly changing. For the administration short-term planning is the order of the day because they are never aware of what is occurring in the next ten-week intake of students. Even the type of student population is constantly changing and enrolments which have fluctuated from one hundred students to two hundred and fifty.

Staff Roles.

Staff roles are outlined in the *E.S.L. Staff Handbook* (1988) and reflect the line of command that operates at the institution. The Chairman is the top-ranked position and is directly linked to the main administrative unit of the Dean, Vice-President, and President of the college. His position is concerned with the daily operations of the college both from a financial and human resources management perspective. The *E.S.L. Staff Handbook* (1988) lists his responsibilities:

- Recommendations to Dean
- Policy for E.S.L. Department
- Administration of E.S.L. Department
- Student Activity Fund
- Summative appraisals (may include observations)
- Professional Development
- Serious student problems
- Budget
- Future intake projections
- Personnel supervision
- Project initiatives
- Staff meeting agendas
- Manager of the Curriculum Renewal Project
- Renovations (p. 4)

The Chairman's responsibilities reflect his administrative role and are described so as to better understand his perspective on policy initiatives and the interpretation of policy into practice. He, too, develops and is actively involved in implementing policy relating to department operations.

The other permanent position is also administrative. She assists the Chairman in the department's operations. She is directly concerned with the logistics of coordinating and organizing the ten-week intake periods so that everything is on schedule and runs as smoothly as

possible without major problems. The *E.S.L. Staff Handbook* (1988) describes the position as follows:

- [oversee] Senior Instructor duties & Volunteers
- Ordering of class sets and sign out books
- Maintenance, room, furnishing & equipment concerns
- Inter-group field trips
- Week 1 scheduling & Timetables
- End of course schedule including achievement testing
- General concerns re: teaching materials (p. 4)

Overall, the Assistant Chairman deals with the mundane aspects of operating the Department. This person serves as an assistant to the Chairman and in his absence takes on her superior's responsibilities.

Of the two other roles described in the *E.S.L. Staff Handbook* (1988), the role of Senior Instructor is unique in that it has an administrative dimension. The Chairman guarantees more permanency to this role by granting twenty weeks' employment inste d of the regular ten to ensure stability and consistency in the Department's coordination of teaching staff. In principle, permanency, although verbally agreed upon, is not a given and the Department Chairman may dissolve it if financial conditions warrant it. This position's responsibilities deal with:

- Ideas & inspirations re: Curriculum and methodology specific to a group
- Formative classroom observations
- Signing of progress reports
- Use of materials & aide
- Student learning problems
- Discipline & Academic student problems
- Special Projects (Special Basic Senior Instructor)
- Contacting and orienting substitute instructors
(E.S.L. Staff Handbook, 1988, p. 4)

On the other hand, the position of Student Advisor lacks any of the administrative characteristics of the preceding ones. The Student Advisor is part of student support services and fits in with the college's mandate to assist those Albertans who are disadvantaged. The position does not involve counseling in the psychological sense but rather offers students the opportunity to resolve some of their social and financial problems by referring them to other agencies that do provide the service needed by a particular student. This consultative role relates well to the issues faced by new Canadians.

People chosen to take on the role may do so only for a year and are selected from the teaching staff. Again, this position is temporary and for a two-year period was eliminated due in large part to financial constraints. The position has the following responsibilities:

- Non-academic student problems
- Counselling referral
- Financial problem refer. als
- Medical referrals
- Information on agencies
- Information on sources of help
- Housing referrals
- Immigration referrals
- Information on other courses
(E.S.L. Staff Handbook, 1988, p. 4)

The final group of staff positions that relate to the E.S.L. Full-time Day programme are the teachers. Teaching staff are hired for ten-week periods in accordance with student numbers. They are divided into four programme areas and share the responsibilities of teaching their designated curriculum. Within the group there are some variations in responsibilities. For example, there is a full-time teacher's aide who assists in a tutorial capacity with the students. So, too, are there from time to time teachers who are asked to assist in the development of new curricula initiatives, projects, and materials such as units. These teachers still retain instructor status in that their

primary role is still to teach. Administrative arrangements are made to give these instructors time during the instructional day to work on these special assignments.

E.S.L. Programme Structure

In the Department four different programmes operate. These four are designated as Special Basic, Core, Intermediate, and Advanced E.S.L. courses. Each one caters to specific student needs. In order for students to be placed in one of these courses they must take a test and go through an interview. Ultimately, test results are not the only items used to determine how a student will be placed. A number of other reasons gleaned from personal interviews and other information gathered from a student sponsoring agency become the deciding factors in student placement.

Often, where students are placed in the E.S.L. programme will determine the level they will reach during their twenty week stay at the college. Those who start at Special Basic will not get beyond the Core level. Others who begin at a more advanced level such as Intermediate will have the language proficiency to enter academic upgrading courses which are offered in the college outside of the E.S.L. Department.

Students placed in Special Basic classes are generally older and have limited or no formal education in their own language. They are regarded as having low literacy skills, and often have special educational needs. There are two levels within the Special Basic group and students who begin in Special Basic 1 (SB1) follow through into the next one — Special Basic 2 (SB2). If on the other hand, they begin at SB2 they may proceed in the second ten weeks into either Core A or Core B.

The Core group of classes are designated as Core A, B, C, D, and E. Both Core A and B are specifically designed to cater to those students who have little or no English language training but in their own country of origin have some form of formal education. The *E.S.L. Staff Handbook* (1988) specifies that a Core A or B student may have "0 - 9

years education" and in Core A "may have studied English for several weeks yet be unable to respond orally or in writing" and in Core B "may have studied English for several months but have little sense of correctness" (p. 16).

In the more advanced Core courses, students have at least been exposed to some English either through other language programmes or on the street. They also have at least more than six years of formal education in their own home countries. Most often once they have completed and achieved a certain proficiency level in either Core C or E they may proceed into the Intermediate group of courses.

Intermediate courses consist of three levels of proficiency -- Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, and Intermediate 3. In the first of the Intermediate series of courses students must be able to "understand basic grammar but may not be correct orally or in writing" (E.S.L. Staff Handbook, 1988, p. 18).

In order for students to pass from one course to another a number of conditions must be met. The E.S.L. Staff Handbook (1988) states that "placement is based on teacher comments as well as test scores" (p. 18). These tests consist of the Basic Placement Test, the Diagnostic Test, and the John, Mary Test. Each one verifies and examines a number of language skills and ultimately determines the student's proficiency levels. If students begin their twenty-week language programme at the Intermediate 3 point and wish to go on they may enter the final course offering: Advanced E.S.L.

In the Advanced course students are tested in much the same fashion as for the Intermediate level so as to determine whether they can enter this level. The E.S.L. Staff Handbook (1988) points out that "normally only a few new students will be placed in Advanced" (p. 18). This course is often not offered when demand is low and as a result students who do have academic aspirations are transferred into the college's Academic Upgrading or T.O.E.F.L. courses. The two latter courses are not a part of the E.S.L. Department's programmes.

Competency Levels for Student Placement.

Students are tested for their proficiency in E.S.L. in five different language areas. These five areas are - reading, writing, pronunciation, speaking fluency, and listening comprehension. Within these five are six competency levels ranging from a low of one to a high of six. Each level pegs student ability in that area according to what the student can and should be able to handle. In the E.S.L. *Staff Handbook* (1988) an example of a competency level in reading level 2 states that a student at this stage:

> Can read and understand short passages specially
> written in easy English. Can understand the basics on
> application forms and other forms. Relies heavily on
> translating word for word. (p. 31)

If students do not meet this standard then they are rated as reading at a Level one. Once all the tests and interviews are conducted and students are rated on each of the five areas they are then placed into a course. In the case of ongoing students the same standards have to be met for students to be passed on to the subsequent course offering.

The Policy - *Foundations for Adult Learning and Development Policy*

Introduction.

Discussions with the key players in the policy environment resulted in the the following history on the policy's development. Why and how the policy developed provides a contextual background for the study.

The *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* has a unique history. Initially in 1989, the policy was to have guidelines and programmes attached to it but by its final rendition in November

1991 it had evolved into a framework policy. This dramatic shift in focus affects how a policy operates in its policy environment.

An historical overview reveals the long and complicated process that the policy makers needed to go through in order to achieve the present policy document. Elucidating the process revealed the policy makers' perspectives as they addressed each issue faced in developing the final policy statements.

History - The Beginning.

Early in 1981, there was a general consensus within the provincial government that there was a need for a literacy policy. At the time there were provisions made for a person to take on that responsibility. No sooner had the process begun when suddenly the project was halted and it was not until 1984 that the idea of a literacy policy was again pondered in the legislature.

In 1984, the branch in charge of Community Programs in the Ministry of Advanced Education decided to commission a study. They had not abandoned their efforts to promote a literacy policy. The study led to a discussion paper that was presented to the senior officials at the time but its development was again dismissed. It was not until the issue was raised from outside the provincial government that events lead toward the development of the present day document.

A Need for a Literacy Policy.

An important event occurred in the mid eighties that prompted provincial governments to reassess their roles in addressing their population's literacy and basic skill's needs. An eastern newspaper conglomerate -- Southam -- released a research report claiming that they had found a crisis in literacy in Canada. In addition to this study there were numerous movements occurring simultaneously in the United States. The response toward achieving excellence in schooling

was gaining momentum and the literacy issue was part of this whole movement.

Another major impetus to prompt provincial government action to develop a literacy policy occurred when a major Canadian business association became interested in this area. This Canadian business association conducted its own study showing how productivity in the workplace was greatly reduced by the problem of illiteracy. On this note, the provincial government decided to conduct its own survey on illiteracy in Alberta.

The survey's results revealed a pressing need for a policy that could address the literacy issue. Timing for the policy's development seemed appropriate considering the upcoming 1990 International Literacy Year. The government responded by developing its own literacy policy.

1989 -- Policy Development.

In late 1989 the idea was endorsed and a committee assembled to develop the literacy policy. Policy development would take the team and its Committee a long time; in fact, it was not until November 1991 that the policy actually was approved and became an official document. The process began with a call for briefings from all stakeholders in the community who had vested interests in the literacy issue. These briefings were analysed and conclusions drawn. From these conclusions a draft document was developed and issued.

A Shift in Policy Direction.

This early draft document made references both to policy options and a possible course of action. Soon after this draft document was created a shift in the policy's focus occurred. Six months into its development the Deputy Minister of Advanced Education informed

the team that the policy would not have programmes attached to it because of budgetary constraints. The team was compelled to change its way of thinking toward the policy. They transformed the policy direction from one which would provide programmes to one that established a framework. This turnaround was a major one in the policy's development.

At this point, the provincial government was also interested in moving a program named the Alberta Vocational Training Program otherwise known as AVT from the Ministry of Career Development and Employment to the Ministry of Advanced Education. In the new Ministry it was renamed the Adult Development Program or ADP, this programme served as a model for the principles of the new literacy policy.

After a general survey of the literacy community, the policy draft was updated by the Committee and the process of getting it approved began. The document in its final dra⌐ form was read in the provincial government's Cabinet where agair anges were made. These changes were incorporated and final apprc by the Minister of Advanced Education occurred in November 1991.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Naturalistic Inquiry

This study's guiding mode of research is based on a naturalistic approach. Owens (cited in Knight, 1990) pointed out how the naturalistic paradigm posits "that the real world that we encounter 'out there' is such a dynamic system that all the 'parts' are so interrelated that one part inevitably influences the other parts" (p. 40). In order to understand the policy system and the process of implementation one must take a wholistic approach and carefully study the context in which it occurs. In other words, the organization, its members, and those it serves, influence dramatically how and to what extent policy becomes reality. Tabachnick (1989) points out that:

> To study such a dynamic event requires methods
> that can describe both their background or
> surrounding general social context and that can
> describe the shifting, changing event as it evolves.
> These descriptions make deeper interpretations
> possible. Interpretations suggest meanings for an
> event that are plausible within the cultural context
> in which they happen. (p. 155)

The factors that affect the ability to implement policy are complex. In the real world, when policy is translated into local level programming it invariably is modified and adapted to suit the needs of those implementing it. At the same time, there is a need to satisfy the policy makers' requirements that regulate and define the terms of practice. Adherence to policy guidelines is further reinforced by the institutional administrators' desires to continue to receive government funds for their programmes. Implementation does not end with a simple reconstruction of policy into programme guidelines

for action, it goes througi. another interpretive process when it is implemented by classroom teachers. Their own personal understandings and values influence the process of applying a set of guidelines.

"Multiple realities" coexist in every policy environment. These realities are ever-changing and add complexity to an already complicated policy system. Therefore, to understand the policy environment better it must be studied as an entire unit rather than as parts of the whole.

Multiple realities created by the policy and its context -- the people who implement the policy and the institutional requirements -- need to be investigated. In order to understand the process of interpreting and translating policy into practice, one must adopt a wholistic approach -- that of naturalistic inquiry. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that

> [the naturalist] elects to carry out research in the
> natural setting or context of the entity for which
> study is proposed because naturalistic ontology
> suggests that realities are wholes that cannot be
> understood in isolation from their contexts, nor can
> they be fragmented for separate study of the parts. (p.
> 39)

In keeping with the naturalistic mode of inquiry, the descriptive case study method was selected to disclose how policy is understood by those who develop it and also by those who must implement it. It is important to investigate how policy players interpret, reinterpret, and translate policy into practice. Ultimately, the descriptive case study method allows the researcher to examine indepth not only the policy but also its context.

Case Study Methodology - Describing the Context

In order to understand data collected for the descriptive case study, one must understand the context. A significant way to enrich the

data is through the descriptive case study method. Basically, for the researcher, the context gives relevant meaning to the information gathered. Fraenkel and Wallen (1990) delineate what distinguishes this research from others in that it "[describes] in detail all of what goes on in a particular activity or situation rather than on comparing the effects of a particular treatment" (p. 368).

Acceptance of the descriptive case study as a viable mode of research stems from a belief that if the study is rigorously undertaken and adequate descriptions are provided, then the study is a valid one. Merriam (1990) adds that such a study is "a study that usually builds theory" (p. 57).

Theory building can transcend contexts in that it allows the reader to understand what Lee Cronbach (cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985) means when he states that "when we give proper weight to local conditions, any generalization is a working hypothesis, not a conclusion" (p. 124). This working hypothesis allows change to be a part of the process of studying a phenomenon. Change is a part of the nature of things and every aspect of the social context is important. Tabachnick (1989) describes the complex composition of social reality:

> The embedded social event has a history and leads
> toward future events; it grows from past events
> and these create expectations in the participants
> and a tendency to explain a social event in terms
> of others that happened before it. Each social event
> is also connected to other events taking place at
> the same time, some in the same context, some in
> another. (p. 157)

Therefore, it is important to describe the history of a context and to give as much information as possible within a limited period of time so that the findings can be significantly interpreted.

Another significant aspect of case study methodology is that the information gleaned from one study can often be transferred to another. Naturalistic inquirers believe that knowledge and

understanding are always tied to all the interpretations that individuals make in relation to their own past experiences as they read the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) go on to state that

> working hypotheses are not that powerful; their transferability depends upon the degree of fittingness. The person who wishes to make a judgement of transferability needs information about *both* contexts to make that judgement well. Now an inquirer cannot know all the contexts to which someone may wish to transfer working hypotheses; one cannot reasonably expect an inquirer to provide sufficient information about the context in which an inquiry is carried out so that anyone else interested in the transferability has a base of information appropriate to the judgement. (pp. 124-125)

In a naturalistic study, the interpretation of data, must be transferable to other situations of a similar kind. In turn, people must be given the opportunity to establish the "degree of fittingness" between the study and their own circumstances. For this to happen, the context in which the study takes place has to be described carefully, comprehensively, and concisely, in what is known as a thick description.

In a thick description, the researcher describes in detail the inquiry's environment along with its players. One important task is for the researcher to make known his or her own beliefs, values, and underlying assumptions. Also, it is equally important in the study to reveal the participants' beliefs, values and assumptions.

In a thick description, researchers act as mediums for the respondents' responses. From the interviews, researchers gather and make use of the very words used by the study's participants. How each individual understands the subject under investigation yields the information needed to answer the research question. Essentially, the researchers' primary role is to build theory as they study phenomena. This theory building is gradual and emerges as the inquiry progresses.

In other words, researchers, through the process of inquiry, bring to consciousness what was valuable hidden and taken-for-granted information found in a context.

Thick Description - People, Materials, and Settings as Text

In this naturalistic inquiry, the policy stakeholders' perceptions of policy and programmes, the settings, and the policies themselves, become text to be examined. Two sources for text were used in the study. The first source for analysis was in the form of written documents -- the provincial government policy, institutional policies, and staffing handbooks.

Not only can written text be analysed but so too can dialogue and actions, all of these combined are data needed for the case study's thick descriptions. The second source of data were the interviews with the study's participants and classroom observations. Subsequently, most of the elements of putting policy into practice have significance in implementing policy.

For humans, their experiences, beliefs, and values, determine how they give meaning to text and how they translate it into action (Freeman, 1988). This notion of the multiplicity of meanings in text, in other words, "polysemy" is linked to Paul Ricoeur, (among others) who looked at text as "an analytical device" (Clyburn, 1988, p. 42). Freeman (1985) describes how Ricouer summarized this notion:

> The most basic idea here ... is that of 'polysemy, the multiplicity of meanings that always calls for a hermeneutics. In arbitrating between structure and function, the virtual and the actual, it is the word which upon its utterance in the context of discourse, provides the invitation to interpret. (p. 303)

In essence, the importance of studying what the intentions of policy makers are and what is actually happening in the implementation process at the local level is significant. It addresses how policy is

understood and whether the objectives are being interpreted and applied in a fashion congruent with th y of the policy makers' original intent.

In order for a more comprehensive understanding of the process of interaction and interpretation, the researcher must go beyond the surface observations and search for the meanings which present themselves in a combination of actions and language used to describe events or beliefs. Sometimes, observation alone does not reveal the subtle changes that occur and a deeper understanding is needed in order to reveal what is trully happening. Therefore, a thick description allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of what lies beyond the surface knowledge garnered from observations and collected facts (Merriam, 1988). The context in which policies are played out give significance to the policy itself. In addition, Pellauer (1979) pointed out the importance of the naturalistic study of text in that it serves to assist the "[researcher] to move beyond a concern for extended works of discourse which may themselves be symbolic of something beyond the world of ordinary, everyday, taken-for-granted reality" (p. 112).

Policy as text is difficult to study in isolation of its context. Often, policy makers develop policy which is couched in confusing and ambiguous language and this creates problems for those who must implement it. Williams (cited in Musella, 1989) stated that "program objectives [and policy guidelines] are often so elusive as to be difficult to determine at all, much less define rigorously" (p. 105).

When confusing and ambiguous language is presented in policy, implementers are thrust into the role of interpreters who through a collective consensus make meaning of the policies for their institution and themselves. Fullan (1982) described this collective understanding as a 'shared meaning.'

How this shared meaning comes about depends on the structural organization in which the policy is implemented along with the values and beliefs of those involved in implementing it. This

evolutionary stance on policy implementation derives from Majone and Wildavsky's (cited in Musella, 1989) notion that [implementation] takes place in a world we never made, we are usually in the middle of the process, with events having occurred before and (we hope) continuing afterward ... when we act to implement a policy, we change it" (p. 108). In changing policy through interpretation, implementers basically develop their own negotiated meanings in light of their obligations to maintain and satisfy their needs, those of the institution, and those of their clients. It is therefore paramount that researchers collect data that Bogdan and Biklen (cited in Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990) stressed as being "in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers" and "seek[s] to portray what they have observed and recorded in all its richness" (p. 368). The data collected will reveal "how things occur and particularly in the perspectives of the subjects of a study" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990, p. 406).

Researchers are better able to understand the culture, beliefs, and values existing in the institution through the perspectives of the participants who implement policy. The participants are best able to describe the context within which they function. These policy players are after all "characterized by particular ways of dealing with problems, based upon commonly held values and assumptions" (Davis, 1989, p. 114).

For the researcher the task is now one of attempting to explain these values and beliefs in the very words used by the study's participants and then conclude how they impact on the implementation of policy into practice. In other words, it is up to the researcher to do "his or her best to capture the thinking of the participants from the participants' perspective (as opposed to the researcher merely reporting what he or she thinks) as accurately as possible" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990, p. 369).

The study's main source of data is the one-on-one semi-structured interview. Participants were asked open-ended questions about their roles in the policy environment and what the policy

statements mean to them. During the interview process other questions emerge revealing how participants understand the policy statements. Furthermore this process reveals the participants' underlying values, beliefs and assumptions.

In addition, policy documents and subsequent programmes reflect the beliefs, values, and assumptions held by those who develop them. How policy is understood and implemented by the local level -- the implementers -- may vary from that of the government level -- the policy makers. To understand these variations the researcher must have a grasp on the differences and similarities in these individuals' divergent perspectives. To understand the interactions between all these policy stakeholders, the researcher has to know what compels policy stakeholders to interpret and act on policy. It is imperative to understand the differences between policy stakeholders' values, beliefs, and assumptions at the local level and those of the policy makers at the government level. In the inquiry process all of this information provides valuable data.

Collecting Data

Non-participant observations, interviews, and ongoing document analysis are the primary sources for data collection. The researcher used a variety of methods for collecting data, in other words, "data triangulation." Triangulation ensures that the study maintains credibility and trustworthiness.

Mathison (1988) refers to this form of triangulation as "using several data sources, the obvious example being the inclusion of more than one individual as a source of data and ... to include time and space based on the assumption that understanding a social phenomenon requires its examination under a variety of conditions" (p. 14). These three forms of data provide just that, a comprehensive picture of the study for the formulation of theory.

Guba and Lincoln (1982) discuss how triangulation is a way to judge "the trustworthiness of findings that emerge" from the inquiry

'p 246). They refer to four naturalistic criteria which are used "in differentiating good from bad, inadequate, or untrustworthy research" (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 246). The four criteria are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Each of these is important in guiding the data collection and analysis.

In order to determine the first criteria of credibility in the study, Guba and Lincoln (1982) suggest that the following question be answered:

> Do the data sources (most often humans) find the inquirer's analysis, formulation, and interpretations to be credible (believable)? (p. 246)

To answer the question adequately, member checks were conducted both during the data collection and up until the final analysis period. Guba and Lincoln (1982) describe member checks as when

> data and interpretations are continually checked
> with members of various groups from which data
> are solicited; done on a continuous basis throughout
> the study and again at the end when the full report is
> assembled, using either (or both) the same members
> from whom the data were originally collected or
> other surrogates from the same groups. (pp. 247-248)

Several of the study's participants were re-interviewed informally to ensure that their perspectives were being interpreted accurately. During this period of data collection and analysis more information emerged which required slight changes in the way participants were interviewed. More interview questions relating to the emerging patterns developed as data were being collected. Analysis often occurred during the interview period. Notes were made on the material being collected and more questions arose which needed answering.

Observing the participants in their classrooms was another way to ensure that what interviewees said in their interviews could be

confirmed by observing what they did. The observations *in situ* provided additional information to the materials collected through the interview process. Here, researchers are considered observers who "do not participate in the activity being observed but rather 'sit on the sidelines' and watch; they are not directly involved in the situation they are observing" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990, p. 369). Observing the actions of those implementing the policy and programmes helped to establish categories as they emerged in the data during the interview process. This method of naturalistic research inquiry ensures that the dependability criteria for judging the trustworthiness of the study is fulfilled.

Three different types of policy stakeholders were interviewed -- teachers, administrators, and policy makers. The semi-structured interview guided the inquiry and is defined by Berg (1989) as "the implementation of a number of predetermined questions and/or special topics" (p. 17). Data were collected over ten weeks and constitutes a regular intake period for students entering the institution. This period of time coincides with the start of the regular day time ESL programmes.

Predetermined interview questions were constructed from the policy document's five policy statements. These broad statements reflect the policy makers' intentions for the development of the adult development programmes in the province. Each statement is worded carefully so as to be understood by all those who must implement the policy. To understand fully how significant these words are and how they are interpreted by the policy stakeholders, researchers need to understand the words themselves. Policy players were asked broad open-ended questions such as "What does equitable mean to you?" in order to elicit how they understood these statements. These types of questions also helped to establish the link between what the statements meant to the policy players and what is happening in the real world of this policy arena.

The main reason for selecting the semi-structured interview was to allow "the interviewer ... sufficient freedom to digress .... [so that the researcher can] approach the world from the subject's perspective" (Berg, 1989, p. 17). Open-ended questions were driven by a desire to understand the context in which the policy was developed and designed to affect. Policy statements were used to elicit participants' understandings of what the policy was intended to do. In addition, open-ended questions were asked that revealed the context and life worlds of the policy systems' players. The values and assumptions delineated in the policy document -- *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (Advanced Education, 1991) -- were used as sources for discussion.

Transcribing and Editing Interview Dialogue

Data for the study was primarily collected in interviews between the researcher and the study's participants. These interviews were taped using a tape recorder and at the completion of the data collection they were then transcribed in an unedited form as raw data on paper. These transcribed notes were then edited to ensure that proper grammar and punctuation was used.

To transform the dialogue sessions between the researcher and the interviewees into viable statements for the purposes of the study further revisions were required. These notes were further revised to rid the narratives of the repetitive use of ideas, words and nonsense words such as "You know." This activity did not compromise the analysis of the raw data, it did not alter what the study's participants' statements meant. An example of this type of revision and editing of the raw data is shown in the following quotation used in this study. The first example is in its raw form with some punctuation added:

> Special Basic, those are the skills right there. Basic
> skills that would be functional literacy would be
> considered a basic skill. That a person could go
> shopping and be able to read what he is buying, that a
> person could go to the stores, I think I'm drawing
> from something I said earlier that functional literacy
> is defined as being able to go shopping, and reading
> what you are buying and pricing things and going
> into a store whether its a food store, using a phone
> book, getting along quite well without having to
> depend on someone else. (TE, p. 4)

The same quotation is shown after it was revised and used in the
study's text:

> Special Basic - those are the basic skills right there.
> Functional literacy would be considered a basic skill
> so that a person could go shopping and be able to
> read what he is buying. (TE, p. 4)

These changes to the text of the interview dialogue were done in order
to draw out the significant passages of information for the analysis.

Content Analysis of Interviews, Documents and Observations

Content analysis was employed to organize data into significant
findings. Recurrent trends and categories emerged as collected data --
interview transcripts, documents, and visual observation notes -- were
read over numerous times and notes made highlighting important
points. Information was first grouped under the five major questions
on the five policy statements to see where the similarities and
differences in understanding the terms existed. Parallels between what
the participants said and what they did in their classrooms were drawn.
From these broad trends, prominent categories or themes emerged.
When a theme was identified, the data were analysed one more time to
ensure that no other themes emerged.

During the course of this process notes were made and a diary kept by the researcher to record any new thoughts and observations. In some instances interview transcriptions were returned to the participants giving them the opportunity to change or add to any statements made in the dialogue sessions. At the end of the data collection these transcripts were reviewed for additional trends in the data or a reclassification of trends.

Documents Analysed

An investigation of policy content found in documents revealed themes and categories. These initial categories served to thematize the rest of the data collected from interviewing and observing the study's participants. A key to categorizing or otherwise coding information is to "*retrieve* the words that are most meaningful, to *assemble* chunks of words that go together, and to *reduce* the bulk into readily analyzable units" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 56).

In particular, the theme is a major element that can be analysed and is defined by Berg (1989) as

> a simple sentence a string of words with a subject and a predicate. Because themes may be located in a variety of places in most written documents, it becomes necessary to specify (in advance) which places will be searched. For example, researchers might use only the primary theme in a given paragraph location, or alternatively might count every theme in a given text under *analysis* (author's emphasis). (pp. 112-113)

In the study, raw data were collected through interviews, observations, and documents in order to be categorized and coded into predominant themes. Theories evolved from the emergent themes found in the data. Merriam (1988) summarized that

raw data need to be organized in some way.... [It]
could be organized according to persons interviewed,
places visited, documents obtained. This body of
material forms the case record or case study database.
(p. 145)

Data Organization and Analysis

For the purpose of this study, interview data were organized
according to three types of participants and the roles they played in the
implementation of the policy. Analysis of raw data occurred
throughout data collection and during the time in which the
interviews were transcribed as is suggested by Miles and Huberman
(1984):

As a write-up is being produced, reflections of
several sorts typically swim into awareness. (p. 64)

These reflections were noted on paper as "reflective remarks" and
served as

an aid during coding, because they often point to
deeper or underlying issues that deserve analytic
attention. (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 65)

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) illustrated how important it is for researchers
to write down their thoughts both when they begin to collect data and
during the collection period:

Rather then allowing the recording of detailed
description to dominate your activities to the
exclusion of formulating hunches, record important
insights that come to you during data collection
before you lose them ... If you notice that certain
subjects have things in common, point it out in
observer's comments. The idea is to stimulate critical
thinking about what you see and to become more
than a recording machine. (p. 149)

The data were transcribed, organized, and coded into three groups representing the policymakers, administrators, and teachers. For coding purposes the following letters represent these groups: PM for policy makers; A for administrators; and T for teachers. Initials of participants' first names were added to the group code letters in order to further distinguish and identify an individual's comments from that of the other members of his or her group.

The policy makers were the only group where the initials of their first names were not used for coding purposes. Since there were only two of them, the numbers 1 and 2 were used to distinguish one policy maker from the other. For the researcher, this method of coding helped to identify the status and role each policy maker held in creating the document and managing it.

These code names were used to identify, cross-reference, and link the statements made by the study's participants into significant categories. Categories emerged as a result of a preliminary analysis of the data. Miles and Huberman's (1984) use of "marginal remarks" were used to code the data for the purpose of categorization:

> One way of retaining a thoughtful stance to coding is the marginal remark.... As coding proceeds, if you are being alert and non-routine about what you are doing, ideas and reactions to the meaning of what you are seeing will well up steadily. These ideas are important. They suggest new interpretations, leads, connections with other parts of the data - and they usually point toward analytic work, like the pattern codes. (p. 65)

These pattern codes or categories represent what Merriam (1988) referred to as

> looking for recurring regularities in the data. Which units of information go with each other? It is a task of comparing one unit of information with the next. (p. 133)

After all as Merriam (1988) stated:

> Much of the work in category construction is a form
> of content analysis. One is, after all, looking at the
> *content* (author's own emphasis) of the data in
> developing categories. (p. 136)

In the study, categories became apparent as the three different
participant groups interpreted the policy statements' words. From these
patterns were derived themes. These themes are indicated in the titles
of the Findings Chapter underneath each groups' perspective on a
policy statement's key words or phrases. Miles and Huberman (1982)
described how themes emerge:

> When one is working with text ... one will often note
> recurring patterns, themes, or "Gestalts," which will
> pull together a lot of separarte pieces of data.
> Something "jumps out" at you, suddenly makes
> sense. (p. 216)

The way in which these themes emerged and began "to make sense"
was when the data were analysed from the participants' perspectives.
Bogdan and Biklen (1982) illustrated how as

> codes oriented toward ways of thinking th t all or
> some subjects share which are not genera. as their
> overall definition of the situation but indicate
> orientations toward particular aspects of a setting.
> They include snared rules and norms as well as
> some general points of view. Often perspectives are
> captured in particular phrases subjects use... They
> capture shared understandings and become codes for
> sorting data. (p. 158)

Grounded Theory

Data analysis is taken one step further into the creation of a
theory or theories. Merriam (1988) described this phase as one which

transcends the formation of categories, for a theory
seeks to explain a large number of phenomena and
tell how they are related. (p. 146)

Theories develop as the themes become more apparent and as they
relate to the observable actions of the participants. This interplay of
inductive and deductive approaches to research is based on the idea of
grounded theory emerging as the study progresses. Lincoln and Guba
(1985) identified grounded theory as occurring when the researcher

> prefers to have the guiding substantive theory
> emerge from (be grounded in) the data because *no* a
> priori theory could possibly encompass the multiple
> realities that are likely to be encountered; because
> believing is seeing and [the researcher] wishes to
> enter his[/her] transactions with respondents as
> neutrally as possible; because a priori theory is likely
> to be based on a priori generalizations, which, while
> they make nomothetic sense, may nevertheless
> provide a poor idiographic fit to the situation
> encountered. (p. 41)

Emergent theory is grounded in data. When data were collected and
categories established an understanding of the implementation process
in this case study occurred and theory emerged. Lincoln and Guba
(1985) explain that

> theory that follows from data rather than preceding
> them (as in conventional inquiry) is a necessary
> consequence of the naturalistic paradigm that posits
> mutliple realities and makes transferability
> dependent on local contextual factors. No a priori
> theory could anticipate the many realities that the
> inquirer will inevitably encounter in the field, nor
> encompass the many factors that make a difference at
> the micro (local) level. (pp. 204-205)

The emergent theory gives substance to the data. It provides
conclusions which can be significant as transferable knowledge for

those reading the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) point to the
importance of the researcher's role in drawing out these conclusions

> that by this formulation local theory is an aggregate
> of local understandings that without the
> intervention of the researcher, would remain
> isolated, and we presume, tacit (or at least remain at
> the level of folklore or conventional wisdom). (p.
> 205)

Tabachnick (1989) adds to the significance of grounded theory by stating
that it

> can illuminate the meanings of schooling within a
> particular context and provide insights to a reader,
> who can recognize possibilities for using the data to
> explain behavior in another context. (p. 162)

To ensure that the theory had credibility and confirmability, "audit
checks" were conducted with the participants. Tierney (1988) describes
the purpose of audit checks:

> the task is to: examine the process of the research,
> ensure the fairness of the representation, examine
> the records and data, and re-interview different
> individuals to ensure accuracy. (p. 228)

This task is key to drawing conclusions which accurately portray the
perspectives of the study's participants rather than that of the
researcher's interpretations of the data. In addition, Tierney (1988)
stated that the audit check is

> to insure that the interviewer accurately heard,
> interpreted, and presented the data that had been
> collected. (p. 228)

Theoretical Conclusions

At the outset of the study it was anticipated that the grounded theory approach to research would lead to the development of theoretical conclusions, and/or support for theory advanced in the research reports of other policy implementation research. Theoretical conclusions emerging from the research reported here are reported in the appropriate sections following description of the research findings.

Ethical Considerations

All the guidelines and regulations set forth by the Department of Educational Administration's ethics committee at the University of Alberta were considered for the purposes of the study. Both, the institution and participants involved in the study were promised anonymity within the text of this case study. Participants were given pseudonyms and the institution was simply regarded by various names such as centre, institution, college or organization. During the data collection and its subsequent transcription, confidentiality was maintained in all interview transcriptions and tapes. Once the study was completed these tapes and transcribed notes remained as confidential information not to be used by anyone other than the researcher unless prior permission of the participants is granted.

Participants were informed of the research purpose and scope. Letters were mailed (Appendix A) and personal meetings with the participants were conducted to ensure they understood all of the study's aspects. During the course of an observation or an interview, participants were given the choice to withdraw and discontinue being a part of the inquiry. Precautions were taken to ensure that no harm was caused by the research findings to those being observed and interviewed.

Chapter 5
A Framework Policy - *Foundations for Adult Learning and Development Policy*

Framework Policy : Description and Introduction

A detailed description of the policy content reveals the purpose for which the policy was created. The introduction to the policy describes the process of how the policy's intent shifted over time and at the same time explains what one policymaker during the data collection period pointed out was the single most important statement of the entire document:

> This policy is a commitment to provide learning opportunities for those whose learning needs are greatest. (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 1)

Furthermore, there was a commitment to develop a policy best suited to fulfill these learners' learning needs and the way to do it was to

> set out a framework for reviewing, developing, providing, and coordinating programs and services offered by the Government of Alberta for adult learners with limited basic skills.(Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 1)

This policy is quite unique in that it provides a framework for action. Implementers are provided with the policy makers' intentions for action rather than directions for action. In the policy, the Minister of Education states that the policy is "developed into a comprehensive framework policy on the development of individual potential among adults with limited basic skills" (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, Foreword). This issue is the motivation for the document's creation.

The unique nature of this framework policy is that it was designed to coordinate policies that already existed and were related to the area of adult basic education. Policy makers, in this instance,

wanted to provide a policy that would ease the complex interrelationships of all the policies that impinged on adult development programmes in general. At the same time, the policy makers, by drafting a policy, expected to formalize their intentions for future development of adult basic education programmes.

The policy did not have an action plan attached to it nor did it provide actual funding for specially designed programmes. The task of programme planning was left up to the institutions and agencies entrusted in providing learning opportunities for Albertans who so required them. In its preliminary presentation to policy players, the policy lacked formal guidelines guiding implementers' actions and programmes. Instead, the policy became one of intent in which it was hoped that funding guidelines would follow. The development of guidelines soon resulted in a document named the *Adult Development Program Guidelines and Procedures - 1992-93*.

There were a few guidelines in this relatively new document. They were devised as rules to guide the eligibility of certain programmes for funding. Furthermore, there are also specific statements about how agencies and institutions can coordinate this policy with other policies and levels of government as they go about creating and offering their programmes.

Policy Content
Policy Rationale.

The policy document consists of three parts -- the rationale, policy statements, and principles behind the policy. The rationale or purpose of this document is described by the policy makers as being twofold. One is to improve Alberta society by ensuring that every Albertan has a foundation of basic skills so that they may "have economic independence, personal stability, and a chance to become fully participating members of Alberta society" (Alberta Advanced

Education, 1991, p. 3). In the document -- *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991)-- basic skills are defined:

> Communication skills, at the minimum include English proficiency, literacy, numeracy, learning/thinking skills, and general civic, scientific and cultural knowledge, values and attitudes. Living skills embrace knowledge of health, nutrition, family planning, management of the family economy, creation and maintenance of a home, the environment, and community participation. Production skills encompass all forms of activity directed towards making a living or producing goods and services, at whatever level of economic sophistication.(pp. 3-4)

The policy makers reinforce the importance of these skills for adults because they feel that these skills will help disadvantaged adults "to achieve their personal goals, improve their social and personal lives, adapt to changing conditions, be economically independent, and assume greater responsibility for themselves, their families and their communities" (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 3).

The policy's other purpose is important and involves coordinating the complex nature of the policy environment. The document is an attempt to counteract the confusion created by the various policies, government departments, and other levels of government; involved in directing the area of adult learning and development programmes. This purpose

ensures appropriate direction, fiscal accountability,
and program effectiveness of the activities
undertaken.... It provides a framework to review the
basic skills programs and services provided by
government departments. Further, it addresses the
coordination of programming initiatives by
government, post-secondary institutions,
community organizations, business and labour.
(Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 3)

Both these purposes are themes which are repeated throughout the
document -- the improvement of the disadvantaged Albertans, who
are deficient in basic skills; and that of coordinating an otherwise
confusing and complex policy environment. It is in the five policy
statements that follow that these th. mes become most prominent as
the policy makers iterate their intentions to implementers.

The Five Policy Statements.

Each policy statement is written under a specific heading -- access
to programs, provisions of programs, student support services,
cooperation and partnership, and public awareness. Each of these
headings is a major policy aim and forms the basis for each statement.
In addition, policy makers have included their assumptions in order to
clarify for implementers each statement's significance and the
perspective from which each has originated. Within those
assumptions are the policy makers' underlying values, beliefs, and
intentions.

Access to Programmes.

The first of the statements deals with making learning
opportunities more accessible to those who need to improve their basic
skills. The document -- *Foundations for adult learning and
development policy* (1991) -- states "The Government of Alberta will

provide adult Albertans, who so desire, reasonable and equitable access
to programs that establish a foundation of basic skills" (p. 4). The focus
of attention in this statement how to provide the best educational
opportunities for students to access. Broad terms such as "reasonable"
and "equitable" are open to interpretation and were explored in the
interview phase of the study.

Provisions of Programmes.

The second statement deals primarily with ensuring the
provision of appropriate programs. The document -- *Foundations for
adult learning and development policy* (1991) -- states "The
Government of Alberta will provide appropriate programs to meet the
basic skills needs of adult learners" (p. 5). Here, assumptions are made
with regard to the "changing needs" of learners and how institutions
should be prepared to provide programs that "must maximize the
gains of learners with a minimum investment of learner time and
public cost" (p. 5).

Student Support Services.

The third statement deals with the provision of student support
through services and financial assistance. The document --
Foundations for adult learning and development policy (1991) -- states
"The Government of Alberta will facilitate the provision of student
support services and will ensure that a reasonable level of financial
support is provided to those otherwise unable to participate in adult
development programs because of financial barriers" (p. 6). The
assumptions made in this statement involve a general understanding
that adults who are disadvantaged in any way require both emotional
and financial assistance so that they "may have to overcome significant

personal barriers before they can participate in education and training programs" (p. 6).

Cooperation and Partnership.

The fourth statement is linked to establishing and encouraging more cooperation and partnerships between institutions and individuals from the public, private, and voluntary sectors; who essentially provide basic skills' programmes to adult learners. The document states "The Government of Alberta will encourage cooperation, collaboration, and the formation of partnerships between and among the public, private and voluntary sectors in the delivery of adult development programs" (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 7). It is assumed by policy makers that "linkages" such as those described in the statement will inevitably lead to the "mobilization of available resources" and at the same time, aid in the "identification of needs as well as the development, delivery, and evaluation of foundational programs for adult development" (p. 7).

Public Awareness.

The final statement is one which advocates increasing public awareness for these types of foundational programmes for adult learners. Here, the document states that "The Government of Alberta will promote the Foundations for Adult Learning and Development concept and provide information about the availability of adult development programs and services" (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 8). The policy makers assume in this statement that "public information about issues and programs related to low levels of basic skills helps to address the problem by encouraging potential students and by stimulating public understanding, involvement, and support" (p. 8). In addition, policy makers felt that adult learners often are not

aware of or do not realize their needs. By raising their level of awareness learners can better identify what they need and where they need to go to access the programs that satisfy those needs.

These five statements are what constitute the policy. The wording of these statements is not dissimilar to the policy statements Gerry Paquette (1991) analysed in the Ontario Ministry. He pointed out that this form of policy is "a reassertion of the traditional strategic policy planning domains ... framed in terms that were flexible, generic, and all-encompassing" (p. 17). This is also true of the Alberta government policy document in which it states that the "Foundations for Adult Learning and Development is a flexible, dynamic concept that can adapt to changing social values, economic demands, educational expectations, and the needs of the individual" (p. 11). The concepts iterated in the statements are driven by three principles outlined in the document.

The Three Principles.

There are three guiding principles in the policy. Each of these is value-laden and represents the policy makers' perspectives in the area of adult learners' educational development. The first of the three involves an understanding of the "individual learner's context." Policy makers stated that "the value and integrity of individual learners in the context of their cultural, social and economic environments must be understood and respected" (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 9). Policy makers point out that it is important to understand this principle if institutions and agencies are to provide programmes that will be effective for the disadvantaged adult learner.

In addition to understanding the adult learners' context, implementers must realize that "the learning and development needs of individuals will change throughout their lives" (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 9). This second principle involves the concept of lifelong learning where individuals throughout their lives discover

that they need or want to continue to learn and upgrade their skills and therefore seek further education. Dennison and Gallagher (1982) described this concept as one that

> [subscribes] to the view that lifelong education is a "master concept," proposing that everyone ought to have "organized and systematic opportunities for instruction, study, and learning at any time throughout their lives ... to remedy earlier educational defects, to acquire new skills, to upgrade themselves vocationally, to increase their understanding of the world in which they live, to develop their own personalities, or some other purposes. (p. 173)

The third principle deals with "shared responsibility" whereby "the provision of learning opportunities and the acquisition of new skills required to meet the needs of adults is a shared responsibility of individuals, communities, government, business, and labour" (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 10). Essentially, the policy makers want to ensure that Albertan adults accessing the programmes are also committed to acquiring the necessary basic skills to become contributing citizens in society.

The Policy's Conclusion.

In concluding, the policy makers state that the policy

> is a framework policy that aims to provide clear and consistent direction for meeting the learning and development needs of individuals with low basic skills and for meeting societal demands for informed and participating citizens. It establishes a context for developing new programs and services. It forms the basis for future planning giving direction for taking action. It is an assurance that learning opportunities will be provided, especially for people with limited basic skills. (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 15)

This type of policy is different than the standard action policy that has funding attached to it. Instead, the policy is unique in that it beckons to a future period in time where the development of policy programmes with distinct guidelines for action will hopefully occur. To understand this policy and its intentions, new language must be used to describe a phenomenon that is occurring more frequently in the world of policymaking today.

A Dialogue on the Different Meanings for the Word Policy

Introduction.

Policy, as a term, is a general way of looking at the area of policy and policymaking. Policy analysts when discussing policy use the term liberally and upon closer analysis, the word policy is used in a variety of ways. So, it is important to distinguish how unique and different the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) is from the other ways of looking at policy. Most people think of policy as being action-oriented and fail to understand that it can also be of the type that suggests action for the future -- in other words, intent. A dialogue on this subject gives a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of this type of policy. After all, Stephen Ball (1990) describes how

> discourse [that] provides a particular and pertinent
> way of understanding policy formation, for policies
> are, pre-eminently, statements about practice - the
> way things could or should be - which rest upon,
> derive from, statements about the world - about the
> way things are. They are intended to bring about
> idealised solutions to diagnosed problems. Policies
> embody claims to speak with authority, they
> legitimate and initiate practices in the world, and
> they privilege certain visions and interests. They are
> power/knowledge configurations *par excellence*. (p.
> 22)

Ball's description of policy is a general representation of how policy is viewed. A more concise overview of the different types of policies gives an accurate picture of the variety that exists in the world of policy.

The traditional way of looking at policy focuses on the action-oriented variety which has funding and guidelines attached to it. A new way of looking at policy is needed to describe its many forms and move away from the traditional view. Ball (1990) states that "the basis of description of education policy has changed significantly and the established conceptual tools seem blunt and irrelevant therefore a set of new descriptors and concepts is needed" (p. 8).

Policy of Intent versus Action Policy
Ten Meanings for the Word – Policy.

Various academics and researchers in the field of policy analysis have written about the many forms of policy. In particular, Hogwood and Gunn (1984) have gone to great lengths in their book, *Policy analysis for the real world*, to describe ten "different uses of the word 'policy'" (p. 13). They have listed ten ways to define policy:

1. Policy as a label for a field of activity
2. Policy as an expression of general purpose or desired state of affairs
3. Policy as specific proposals
4. Policy as decisions of government
5. Policy as formal authorization
6. Policy as a programme
7. Policy as output
8. Policy as outcome
9. Policy as a theory or model
10. Policy as process. (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984)

Each of these uses describes a different way of defining policy. Only a few of these definitions apply to the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991).

The first use of the word policy is as a label for a field of activity. This applies to policies in general and is described by Hogwood and Gunn (1984) as

> both a common and apparently common-sense one, it can only be a starting-point. For example, it covers past, current, and potential activities - it makes no distinction between policy as aspiration and policy as achievement - and it does not really distinguish between policy as action and policy as inaction. (p. 13)

This general way of defining policy under one label tends to dismiss the important differences between policies. In particular, there is a distinct contrast between policies of action and those that are not. Generally, what occurs as a result of these generalization is that assumptions are made by those who exist within the policy environment about what the policy aims to do.

People often associate this meaning of policy with one that assumes that all policies are action-oriented. Darling-Hammond (1990) points out how assumptions are made in the policy arena in particular with "*implementation*, a term frequently used as though it means straightforward compliance" (p. 236).

Often, policy, is seen as a catalyst for action but that is not always the case. Policy, according to Hogwood and Gunn (1984), can also be considered as "an expression of general purpose or desired state of affairs" or what can be referred to as a policy of intent (p. 14). This promise or intent for future action offers a vision for things to come. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) look at the notion of intent in policy

> many writers would insist that anything meriting
> the title of policy must contain some element of
> purposiveness.... For the moment, we would simply
> point out that the 'intent' of policy-makers is not
> always reflected in their policy's 'content'. Also the
> 'rational' case for clearly defined objectives at an
> early stage in the policy-making process may blind us
> to the occasional reality of objectives which are
> invented retrospectively as a means of
> 'rationalizing' what has gone before. (pp. 14 - 15)

The *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) also acts as a form of rationalization of what has gone on before in adult education in Alberta. Policy makers, in their efforts to coordinate the complex nature of the adult basic education policy environment, developed a document. The document formally stated the policymakers' intentions. One policymaker stated that "your policy not only tells or states what exists but also provides statements of intention for the future."

A third use for the word policy is -- "policy as specific proposals." This type of policy is unique in that it is policy to develop policy documents or programs. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) asserted that the policy consists of "statements of specific actions which political organizations (interest groups, parties, the Cabinet itself) would like to see undertaken by government" (p. 15). This type of policy is akin to Dror's concept of megapolicy. Dror (1971) defines this concept as follows:

> Megapolicies involve determination of the
> postures, assumptions, and main guidelines to be
> followed by specific policies. They are a kind of
> *master policy,* clearly distinct from detailed
> discrete policies, though these two pure types are
> on a continuum with many in-between cases.(p.
> 65)

The *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) clearly points out that it is a policy for future policy development:

> It will guide future decision making by providing
> consistent direction for meeting the learning and
> development needs of individual adults with low
> basic skills, and for meeting social and economic
> demands for informed and participative citizens. (p.
> 1)

The policy does not propose to take immediate action. Instead, it is aimed at providing direction for future endeavours like action policies. Subsequently, policy makers hope that these action policies serve to uphold the intentions stated within the original document.

The fourth type of policy -- "policy as decisions of government" -- is typically a reactionary measure to deal immediately with a problem. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) described this type as reflective of "decisions, typically those arising from 'moments of choice' in some famous (and therefore atypical?) episode such as the Suez Crisis" (p. 15). In this instance, the policy problem must be of a pressing nature and is sometimes brought on by an event.

The fifth type of policy is "policy as formal authorization." This policy is developed when government wants to state that "it has a policy on a particular topic, the reference is sometimes to the specific ... statutory instrument which permits or requires an activity to take place" (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984, p.16). This type of policy is not intended to be operationalized but instead is a formally authorized plan of action such as a Bill of Parliament. In this case, what often happens is that the policy lacks any formal funding and guidelines therefore it is rarely implemented.

In the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991), the policy makers, point out that the provincial government never had a formal policy in adult learning and development and therefore they had to develop this document. This effort to fill the gap is further highlighted in the document's introduction "This policy is a commitment to provide learning opportunities for those whose learning needs are greatest" (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 1). Pointing out that the document is a commitment to these people

suggests a formalization of what the government hopes it is doing and will be doing.

The sixth type of policy "policy as a programme," characterizes the sort of policy North Americans are most familiar with. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) summarize "the idea of a programme - a defined and relatively specific sphere of government activity involving a particular package of legislation, organization and resources" (p. 16). Programmes are action policies that have funds and guidelines. Aimed at dealing with problems, programmes have definite objectives and intended results.

The seventh meaning of the word policy is "policy as output." Hogwood and Gunn (1984) describe it

> as what government actually delivers as opposed to
> what it has promised or has authorized through
> legislation. Such outputs can take many forms - the
> payment of cash benefits, the delivery of goods or
> services, the enforcement of rules, the invocation of
> symbols or the collection of taxes. (p. 16)

This type of policy most likely has a legislated direction but often policy makers do not follow it. Instead, they enact their own policy -- a policy of outputs -- where policy makers do what they feel is appropriate, taking into consideration other factors which constrain their efforts at implementing the policy.

People responsible for enacting the policy act on policy directives as best they can rather than follow what has been approved. As a result, actions often do not represent what a policy originally intended. Therefore resources and services are dispensed without regard for what the policy was designed to achieve.

The eighth use of the word policy is one which is discussed often when analysing policy effectiveness; "policy as outcome." Hogwood and Gunn (1984) describe it as "another way of looking at policy ... in terms of what is actually achieved" (p. 17). This is an important

distinction for policy makers in that they tend to view outcomes as a means of assessing policy effectiveness. In this case a policy's success depends largely on how well its intended goals are achieved.

The penultimate way of using the word 'policy' is "policy as a theory or model." Hogwood and Gunn (1984) describe it:

> All policies involve assumptions about what
> governments can do and what the consequences of
> their actions will be. These assumptions are rarely
> spelt out, but policies nevertheless do imply a theory
> (or model) of cause and effect. At its simplest this
> theory takes the form 'if X, then Y will follow'. (p. 18)

Policies which fall under this category are those associated with action policies whereby an immediate response is expected in the form of programmes. These programmes have definite objectives and in turn are closely measured through standardized policy instruments. Here, policy makers know what they want the outcomes to be and are quite specific about the means to achieve them. Programmes spell out in specific guidelines how programme recipients must act in order to receive funding. These efforts are all designed to create a desired end result -- cause and effect.

The final way of viewing policy is "policy as process." Here, policy is seen as a series of events which take place over time. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) point out that policy as process "is the equivalent of a film which will allow us to study the unfolding over time of the complexities of the policy-making process" (p. 19).

Th's last one is very different than the nine other labels discussed above which are one-time policy events rather than processes. The government's framework policy the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) can also be seen as an event. It has all the characteristics described by Hogwood and Gunn (1984) as that of a "statement of an objective" rather than an ongoing process that goes through various stages as it is implemented. Darling-

Hammond (1990) in her study of the California Mathematics curriculum framework policy points out that "policy makers often behave as though the policy process is virtually complete when a new law has been passed and the writing of regulations or guidelines has been completed" (p. 236).

This simplistic overview of the policy process by policy makers creates many problems at the implementation phase. Darling-Hammond (1990) points that out in her study policy makers communicated the policy "requirements to local administrators who were to adopt a strategy for meeting them" (p. 236). This leaves implementers with "the message through a filter, with much of the information and most of the contextual clues screened out" (Darling-Hammond, 1990, p. 236).

In the case of the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) the generally worded policy statements are broad in scope. This situation leaves implementers, "of course, interpreting the new through the lens of the familiar, [which] is as cognitive science now tells us, how all of us construct meaning from the information we process using our existing schema" (Darling-Hammond, 1990, p. 236).

For teachers at the implementation site, policy takes on different meanings than it does for the policy makers at the policy development stage. Darling-Hammond (1990) points out that in policy development "teachers' prior learning, beliefs, and attitudes are rarely considered as an essential ingredient in the process of teaching itself, much less in the process of change" (p. 238). In order for there to be a proper understanding of what the policy's intentions are

> policy must be better communicated if it is to be well understood. Meaningful discussion and extensive professional development at all levels of the system are critical components of such communication; directives are not enough. (Darling-Hammond, 1990, p. 240)

Each groups' differing goals must be taken into consideration when presenting a policy if it is to do what it was intended to do. Stephen Ball (1990) states that,

> grand intentions are not always realised in practise and may actually be contradicted. The concerns of schools, of industry (and of different schools and industries), of the state (and of different sectors of the state) rarely come together unproblematically. (p. 99)

It can be suggested that many problems faced in the implementation phase of the policy are a result of how policy is viewed by those who must implement it. Implementation problems occur when policy stakeholders look at policy as a one-shot event rather than as an ongoing process. In order to know how each group of participants in a policy environment understand a policy requires an understanding of each group's perspectives. An examination of the ways in which they interpret policy statements will elucidate how each group understands the policy and its requirements.

Chapter 6
The Findings

Introduction

Each statement in the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) carries with it multiple meanings. It is important to understand how each group of people within a policy environment interprets the wording of these ambiguously worded statements. Ball (1990) points out that

> words and propositions will change their meaning according to their use and the positions held by those who use them. Knowledge is that of which one can speak in a discursive practice. Meanings thus arise not from language but from institutional practices, from power relations, from social position. Words and concepts change their meaning and their effects as they are deployed within different discourses.... Conflicting discourses may arise even within a common language. (pp. 17-18).

Meanings, as they are interpreted by those who seek to understand the statements, often range from a subtle to a sensationally different one from what the policy makers intended. Even a subtle difference in comprehending the policy statements can have a significant impact on how the policy is viewed and in the way in which it is implemented.

The underlying meanings are notable in that as Kogan (cited in Ball, 1990) states:

> Policy is clearly a matter of the 'authoritative allocation of values': policies are the operational statements of values, 'statements of prescriptive intent.' (p. 3)

Ball (1990) goes further by stating:

But values do not float free of their social context.
We need to ask whose values are validated in policy,
and whose are not. (p.3)

A clearer understanding of how policies are understood at the different levels in a policy system is revealed by asking whose values are represented within the document itself. All the individuals within that context have "their own interpretation, their understanding of the context in which they work that provides a framework for their actions and thoughts" (Knight, 1991, p.64). In summary, examining the context closely should reveal how these individuals come to understand and interpret policy.

Organization of Findings

The data analysis findings are organized into sections indicating the main principles and policy statements highlighted in the policy document *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991). In this chapter the principles and policy statements are discussed first and then the themes derived from the findings are presented underneath each of the participants' group perspectives.

The findings are determined from how each of the three particpant groups comes to understand what these principles, policy statements and their concepts signifies for them both from their individual perspectives and from the perspectives of the roles they perform as the policy players in this study. Below each of the principles or policy statement's main ideas are listed the particpant group's perspectives and subsequently the themes which emerged from the data analysis. In some instances there are two or more themes for each of the principles or policy stataments' main ideas. These themes are explained individually under each of the groups' perspectives.

Policy makers - The Need for a Policy

Two policy makers were interviewed during the data collection phase. These two, Jack and Bart, were the main players who were instrumental in developing and designing the policy document. Both of them have government positions in the field of adult education. It was their mission to ensure that a basic education policy for adults be produced. During the development phase of their policymaking efforts, these policy makers were compelled to abide by certain constraints. Decisions made outside of their offices often constrained their efforts to develop a workable policy and these were often connected to the policy's financial feasibility.

During the interviews, the two policy makers, Jack and Bart, agreed on the main reason for the policy's development. Essentially, the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) "derived from a perception that the province needed a literacy policy" (PM1, p. 1). In general, it soon shifted to a policy that embraced adult basic education development.

Theme of Framework Policy as Guide and Standard

Our first policymaker, Jack, points out that the policy "ended up being a government policy as opposed to an Advanced Education one; it served as an umbrella under which all government departments are obliged to measure their programs against the principles in the document" (PM1, p. 6). Jack's description of this policy as an umbrella refers to the policy's coordinating role highlighted within this piece of legislation. According to the policy makers, the document's primary purpose is to bring together the various government departments involved in adult basic education development. Consequently, the policy would formally authorize what had existed. In addition, the document explicitly refers to a commitment for future action in this field:

> Together with other social and educational policies
> of the government, it sets an appropriate context for
> the development and maintenance of specific
> program policies designed to meet the needs of
> adults for basic skills in an ever-changing cultural,
> economic and social environment. (Alberta
> Advanced Education, 1991, p. 15)

Like Jack, Bart points out that "the policy not only tells or states what exists but also provides statements of intention for the future" (PM2, p. 4). He elaborates that the policy conta

> no statements that we don't already s nat we are
> doing. There's nothing here that totally operates in
> the future; everything in here exists. The intention
> aspect is perhaps going beyond what's already been
> done. (PM2, p. 4)

Bart distinguishes this type of policy from action-oriented ones:

> what makes this policy different is that there were
> programmes in place in three different departments.
> These programmes were not formal policies even
> though they had guidelines, they lacked formal
> policy statements. Statements that would cover all
> their activities regardless of what department they
> were in. Each one of those programmes had
> guidelines or funding contracts stating the kind of
> programme you had to offer. So, what this policy did
> was bring everybody together who had a vested
> interest in government and solicited opinions from
> the entire literacy community going beyond what
> existed. (PM2, p. 5)

In addition, Bart points out that even though the policy goes beyond what already exists, it now also represents a

> multiple perspective of ... all the departments that do
> not provide funding to the literacy programmes but
> who have a vested interest in funding. They provide
> services that are necessary for people to be able to go
> to these programmes. (PM2, p. 5)

In addition to a coordinating role, the policy makers see the policy as serving a second function, that of "a guide, a framework for all institutions and departments to abide by" (PM1, p. 6). Jack hopes that the people who administer institutions and departments providing programmes for adult development will consider that "they should try to tailor their thinking to that intent" (p.6). In other words, the policy serves as a standard by which a. It development agencies should evaluate their programmes. There is the hope that standards will be developed to coincide with the document's purpose. Bart, too, supports this notion of policy as a standard by stating that

> this document exists so that when [institutions or
> government departments] review programmes they
> now have this to review them by. The document is
> part of the context for review. (PM2, p. 8)

Jack mentions that this policy will provide a mode to review other policies that exist in adult basic education. The policy would also serve as a measure to evaluate programmes. Jack outlines how difficult it is to describe the concept of quality. It has various connotations and often is perceived by the public as synonymous with standards:

> Have you read *Zen and the art of motorcycle
> maintenance?*... It is a kind of philosophical diatribe
> that calls up the whole concept of quality. The
> character in the book decides that he has figured out
> what quality is but he can't describe it. The
> interesting part of his debate is philosophical. At a
> more conceptual abstract level, his point is that
> people recognize quality when they see it yet they
> have a difficult time describing it. How that applies
> to us I'm not sure. So, the issue of standards seems
> in people's minds to be some assurance of quality.
> (PM1, p. 8)

The intent of policy as a form of measuring a programmes'
quality is a strong theme. Throughout the interview, Jack points out
that the policy's principles served as catalysts for developing each
policy statement. In other words, the principles were the guiding
elements for designing the policy. The policy makers' following
statements clarify how important these principles are. Jack states:

> The policy and its principles serve as an umbrella
> against which all government departments are
> obliged to measure their programs.(PM1, p. 6)

> When one looks at the assumptions and the
> principles and they can see what was intended here,
> they can say "well, here is what they assume so we
> should try to tailor our thinking to that
> intent."(PM1, p. 6)

Bart too shows how the principles fit with a philosophy of lifelong
learning:
> One of the principles of the document is that
> learning creates change for people. This is a
> recognition of that and as well that you need to learn
> for various aspects of your life.(PM2, p. 8)

All three principles -- individual learner context, changing learning needs, and shared responsibility -- promote a philosophy of lifelong learning (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, pp. 9-10).

The Philosophy of Lifelong Learning

Policy makers' Perspectives
Themes of Learning as Enrichment and to Change Attitudes.

Policy makers see lifelong learning as important in all the stages of a person's life. Both Jack and Bart want the public to think of education as ongoing and continuing past the early part of a person's formal education. They make this assertion in the document's text:

> Lifelong learning implies the constant reassessment
> of current skill levels against the demands of present
> or future ambitions. What is required is the
> willingness of individuals to act to eliminate the gap
> between current skill levels and the skills they need,
> and the provision of learning opportunities to make
> that possible. (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p.
> 12)

The policy makers aim to provide Albertans, with limited basic skills, the opportunity to gain a better lifestyle by furthering their education. Dennison and Gallagher (1986) refer to this trend as "the lifelong learning response" (p. 173).

In their book, *Canada's community colleges*, Dennison and Gallagher (1986) state that this response is a reaction to viewing adult education institutions as "catalysts for the development of Canada as a learning society" (p. 173). This notion of lifelong learning is one which Dennison and Gallagher (1986) believe stems from an earlier version issued in a 1972 report by the International Commission on the Development of Education and published by U.N.E.S.C.O.:

> They subscribe to the view that lifelong education is
> a "master concept," proposing that everyone ought
> to have "organized and systematic opportunities for
> instruction, study, and learning at any time
> throughout their lives ... to remedy earlier
> educational defects, to acquire new skills, to upgrade
> themselves vocationally, to increase their
> understanding of the world in which they live, to
> develop their own personalities, or some other
> purposes.(p. 173)

The objective of providing opportunities as part of lifelong learning is reiterated in the interviews with the two policy makers. Jack describes lifelong learning as follows:

> The whole notion of a learning culture is something
> that this document is contributing toward. The
> mindset most of our civilization has grown up with
> is that you pack your education into the early years of
> your life and that that is sufficient is obviously an
> outmoded kind of thinking. (PM1, p. 10)

For Jack, learning as a lifelong activity is an idea that requires a change in society's thinking. He feels that this change in thinking is one that can be promoted by this policy. For him "awareness raising" is important. He wishes to see adult education as a mainstream activity and at present, Jack believes that Canadian society views adult education as marginally important. He feels that people consider the education of adults as one reserved for those who want to establish a career or for those who somehow failed to receive a proper edcuation in their early years. Jack states:

> Adult education is still seen in many ways as
> marginal: an admission of inadequacy in our
> educational system. Instead we should look at adult
> education as an acknowledgment that we need to
> upgrade, enrich ourselves. This is what lifelong
> learning should be. (PM1, p. 10)

Dennison and Gallagher (1986) agree with Jack's statement in that,

> to advance the lifelong learning concept, the most
> fundamental need is for a change of Canadian
> attitude about learning. There is still the widespread
> view that the years from six to eighteen are the best
> for learning, despite the richness of educational and
> general literature which refutes this claim. (p. 173)

The policy makers believe that a change in current attitudes toward adult education requires educating the public on what adult education ou??? be. To ensure that lifelong learning is entrenched into the idea of a le??? culture, Jack asserts that "there has to be shared respc?????? in the process of change by the government that funds it ??? ??? institutions that have to deliver it" (PM1, p. 11). This is a ????? commitment as well as being a decision to do it" (PM1, p. 11).

When asked what lifelong learning means to him, Bart feels the same way Jack does. He describes it as "one of the principles of the document. Learning is a form of change for people as well as a recognition that you need to learn for various aspects of your life"(PM2, p. 8). He goes on to state that adult education should not be "totally geared toward work and employability, it is geared more toward adult development" (PM2, p. 8). To him learning as a lifelong activity represents change and change is part of everyone's life. Another predominant theme is the connection between upgrading and enrichment. Bart explains:

> Lifelong learning has more than one focus. Its not
> just employability there are various reasons why
> people might want to upgrade. In one part of a
> person's life writing skills may be adequate but in
> another part they may not be. Adults' skills may be
> adequate to function on a daily basis in terms of their
> family responsibilities and in the community. But
> on the job something happens and they no longer
> have the skills to function in that area of
> development. (PM2, p. 10)

He goes one step further in pointing out that this activity demands a shared resp⌐   with those it is aimed at enriching:

> Lifelo⌐ ⌐ ⌐arning for me means that you have to
> be reass⌐⌐sing your skills constantly. Its an
> individual's responsibility to be doing that to a
> certain extent. I mean I have to do that, too. (PM2,
> p. 10)

Both policy makers see learning as a lifelong activity. They view it as an ongoing experience and significant to their own lives.

Administrators' Perspectives - Lifelong Learning

Themes - A Way to Cope and to Adjust to Changing Needs and Society.

Administrators of the E.S.L. full-time adult programmes share similar viewpoints on the philosophy of lifelong learning. All four of them, three men and a woman, look at lifelong learning as having great value throughout one's lifetime. They see learning as a means of dealing with change.

Education as a means of coping with change is a different way of looking at learning. Often, education is seen as a vehicle for change in attitudes, beliefs, and values. For the administrators, words such as cope, adapt, and adjust describe what the philososphy of learning as a lifelong activity means to them. On the other hand, the policy makers view learning as a way to promote a change in attitude toward learning.

Specific interview statements illustrate the differing values of the various administrators as they describe what learning as a lifelong activity means to them in their context. Marvin, the Dean of Adult Development Programmes, addresses what lifelong learning means to him as he relates it to his job:

> For E.S.L. learners there is a developn   al thing
> that happens. Once these people come int   '-
> country th- fi st thing that concerns them   a
> se ies of settlement issues such as finding a plac
> figuring out how to get around ar shop. That
> implies a fairly rigorous review or learning as a
> form of life.(A, p. 5)

Here, Marvin implies that learning i part of living. He feels that in order for new immigrants to cope with new situations they must be given educational opportunities that can help them to cope and adapt to their new environments.

Specifically, Marvin, extols his personal feelings when he describes that the desire to learn is sparked by a desire to better one's self-esteem:

> People want to learn as a result of self-evaluation.
> They assess their own values and life
> circumstances. Because of specific life transitions
> such as marital status changes they may perceive
> the opportunity to remove a barrier to their
> personal success in life.(A, p. 5)

He goes on to point out the connection between self-esteem and learning:

> A number of people said I want to learn so that I
> can have a more active role in my community, I
> want to learn because I'm curious about whatever;
> I want to learn because I feel that people around
> me are functioning at a higher level than I am and
> I want to take a role in my social group which is
> different. Learning becomes a self-esteem type of
> issue. (A, p. 5)

The Chairman of the E.S.L. Department shares the same interpretation on the philosophy of lifelong learning. He, too, views education as self-evaluation and a mode to build positive self-esteem.

He believes that students should know that the institution cannot possibly prepare them to be fully fluent in English by the time they leave. He feels that to expect to come out of the programme fully fluent is an unrealistic expectation due to the short time period students attend. Therefore, he points out that it is important that the teachers impress upon their students that they should continue to learn throughout their lives:

> When they graduate they know that they have
> more to learn. They know within themselves tha¹
> they are not great in the English language. S ᵣ
> think if they have not realized that ther wᵣ ᵥe
> lost.(AJ, p. 3)

A third administrator, Lori, the Assistant Director, also looks at the idea of lifelong learning as a means of coping with change. Shᵣ ᵊelie ᵥes that at best all the programmes can do is give students the basics and a desire to continue to learn:

> I'm looking at this as an administrator. I hope we
> provide in E.S.L. classes the basics to carry on in
> Canadian society. We wish to instill in our
> students the desire to keep learning and changing
> especially with the way things are in society and in
> the world. If we can leave them with anything,
> leave them with that kind of an outlook - wanting
> to learn. (AL, p. 4)

Basics, to Lori, signify learning strategies that can be taught that allow a person to cope in society long after completing the programme:

> Maybe it comes down to teaching some learning
> strategies that they can go off with after 20 weeks
> and feel comfortable with. These will help them to
> continue learning somehow but they will also
> help them to perhaps find a job.(AL, p. 4)

Myles, the President, best defines lifelong learning as,

a notion of an individual continually acquiring
those important skills needed to cope with life's
changing demands. (AD, p. 3)

He adds to this by saying:

What I mean is that people need to learn in order to
cope with the environment in which they are living.
So, the very first reason or rationale behind lifelong
learning is that because of the environment in
which we live we need a number of additional skills
to help us cope with it. In E.S.L. we need English for
these people to cope within our Canadian
environment. So, that's one important aspect I see in
lifelong learning that we all need to learn and
continue to learn to cope with the changing
environment. In this case, English is an important
base. (AD, p. 3)

In addition to the aspect of coping, Myles shares with the policy makers
similar feelings on the matter of creating a culture of learning:

We've ended up having to spend a lot of time
almost with cultural bridging classes to help them
understand that it is important to continue to learn
because you're not going to cope in this cultural
environment without learning. (AD, p. 3)

In conclusion, the administrators as a group look at the idea of
lifelong learning as a necessity for those individuals who must cope
with change. Not only do they look at learning as synonymous with
teaching but they imply that a formal education will provide the
vehicle for learning. Students are taught learning strategies which
administrators hope will be sufficient enough to aid individuals
through changes in their present and future lives

In addition to the strategies, administrators believe that students
should be encouraged to reassess their present situations in life. This is
especially true, they believe, for individuals who enter the institution

and who lack the necessary skills and knowledge to improve their
present disadvantaged state. In this instance, self-evaluation and
reassessment are seen as key factors to encouraging students to
continue learning throughout their lives. The administrators
concluded that this shared responsibility means that individual
students should demonstrate a commitment and the institution's
administration should ensure that there are programmes in place that
satisfy the needs of the student.

Ultimately, they believe that the institution's role is to give
students adequate skills to cope with changes in their lives. As
administrators, they hope that the outcome of these programmes
would be to raise the adult students' self-esteem. By doing this they feel
the programmes will encourage these adults to participate in future
learning opportunities. In addition, they hope that this encouragement
will create a culture of lifelong learning. Myles sums this up best:

> Average age of our students is 30 which means that
> faculty have to deal with barriers to learning that
> people bring with them. This supportive approach
> becomes an attitude that teachers have as teachers of
> adults, to motivate, to work on the self-esteem side
> of it so that we facilitate the learning that goes on.
> Until those personal barriers are overcome it is
> difficult for people to learn. (AD, p. 3)

From that statement, Myles believes that teachers can help adult
learners overcome personal barriers that they bring to the clarssroom.

Teachers' Perspectives - Lifelong Learning
Themes - Teach Learning Strategies, Boosting Self-Esteem, and Responsibility for Learning.

Teachers, in general, feel that promoting lifelong learning is part
of their role. They believe that adults must be shown the value of
learning and the best way to do this is through activities that give

students strategies for future learning. Patrick, a teacher, points out that instilling the philosophy of lifelong learning is directly linked to giving students specific learning strategies:

> I believe in instilling in students the desire to learn
> English. This is unwritten; it does not exist in the
> curriculum but I think you would be hard-pressed to
> find a teacher who does not spend some time going
> over ways of continuing to study English. I said it
> wasn't part of the curriculum but perhaps it is. For
> example, the Intermediate Level curriculum
> concentrates on natural material like the news,
> reading a newspaper, listening to the news, to the
> radio, or watching TV programs. There is a lot of that
> in the curriculum, so those are things that students
> can continue to do once they've completed the
> twenty weeks.(TE, p. 2)

Margie, a long-time teacher at the centre, explains how learning strategies are taught:

> We teach them strategies and ways of learning
> English that stay with them such as ways of
> continuing to practice, continuing to build on what
> they have gained here. We teach them ways of
> asking question, ways of getting information,
> exposing themselves to certain language rich
> situations and getting the most out of it and at the
> same time building their confidence.(TMM, p. 1)

Like Margie, almost half of the teachers, five out of the twelve, feel that lifelong learning as a philosophy requires giving their students learning strategies so that they can continue to learn in the future without having to return to a school environment.

The rest of the teaching staff promote the philosophy of lifelong learning by making students more aware of other programmes or courses that they can take to improve their learning of English. These teachers imply that learning is a student's responsibility and that to

encourage them is sufficient to create a culture of learning. Keith, a
beginning teacher, states:

> It is a lifelong responsibility: there is no doubt
> about it. It goes double for the teacher as well as
> the students. I learn everyday I am here and I
> will probably be learning for the rest of my life.
> It is up to the students and that's why I try to
> instill in them that they have the responsibility
> to learn, too. (TW, p. 2)

To promote in students the desire to continue to learn is one which
Josie feels is entrenched in the goals of teaching:

> As teachers we also encourage and promote the
> continuation of learning. So we push our students
> by telling them "well you can take another course
> and maybe in the future you can maybe write your
> TOEFL and go back to University." I don't know if
> it is necessarily part of the programme but I think
> all of the teachers here have that same goal. Maybe
> it is not a philosophy here at AVC but its an
> underlying philosophy of teachers, it is just bred
> into you. (TT, p. 2)

To Josie encouraging students to be involved in lifelong learning is a
goal which she feels is a characteristic one for teachers. Teachers, she
feels, promote the idea of learning throughout one's lifetime to their
students.

A way to emphasize the philosophy of lifelong learning is to
show students how learning leads to success. In other words, it is
important to show by example that learning leads to a promising
future. Marie, the student advisor, mentions that she uses a video to
make the point. She distributes the video to the teachers so that they
can show it to their students. She describes the video's contents and the
purpose she hopes it serves:

Role models are important and so is getting
information to them. We've got a great video
from Calgary on immigrants and how they made
it here and their struggles. Different sorts of jobs
were represented from factory jobs to
entrepreneurs and even a doctor. There was a
range of ways they either changed careers or got
into their previous career or received training. I'll
push it, I'll take it to the teachers and when
they've got classes that are finishing I remind
them. (TD, p. 3)

To Marie, being a role model is another way to show her students that
they can do better for themselves if they are willing to take on
responsibility for their own future learning.

Teachers, as a group, believe that to promote lifelong learning
successfully requires the fulfillment of a key goal which pertains to
teaching adults -- the building of students' self-esteem and self-
confidence. The teachers hold that without a healthy self-esteem
students do not attempt to continue to learn English let alone anything
else. Jolene, who teaches an intermediate level class, clarifies how she
tries to increase students' self-confidence:

Many of the students are afraid of the telephone
and I can see why. I mean in a different language
answering the telephone can be scary because in
Canada everyone talks so rapidly on the
telephone. It is bad enough talking to a person in
person but on the telephone it is really scary. The
conversations we practice here help them to feel
more at ease with talking and I think that is
helpful. I know it would be helpful to me. I've
received feedback from students who have said to
me that it is helpful not to be shy especially for
basic things like being able to phone 911 or explain
a problem.(TMJ, p. 2)

To Jolene increasing students' self-confidence is a basic requirement of teaching. She believes that her students need this self-confidence so that they are motivated to use the English language in daily living. In addition, she feels that by increasing their self-esteem they will gain a desire to continue to learn.

The teachers in general imply that education increases students' self-confidence. This way of thinking suggests cause and effect. So, teachers believe that the more students become fluent in English the more confident they will become. Margie, another teacher, adheres to this notion, she feels that the best way to promote success for lifelong learning is to offer advice and instill a positive attitude toward learning through progress reports:

> In our progress reports, half way through the 10 week term, we sit down with the students and try and show them ways that they can help themselves. Progress reports and student teacher interviews are progress reports. We also sit down with them and give them as much advice as we can half way through and then half way through each 10 week session and again at the end of the first 10 weeks. (TMM, p. 2)

The teachers hope that progress reports, advice, and an increase in self-esteem will change students' attitudes toward learning as an ongoing activity rather than a one-shot deal. Jolene's perspective articulates this best:

> It means they are not only learning English, they are learning life skills and about different cultures. I think that is a lifelong process that in order to get along in the world you have to learn basic skills.(TMJ, p. 2)

For teachers, changing their students' attitudes toward learning as a lifelong activity is their primary goal. They as teachers have a desire to promote and encourage students to take active roles toward learning

and learning for the future. In the end, to promote lifelong learning the teachers' underlying goal is to increase students' self-esteem and build up their self-confidence.

A Synopsis on the Promotion of Learning as a Lifelong Activity

A close look at varying interpretations of the philosophy of lifelong learning reveals how each group understands it. Player roles and goals are defined as each of the three groups, the policy makers, teachers, and administrators, describe what part they play in a combined effort at fulfilling the visions expressed in the policy document. There are shared commonalities and distinct differences between the way the groups relate to the main principle of the policy -- the promotion of lifelong learning.

All three groups see the philosophy of lifelong learning as a positive direction toward establishing a learning culture among the adult population as a whole. They also agree on the idea of adults sharing the responsibility of learning with both the government, whose main role is to provide the opportunities for learning, and the institution whose role it is to provide the programming to serve individual students' needs.

Institutional adminstrators and teachers both emphasize the fact that adult learners need skills to cope with change. These skills would be in the form of learning strategies for the students to use in the future. Both agree that their educational programmes are designed to increase students' self-esteem and self-confidence. This not only improves learning but also encourages students to continue in lifelong learning.

The only distinct difference, exclusive to the policy makers, is how they describe learning as a means of encouraging a change in the adult population's attitude toward learning. The policy makers' focus is to foster the idea of learning as change rather than as a way of coping with change. They believe it is important to get adult learners to re-evaluate their skills and life situations several times over the course of

their adult lives. Soon after a re-evaluation these adults should be given the opportunities to fulfill their educational needs and add skills which they feel they lack.

Overall, for policy makers it is important to assist adults in their quest to satisfy educational needs. In addition, they want to encourage further development of skills for adults by providing what they feel are appropriate educa onal opportunities that adhere to a philosophy that promotes lifelong arning. This idea is best summarized in the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991):

> This policy encourages and assists Albertans to assess their needs and to accept responsibility for taking advantage of programs and services to develop their basic skills. (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 4)

First Policy Statement - The Principle of Reasonable and Equitable Access to Basic Skills Education

The first policy statement in the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) states that "the Government of Alberta will provide adult Albertans, who so desire, reasonable and equitable access to programs that establish a foundations of basic skills" (Alberta Advanced Education, p. 4). This statement deals with the idea of providing universal accessibility to educational programmes for adults.

These programmes are unique in that they are developed to provide opportunites for adult learners who need to add to their basic skills. The policy clarifies who qualifies as adult learners for this specialized type of education. It clearly defines that they are adults who need "to acquire the basic skills to achieve their personal goals, improve their social and personal lives, adapt to changing conditions, be economically independent, and assume greater responsibility for themselves, their families and their communities" (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 3).

There are two main constructs in the first policy statement that deal with the question of accessibility to educational opportunities -- *reasonable* and *equitable*. Each of these constructs elicit varying responses from the three groups under study. Often the interviewees' responses are similar but in a few instances there are interesting variations.

Policy makers' Perspectives
Themes - Educational Accessibility and Being Equitable.

Both policy makers agreed that the first statement is a commitment to provide sufficient opportunities for those adults who want or feel they need further education. Jack indicates how important accessibility is as one of the policy's key principles:

> Access as a principle in the policy is one that has
> prevailed in Alberta forever. It is simply one of the
> responsibilities of government to provide access to
> post-secondary education for the adult learner. We
> needed to confirm that and that is why that principle
> is the number one principle.(PM1, p. 13)

This confirmation is further validated by the policy makers who profess to provide this educational service to "those Albertans who so desire." Even though they state that, the policy makers point out that the concept of universal accessibility is constrained by economical factors. To make this first policy statement realistic, the policy makers added the two words *reasonable* and *equitable* to the statement. Bart points out that limited resources constrain both the policy makers and government alike:

> A policy statement in a framework policy has to
> work in a particular kind of way that not only covers
> the kind of programmes that exist. It tries to fit those
> programs into that policy statement but also
> demonstrates the intent to do what has been stated.
> For me *reasonable* can mean a number of things. To
> some extent it is a restrictive kind of word in that
> you might not necessarily be providing something to
> someone immediately.(PM2, P. 11)

The word *reasonable* for policy makers, acts as a disclaimer. It clarifies
for the public that educational opportunites cannot be provided
immediately on a demand basis. Although the statement is a
commitment to provide educational opportunities to those who are
willing to access them, it is not a promise to provide programmes
without considering their cost. Also, *reasonable* implies what policy
makers feel they can and cannot supply in educational programming
for adults. Bart addresses the issue of financial limits in education by
stating what the policy cannot do rather than what it can:

> This policy does not guarantee that a person can get
> into a program that afternoon. It does not also
> guarantee that a person will necessarily find exactly
> the right kind of program that they want within
> their community. So, [*reasonable*] to some extent has
> to do with the resources that exist and the kinds of
> programs that have been put in place around the
> province. (PM2, p. 11)

These constraints on accessibility of educational opportunities
are a result of limited resources. Both policy makers agree that
institutions who educate adult learners also have limited resources. As
a result, Bart suggests that institutions must

> determine themselves what their priorities are for
> their area. They determine what kind of
> programming will be put in place. To some extent
> that will be the decision of the community agencies
> who can also access funding through government
> and make decisions regarding what type of programs
> they can apply for. So, programmes are put in place
> by government, by post-secondary institutions, and
> by community agencies. There may not be
> something in every community for everybody. So,
> [reasonable] is going to take into account the funding
> system that we have in place. Most communities
> have something that they can provide. (PM2, pp. 11-
> 12)

Even though Jack, the primary policy maker, feels that adult education should be a basic right he understands that it is an impossible and expensive proposition:

> Policy has to be a balance between what the
> community wants and what government can in fact
> endorse or deliver. So, if you were to declare that a
> right and say anyone has universal access to
> language training to whatever extent is required for
> employment or to meet personal goals, government
> would have to turn around and say you cannot do
> that we. (PM1, p. 13)

Ultimately, he views reasonable accessibility as providing an "opportunity to participate" (PM1, p. 13). Jack elaborates:

In the larger framework access means the
opportunity to participate. So now you have to think
about what's the reality of that, do you give people in
Fort Chipewyan the same ability to participate as you
do in Calgary or Edmonton. You may only get one
non-English speaking immigrant in Fort Chipewyan
in a year and you get a lot more in Calgary. So does
that one fellow get the same service as in Calgary. So
we cannot serve him because we cannot afford to
deal with one fellow. This is where we include the
notion of equitable -- we will make it fair. We have
to qualify [equitable] with [reasonable] in some
interpretations. It is a subjective thing in that it
would not be reasonable to provide a program of
E.S.L. to one person in Fort Chipewyan. (PM1, pp.
13-14)

To Jack the word *reasonable* is related to the concept of *equitable*.
Equitable means being *fair*. *Fairness* is relative to how best one can
serve the majority of the population with the limited resources
available for educational programmes. Compromises must be made in
order to reach the largest number of people -- this according to the
policy makers is being fair. Jack makes it clear that *equitable* should not
be equated with the notion of *equality*:

It cannot be equal it will not be equal that's why we
use the term [equitable]. [*Equitable*]means or is
intended to mean that you will have the opportunity
to educational programmes and that it may not be in
exactly the same proportion as somebody who lives
closer to Edmonton. (PM1, p. 14)

The distinction made between *equitable* and *equal* is to point out the
impossibility of offering educational opportunities to a few people at
the expense of the majority. Because of limited resources the policy
makers explain that the entire educational system is jeopardized if it
caters to all individuals in society equally. After all, both words --

equitable and *reasonable* — are in the statement to emphasize the fiscal realities of providing access to educational opportunites.

Administrators' Perspectives
Themes of Reasonable and Equitable Accessibility - Being Fair

There was a definite consensus among the administrators on how they interpret the word *reasonable*. They all feel that the word *reasonable* is important in tnat they, too, as administrators are faced with limited institutional resources. These constraints force them to look at their programming concerns from a financial standpoint. Everyday they are influenced by monetary factors when making programming decisions. Marvin confirms this:

> The salient word here is access, reasonable access.
> *Reasonable* means that people cannot assume that
> minutes after landing at the airport they can be
> placed in an E.S.L. class. Obviously, there are
> limits in terms of our resources and there are
> limits in terms of our ability to process them and
> respond. So, the word *reasonable* is a legitimate
> qualifier that there are limits.(A, p. 7)

Even though financial limits exist, Myles, the President, makes it clear that the word *reasonable* stands for what realistically can be done as opposed to what is appropriate ideally from an educational viewpoint. Myles explains what he thinks the problem is

> part of the problem is that there is only a finite
> amount of funding available to support and we're
> constrained by that. We know from an educational
> perspective that we cannot expect to do everything at
> those sub basic levels in 20 weeks? Its not logical
> from an educational perspective.(AD, p. 5)

He adds that in an ideal society the education system would try to serve learners as unique individuals with their own needs:

> In a utopian situation every student should be
> treated individually. We would identify their
> needs and aspirations and if they need all 4 levels
> of E.S.L. then that's what they need to be exposed
> to. Unfortunately, there is a financial constraint
> problem.... *Reasonable* has got to be the balance
> between what you can and cannot do. (AD, pp. 5-6)

The Chairman of the E.S.L. department, Jason, recognizes that
"funding is not a bottomless pit" (AJ, p. 4). As a result of these limits,
he along with the policy makers, feels that the institution cannot
"provide courses on demand" (AJ, p. 4). Jason explains:

> People have to prove a little that they need the
> course and I have no problem with that. (AJ, p. 4)

This response reveals that Jason does not believe that universal
accessibility to educational programmes is necessarily a good thing. He
indicates that a little effort on the part of learners in this whole issue of
gaining access to training is worthwhile.

Like Jason, Lori too, believes that accessibility is not a problem.
Referring to waiting lists of learners wanting to access E.S.L.
programmes, she points out that the institution and the programmes
are reasonably accessible. Often, she asserts students are not available at
the start of a programme:

> Sometimes, I find the students talk about waiting
> lists: they talk about some students that can't get
> in. Well, I know as an administrator, that when it
> comes to filling spaces with students from the
> waiting list sometimes the students aren't there. I
> don't think a lot of people realize that. (AL, p. 5)

She gives an example to illustrate her point:

> There was a time we were promised 200 students and on registration day 150 showed up. Employment Canada promised us 50 more and they tried to get them and had trouble filling the placements.(AL, p. 5)

Administrators, as a group, see limited resources as part of every system that operates with public funds. They see their efforts as being *reasonable*. They feel all learners are given opportunities to better themselves educationally. Accordinr to administrators, education should fulfill a specific need, but that does not mean that it be provided on demand for students desiring to access it. Rather, they contend that fair access is more important than access on demand. Once students have gone through a process requiring a waiting period they can gain access to the programme best suited to satisfying their needs. Therefore, for administrators, the term *reasonable* means spelling out that there are constraints that influence who has access and to what types of programmes.

Overall, all four administrators agree that being *equitable* is being fair to individuals seeking further education. Out of four only Marvin, distinguishes between *equal* and *equitable*:

> [*Equitable*]as opposed to equal is an important distinctio:. People don't have a right to equal access they have a right to equitable access. There's a difference between a Somalian peasant and a Polish nuclear physicist they don't deserve equal treatment. They are not equal, their needs are different and they need access to programming that meets their individual needs. They do not need access to the same program. It isn't a matter of treating them equally its a matter of treating them as individuals. ... People want to be treated equally on one hand and they'll argue about the virtues of equality and on the other hand they also want to be treated as individuals. Those two notions contradict eachother. (A, p. 7)

Others in the group see no apparent difference between the meaning of the words *equal* and *equitable*. They use the terms interchangeably as they describe what equitable means to them.

Although there was a connection made between the two terms, the administrators all state that they feel that the term *equitable* implies that everyone is given a fair opportunity to access programmes they need. Jason summarizes what all four administrators believe:

> Well, *equitable* is easy for me you have to be fair
> to everybody and you can't exercise any
> favoritism. I attribute that to a real plus of this
> institution. There are checks and balances all the
> time. I can't let anybody into this program just
> because they are my brother-in-law and I think
> that it's very good the way that works. In E.S.L.
> there's no cheating, no queue jumping.(AJ, p. 4)

Here, *fairness* denotes having an equal opportunity to access educational programming. Lori explains:

> Well, I'm hoping that everyone is considered on
> an equal basis ... considering some of the factors
> such as citizenship, and skills. Are they able to get
> into their skill area? Are they able to access
> programs that relate to their profession? (AL, p.6)

To administrators, being *fair* requires that all these considerations be valued when granting students access to participate in programmes.

In the interviews, administrators reveal how they feel about the concept of being *equitable*. In the final analysis they believe that they are not able to be equitable to students who request access to their programmes. The way in which the programmes are structured does not allow for individual student considerations and therefore this to them does not fulfill the ideal of being equitable.

For administrators, being *fair* to individual students requires a regard for students' educational wants and needs. In order to accomplish this students' educational and personal backgrounds need to be assessed and suitable programmes provided. The administrators view the failure to evaluate individual students' requirements in these programmes as an unrealistic means of providing adequate education for these disadvantaged adult Albertans. This situation stems from what they see as an inherent problem that all institutional administrators face today and that is having to work with fewer and fewer resources and still fulfill educational goals. Myles, the President, articulates his frustrations and offers possible solutions to the problem of trying to cater to individual students' needs:

> Equality, simply put, would mean that all people
> out there should have an opportunity to access
> programming. A lot of those people work in
> restaurants and other areas and their business is
> done at the same time we offer classes. We need to
> be more flexible in what we offer both in terms of
> time and in the method of delivery.(AD, p.6)

This need to supply alternative approaches to educating adults is one that Myles believes would be difficult to achieve with the present model of education that exists.

Summary.

Administrators see the terms *reasonable* and *equitable* as tied to the economics of education. They view *reasonable* as a necessary term in the document in that it establishes limits. From a financial viewpoint they too are faced every year with operating their institutions with limited resources. As administrators, they believe they must set priorities, establish, and provide programmes that benefit both their students and their institution. So, according to them being

reasonable is finding a balance between the institutional and educational goals of educating adults.

For administrators, the second term, *equitable,* conjures up confusion as how to be fair to students. They feel that they must first be fair to the collective public and not to individual students who have a variety of unique needs which under the current mode of educating adults cannot be equitably served.

Teachers' Perspectives - Reasonable and Equitable
Theme- Being Practical.

Teachers, as a group, are practice-oriented and look at policies only as they relate to their practice in teaching. They interpret what these terms, *reasonable* and *equitable,* mean to them by reflecting on their roles as instructors of adults.

Teachers are influenced in their teaching by statements their students make about the education programmes. How teachers evaluate programmes and policies as being *reasonable* and *equitable* is reflected in how they see it affecting them and their students in the classroom.

Educational goals supersede those of the institution because for teachers teaching and learning define what they do. From their responses they regard present E.S.L. programmes as being unreasonable. A teacher, Josie, relates how the current situation is detrimental to the educational success of her students as she summarizes what she feels policy makers are assuming in the first policy statement:

> They are assuming that people who come to
> Canada can learn English, the basics in five
> months. I think they assume that it's possible that
> people can become completely literate and
> functional and that everyone is the same.(TT, p. 3)

Adding to this, Marlene, states that the programmes as they exist do not give students a *reasonable* level of basic skills:

> They don't get to a level that allows them to really benefit from English language training. (TDM, p. 6)

These statements reflect the thoughts of the entire group of teachers with the exception of one who feels that the amount of time given to students to learn English is *reasonable*. This overwhelming negative response indicates how teachers do not equate the term *reasonable* as being *equitable*.

In this respect, the teachers differ from the other two groups of respondents. Their varying interpretations arise from how they relate the term *reasonable* with the element of time. How long it takes individual students to learn English is more significant to them than the overriding financial concerns of administrators and policy makers. They do not consider the limited resources which constrain long term education programmes when they discuss educational outcomes. They view the term *reasonable* as it relates to their students. If their students are not being given what they feel is fundamental to learning E.S.L. - basic skills - then for the teachers the policy falls short of its goal to be *reasonable*.

Teachers believe that in order to give adults basic skills more time is required than the designated two ten-week periods for English language training. And since they, as a group, regard the word *equitable* as being fair, they deem the policy to be unfair.

Teachers do not equate the term *equitable* with that of reasonableness. To them equitable means being fair in providing equal opportunities to all students who are willing to enter the institution. In addition, it means being fair in considering individual needs when allowing them access to E.S.L. programmes.

On one hand, the teachers want everyone to have the opportunities to access the education they need yet, they want to be fair

in considering individual student differences for course entry. Here, the word *fair* is used in many ways. There is confusion as to what it means to be *fair* and *equitable*. Dylan demonstrates how he confuses equality with the word *equitable*:

> *Equitable* is to all people male or female.(TM, p. 5)

In this quotation, Dylan describes the term *equitable* as synonymous with equality, in particular, the equality between men and women. Yet, in the next response he looks at the term as illustrating fairness:

> Making it [*equitable*] might mean making it more
> available to people who really need it and less so
> to people who probably can manage on their
> own.(TM, p. 5)

Dylan expounds on a sentiment shared by half of the teachers. Teachers would like to see equality but they also want the policy to include student differences and needs when determining who can and cannot access these programmes.

Clearly, there is a contradiction in terms. Potential students are not treated equally if they are considered for the programmes on the basis of individual differences. Even though policy makers carefully selected and clarified the word *equitable* in the first policy statement, for teachers a lot of confusion remains. Both Phyllis and Annette, state that they feel some groups are treated less equally than others. Annette addresses the fact that

> some people appear to be considerably more
> fortunate than others. For example, this lady
> today, Maggie, I was surprised that she could get a
> course that cost $4500 and there are others that
> can't even get an English course. So, obviously the
> system is not equitable. (TL. p. 7)

Phyllis attributes this inequity to what she has heard:

[*Equitable*], I'm not sure. I've heard rumours of
certain groups getting more than others. I don't
know if they are true.(TF, p. 4)

Summary.

So, what administrators and policy makers believe to be an
equitable and reasonable approach to providing educational
opportunities is quite different from that of the teachers. The teachers,
on the other hand, do not understand fully the meaning of *equitable*.
Fullan (1991) suggests how confusion can create problems for teachers,
in particular:

> But what is understandable is not necessarily
> right. The subtleties of change are once again
> evidenced when we point out that efforts to bring
> about change have failed regardless of whether
> they were engineered by university professors,
> federal or state/provincial departments of
> education, or local teacher committees. The main
> reason for failure is simple—developers or
> decision-makers went through a process of
> acquiring *their* meaning ... But when it was
> presented to teachers, there was no provision for
> allowing them to work out the meaning of the
> changes for themselves. (p. 112)

Thus often the most well-intentioned and clearly stated policy
statements do not allow for the process Fullan describes as a "shared
meaning" for all those in the policy environment (1982, 1991). This
failure to allow for the process is demonstrated in how different groups
interpret the language used in the policy. The teachers' confusion over
their own understanding of the terminology is an added indication of
how the process is not being allowed to unfold.

The Second Policy Statement - Appropriate Programmes that Provide Basic Skills

The second policy statement in the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) states that "the government of Alberta will provide appropriate programs to meet the basic skills needs of adult learners" (Alberta Advanced Education, p. 5). This statement deals with providing programmes that suit the needs of adults who wish to "improve their basic skills by helping them to acquire the skills to function more effectively in their workplaces, in their communities, and in their everyday lives" (Alberta Advanced Education, p. 5).

In this statement there are two main concepts. First, there is the idea of what is appropriate programming. And, second, what basic skills are. The latter concern is one that deals with the issue of how much education is sufficient enough to give students the necessary basic skills required to fulfill the policy's mandate.

Policy makers' Perspectives - Foundation of Basic Skills
Theme - Becoming Functional.

For policy makers developing a foundation of basic skills is not linked to an arbitrary definition of a level or standard to be achieved by students. Instead, building a foundation of basic skills means becoming functional in society. For the E.S.L. student it means being able to deal with daily needs in a way which allows them the freedom to become independent. It also signifies developing skills that make a person more employable and self-sufficient. Jack summarizes what basic skills are and should be:

> In the policy we let that be self-defining. The
> discussion about a continuum of skills is an
> attempt to say that if you treat individuals
> logically as individuals then what they need as
> basic skills will likely differ rather than setting up
> arbitrary gatekeeping functions for example to say
> that grade 9 gets you over a hump. (PM1, p. 15)

This ambiguous definition serves many purposes in that as the policy makers describe it it is designed to provide for each individual student's need for basic skills. Bart illustrates why it is important for students to attain basic skills:

> Basic communication skills help you in every
> aspect of your life whether it is family or
> employment related. Those are the foundations in
> the sense of this policy. (PM2, p. 15)

Bart describes that to gain basic skills means being able "to function as well as you would like to" (PM2, p. 15). But, later in the interview, Bart asks philosophically, "what's functionality"(PM2, p. 16). He answers this by stressing that the policy aims to treat people as individuals and therefore what may be satisfactory for one person may not be for another.

Both policy makers agree that there are limits to providing a foundation of basic skills for students. In the interview, Jack asks what does it mean to be *reasonable* when providing programming funds aimed at building a foundation of basic skills for students. He answers

> [that] we'll train you for this much and if you need
> more after that then we'll provide the
> programming but you'll have to pay your part.
> That's your need.(PM1, p. 17)

The policy makers concur that there are limits to what they can promise and that the policy statements are intentions for the future.

They feel that they considered these limits when they developed this document.

This second policy statement discusses basic skills but it also suggests that the programmes that were to be developed would be appropriate. For them, programmes have to meet the needs of those students who are planning to augment basic skills.

Appropriate Programmes - The Theme of Being Versatile.

For policy makers, offering appropriate programmes signify offering the widest range of offerings. They hope that educational institutions are capable of providing a wide range of courses in basic skills training.

Variety in programming is the key to catering to individual student needs. Jack illustrates how meaningful this approach is:

> Appropriate is one of those nice undefined terms. I think what we are looking for is to match the situation to the student or the teaching to the situation of the student. That should be an overriding primary consideration. So, if you are going to teach literacy to trappers in Northern Alberta you do it in a particular way that meets their needs which is appropriate to their situation. It would be entirely inappropriate to try to teach it at AVC (Edmonton) because the two needs are so different, so appropriate means geared to the needs of the students. (PM1, p. 18)

For Jack, gearing programmes to student needs is of utmost importance in order for adult education to be successful. He believes that present programming structure is far from achieving that and he expresses what he believes E.S.L. teachers feel about what exists:

> Teachers are screaming everyday about the problem
> with E.S.L. programmes. It seems to me this is
> because administrative demands override the
> interests of the students. The problem is that you get
> a group of people together you teach them all the
> same thing in the same period of time with the same
> outcomes in mind. Then, your program is judged to
> be good for better or worse depending on how well
> that whole group of people came through that
> process. Could we be any dumber about how we do
> things? (PM1, p. 18)

Largely, Jack attributes this problem to how these programmes are administered not to the teachers. Treating students as a homogeneous group is the single most disturbing issue for Jack. But, he agrees with Bart who feels that variety in programming will take care of that problem to some degree. Bart describes what appropriate means to him

> as much of a range as is possible so that a person who
> is working can attend on a part-time basis. So
> someone who is unemployed gets as much support
> in the programme as they would if they were in the
> full-time programme taking into consideration their
> circumstances at that time. You may not have a full
> range in every program but you should have as
> much as you equitably can with the available
> resources. (PM2, pp. 16-17)

For Bart it is appropriate to make the programmes as fully accessible to all students willing to access them. His concern is not to provide courses that suit everyone's educational needs but rather to satisfy their needs for convenience so that no segment of society is denied an opportunity to learn. Understanding appropriateness and associating it with the ability to be flexible is agreed upon by the other two groups in the study - the teachers and administrators. The administrators believe that what they provide is appropriate. They feel that through needs

assessments they are able to identify their students' needs so that can try to satisfy them.

Administrators' Perspectives - Appropriate Programmes to Provide Basic Skills
Theme - Making Students Functional.

For adminstrators providing a foundation of basic skills means giving students the ability to function in society. In addition, it means bestowing upon these students a base from which they can continue to learn and fulfill their own personal goals. Myles, the President, describes what he believes to be basic skills as:

> those that permit an individual to successfully
> live and attend to their daily tasks such as
> operating a bank account; being able to access the
> transportation system; to be able to read the
> newspaper; and to fill out the forms needed to
> conduct one's everyday life. (Ad, p. 4)

This sentiment is shared by Lori who feels that

> basic skills are being able to cope on a day to day
> basis while integrating with society. It is being able
> to find a job so that you are a functioning member
> of Canadian society.(Al, p. 8)

Lori hints at the two-fold reason for providing a foundation of basic skills. The first reason is to make people functional for their own personal satisfaction. The other reason is not so altruistic and serves to integrate these newcomers into their newly chosen society. Jason is more direct about the agenda behind providing E.S.L. basic skills for new Canadians:

> Since the changes in the Federal government
> policy the Basic Skills Core is now referred to as
> enough English to integrate. That is a big shift. To
> accommodate that shift we changed our syllabus.
> ... Previously we wanted them to know how to get
> the job but now we teach them a new Core called
> Understanding Canada which means how to
> integrate into our society. ... like how to talk to
> your neighbour and what sort of food Canadians
> prefer.(AJ, p. 5)

Marvin, too, describes what basic skills education is and how it relates to E.S.L. students:

> We asked the question what skills and what basic
> level of education does an adult need in order to
> survive in Alberta society. What we discovered
> isn't at all that radical, it revealed that they needed
> some contextual skills. This helps them deal ... the
> need for interpersonal and foundation skills. (A,
> p. 8)

He describes fully what he means by interpersonal skills:

> They could be socially related or in some cases
> fairly specific: how to communicate effectively;
> how to make sure that people are understanding
> what you mean; or perhaps at the other end, it
> might be understanding body language such as
> different personal space issues.(A, p. 8)

So, for Marvin, to be functional means to be integrated or as he describes it be acculturated into Alberta society. According to that premise, a foundation of basic skills develops students into good citizens who can cope with societal demands and yet, enrich their own personal lives.

For the administrators, the question that remains unanswered is how appropriate programmes are in preparing students to integrate

into their new society. According to administrators, a way to obtain these learning outcomes is to provide the widest range of courses that is economically feasible.

Theme - Appropriate Programmes Offering A Wide Range of Courses.

All the administrators feel that their programme offerings are appropriate in light of the limited resources they have. The key to providing appropriate programmes depends on the number of offerings and how they suit students' needs For Marvin, the Dean of Adult Development, there is tangible proof that the programmes are appropriate. He defines appropriate programmes as follows:

> Appropriate programmes means three or four different things. First, the obvious thing is to have devised programmes on the basis of a needs analysis so that you fit the needs of a particular client group. It means that the government needs to provide a variety of programming approaches so even though the needs of the house bound individual might be the same as the needs of somebody who is not house bound perhaps the delivery methods should be different.(A, p. 9)

He goes on to say

> that there needs to be a variety of different delivery methods as well as adapting the programming to the learning styles of students. Too it means something in terms of different scheduling of times and opportunities and duration. Some people need to get their training another way.(A, p. 10)

Jason, the Chairman, defines appropriate as being an ideal which he hopes he is delivering to the students that attend his institution. When asked what he thinks appropriate programmes are he states that the

> wishy washy answer to that is the programme that
> meets students' needs.(AJ, p. 6)

Yet, when asked if he feels his programmes are appropriate, his answer is that he hopes they are and that all administrators would say the same about theirs. Jason illustrates the parochial attitude he believes all administrators share:

> I have never yet met a person who runs a
> program that says that their program does not
> meet the needs of their students. I mean if I
> walked over to any institution in the city and said
> is your program appropriate, are you meeting the
> student's needs they would say," oh, yes."(AJ, p. 6)

He makes it clear in this statement that administrators hope that they are doing the best they can with the resources they have.

Summary.

For administrators, there are three areas which define what appropriate programming is. The first being the measure of how well course offerings satisfy individual student needs. Second, being the idea of how much variety and flexibility is built into the institution so that syllabi can be changed to accommodate the changing needs of the student population. And thirdly, the idea that variety in the number of programme offerings is what constitutes appropriate programming. These three areas focus on student-centred education which is equally endorsed by teachers.

Teachers' Perspectives - A Foundation of Basic Skills
Theme - Becoming Functionally Literate.

In the area of basic skills education, the teachers' beliefs differ slightly from the other two groups. What they emphasize as important is quite different. They view basic skills as a lifestyle necessity for individual students.

Whereas the others, specifically the policy makers, focus their attention on the need to develop functional citizens by integrating newcomers into Canadian society. Here, the role of basic skills education is to make new citizens contributing members of society. For policy makers, programme planning decisions are not and should not be based on personal reasons students may have for educating themselves. Instead, these reasons play a secondary role when it comes to developing courses.

The differing objectives among these groups illustrates the contrast between what teachers value and what policy makers and administrators value. The difference is so great that the teachers even go as far as attempting to set some sort of arbitrary standard to what constitutes a foundation of basic skills. A number of them suggest what they think makes up basic skills:

> Being able to read and write. I don't know what
> level, you know every country measures it
> differently. I think here in Canada it is Grade 9.
> You are not considered functionally literate unless
> you can read at a Grade 9 level. (TF, p. 4)

> Being aware of what's happening around you. To
> be able to use the media - the news media. To be
> able to read a newspaper; read medicine bottles;
> read the directions on food or cleaning products
> and understand them. It is literacy. To read the
> newspaper is a basic skill and I think you need to
> have a Grade 6 or 7 level of English to do that.
> (TDM, p. 5)

Patrick, a senior instructor, struggles his understanding of what it means to attain a foundation of basic skills. He refers to this foundation as the institution's achievement level entitled 'Special Basic':

> Special Basic - those are the basic skills right there.
> Functional literacy would be considered a basic
> skill so that a person could go shopping and be
> able to read what he is buying. (TE, p. 4)

Even though a cor~ ~able amount of discussion focuses on deciding what basic skills . ~he teachers agree that they should help to develop students v. ~te human beings. These literate students would hav - to satisfy personal aspirations and also those which the State ~ as valuable. The teachers' hopes are that the educational programmes prepare students who are both functional in society and also educationally enriched.

In the final analysis, all the teachers arrive at a similar conclusion that functional literacy is achieved only when students attain a foundation of basic skills. For the teachers, the success of a basic skills' education depends on whether students attain the necessary skills allowing them to comfortably communicate with others daily. Keith explains how fieldtrips help students discover communication problems which could hamper them from becoming functionally literate:

> You can cover some of the basic skills like going to
> the bank, going to the bus but you will never be
> able to cover everything. What I like about this
> programme is that we go on fieldtrips and sooner
> or later we'll come into something that they will
> have to deal with and we can work it out. We
> work out problems where I ask them what they
> did on the weekend and hopefully they will come
> up with something that happened.(TW, p.6)

To discover students' problems, is one way for Keith to understand which basic skills his students lack. He believes that by tailoring his teaching to his students' needs he is better able to serve them. In other words, Keith feels he is accomplishing a significant educational goal by providing his students with the best communicative strategies needed in order for them to cope with daily problems. He realizes that when the programme ends these students are left to deal with situations on their own.

Patrick, on the other hand, views basic skills as those which allow a person to do simple everyday tasks:

> Functional literacy is defined as being able to go
> shopping, reading what you are buying and
> pricing things in any store. It is using a phone
> book and getting along quite well without having
> to depend on someone else.(TE, p.4)

For him, basic skills are more than just being able to communicate, it also gives people freedom and independence. Almost all of the teachers agree with this idea of giving students skills which allow them to do things on their own without relying on others. For example, Jolene, an intermediate level teacher, views a common daily activity such as answering the telephone as an essential basic skill to master:

> So many students are afraid of the telephone. I can
> see how they would be. In a different language,
> answering the phone can be scary because in
> Canada everyone talks so fast. It is difficult enough
> talking to a person in person but on the telephone
> it is really scary. In conversations here we help
> them feel more at ease with the telephone and
> that is helpful. (TMJ, p. 2)

Sherry agrees with Jolene that telephone skills are important:

> Basic skills to me are like being able to pick up the
> telephone and converse with somebody on the
> other end and not be tongue-tied or not knowing
> what to say. (TV, p. 3)

Marta, who teaches one of the lowest levels of beginner classes, has a different way to describe a foundation of basic skills. She outlines them as being generic E.S.L. skills:

> Basically, we provide a lot of generic English
> mostly for people who are quite new to Canada
> and just starting out. I think that the institution
> quite justifiably has a good reputation for
> providing good generic E.S.L. ... Generic meaning
> providing programming not specific to a job, not
> specific for getting ready for NAIT but looking at
> all the different skills together. (TA, p. 9)

Marta shares the opinions of the other teachers about what basic skills are. She believes that the role of the teacher is to supply students with the ability to fulfill their basic communication needs.

In discussions with teachers about what constitutes basic skills, they argued about the appropriateness of programmes in providing these skills to students. They debate what appropriate means and how it serves as a term of reference when evaluating the success of these programmes. The central issue surrounds whether these programmes are adequately satisfying students' needs and whether or not they are successful in achieving the teachers' educational goals.

Appropriate Programmes versus Adequate Programmes.

For teachers, appropriate programming means providing variety in programming. But most of them believe that some of these programmes fall short of satisfying basic communication needs of students. Annette represents the general opinion of the teachers, she believes that the existing programmes are appropriate for students who

enter at an Intermediate level but not adequate for those who enter the Special Basic ones. A long time teacher, she has taught a wide range of levels more than once and has a broader perspective than the rest of the staff on all the courses in E.S.L. at the institution. She iterates her feelings about the matter:

> Our basic program is appropriate. The approach we are taking at the Intermediate level is quite effective in giving people basic skills. But it certainly is not adequate for a person to get out and find a job for most people particularly, if they want to get back into the field that they were in previously.... We may have given them the language skills to communicate on a basic level but many are still functioning at too low a level to get into ... any other programs of that sort.(TL, p. 10)

She points out that even some of the Intermediate students' educational needs are not satisfied by the programme:

> We have some students from Intermediate One Level, they do not have sufficient fluency or listening skills to get into really any other program except more E.S.L. so they have to rely on their own resources. The courses are probably intensive enough I know five hours a day is certainly quite intensive but not over time. (TL, p. 10)

In the short run, she points out that the programmes are appropriate and give students the basic skills they need, but, in the long run, these same students will need to take more E.S.L. courses in order to satisfy their goals.

On the other hand, Phyllis, a long time E.S.L. teacher, believes that the variety of levels makes the institution's programmes appropriate. But, she does not necessarily agree that students learning E.S.L. should spend more than the allotted twenty weeks in the institution. Somehow, she feels that the programmes could be more

effective if they were integrated into other activities which become or are a part of a student's daily life. She explains that

> a more appropriate program would somehow
> incorporate working, something to get you right to
> the job market.(TF, p. 7)

She hopes that institutional programmes incorporate the workplace as a setting where E.S.L. training can occur:

> More appropriate would be where students could
> work for half a day and come for half a day and we
> are going in that direction.... I guess we are
> responsive to the learners.(TF, p. 7)

For teachers, E.S.L. programmes should be closely related to students' everyday affairs. They agree that if the students are employed the educational programmes should be relevant to the kind of situations which students encounter in their work. They believe that learning English should incorporate the student's world rather than keeping it separate.

Summary.

The teachers' statements about how appropriate E.S.L. programmes are reflect a pragmatic stance toward education. Teachers want the programme to be closely linked to students' real life situations. Interactions with the bank teller, grocer, and the doctor are all important points of departure from where learning English should begin. This sentiment is reflected in their general views of what education ought to provide for its learners. Teachers like to see their students emerge successfully from the programmes without great sacrifice to their personal lives. They believe that students should be free of any barriers that would keep them from learning. This is

especially true for newcomers who come to Canada at great personal sacrifice and face the greatest barrier of all - not being literate in English.

Third Policy Statement - Student Support

The third policy statement in the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) states that "the Government of Alberta will facilitate the provision of student support services and will ensure that a reasonable level of financial support is provided to those otherwise unable to participate in adult development programs because of financial barriers" (p. 6). This statement reflects the policy makers' desire to ensure that students in adult development programmes continue with their learning regardless of personal and financial barriers.

In this statement, policy makers qualify that adults have more social responsibilities than school-aged children. They understand that many factors keep adults from fulfilling their educational needs and they want to ensure that these are minimized. One of the assumptions they state in the document clarifies this stance:

> Government policies should support the choices
> and decisions of individuals concerning their
> foundational learning and development. (p. 6)

This is further supported by the next assumption that states:

> Government policies must recognize and
> accommodate the fact that adult learners may
> have to overcome significant personal barriers
> before they can participate in education and
> training programs. (p. 6)

These two statements support the main policy statement and are the foundation of the policy makers' efforts to promote adult learning and development in the province.

Policy makers' Perspectives - Student Support Theme - A Funding Structure Issue.

For policy makers, student support services signifies supporting students in many ways. Student support means anything which helps students to cope with and resolve problems both inside and out of the educational institution. Jack and Bart, the policy makers, feel that these services benefit adult learners' efforts to continue with their education. Bart describes what is meant by student support services:

> Student support services can be quite a range of
> things. It can be money ... but its more than just
> money its also services, special services for students
> like the physically disabled.... It can be health services
> and counseling services that are necessary. (PM2, p.
> 17)

Often, institutional administrators agree that these services are important, but they do not always provide them This situation provides discord between the administrators and the policy makers. The policy makers' intention to provide adequate student support is thwarted when administrators do not comply.

After all, policy makers have no control over decisions made at the institutional level because of how funds are controlled at that level. They, as policy makers can only hope that these services are being provided. Jack does not place the blame for this entirely on institutional administrators, he elaborately explains why this is the case:

> The nature of the budgeting programs is done on a
> per capita per diem basis. We expect the institution
> to provide the infrastructure, the support system, we
> only want to off-set the cost. It is very difficult for the
> institution to anticipate enough revenue to provide
> a support system. Until we can resolve the funding
> issue by setting up a base funding scheme or program
> that will allow an institution a reasonable level of
> income to do all of that, then we can add on from
> there but we have not done that yet. We can say
> from our side that that has been provided within the
> base grant to the institution. How they put the
> priority on their funds is up to them. If they choose
> not to provide the counselors for E.S.L. students well
> then they've obviously put those at a lower priority.
> (PM1, p. 19)

Bart and Jack, both, feel that the way in which funds are given to institutions sometimes does not allow those funds to go directly toward student support services. Every institution is left with discretionary power to decide where funds should be designated. Essential operating costs are the top priority to be considered. All other services are deemed to be expendable and have a secondary status when it comes to fulfilling institutional priorities. Most often there are limited student support services offered or in some cases none because of financial constraints placed on institutions such as this one.

In concluding, both policy makers agree on what student support services are and the purpose they serve. Also, they agree that as policy makers they only have the power to suggest the ideal situation but they cannot force institutions to comply in this matter. Bart and Jack, view this policy statement as one which is beyond their control because of how funding and programming operate in post-secondary educational institutions.

Theme - Reasonable Financial Support To Provide Access.

Financial support for learners is another area where policy makers point out that they have no decision-making control over. Jack discusses what *reasonable* financial support means to him and how he thinks it is provided:

> Both levels of government are sensitive to the
> issue and attempt to provide funds to make life
> bearable and durable for students. (PM1, p. 20)

How much adult learners receive financially to fulfill their educational needs is limited. Bart states that

> *reasonable* is defined by the system of funding
> programs that are in place and the guidelines that
> exist. (PM2, p. 17)

Both policy makers agree that *reasonable* as a term has a different meaning for them than teachers who deal with adult learners on a daily basis. Jack feels that the teachers get to know the financial problems their students face everyday. For Jack, teachers are more sensitive about what they consider to be a realistic view of what constitutes a reasonable level of financial support for their students:

> The judgment is how well is that being done and
> the answer is by most teachers that it is not nearly
> enough when they look at their students on a one
> on one basis. (PM1, p. 20)

Policy makers who are representatives of the provincial government feel that they are providing the best support they can. Jack explains what financial assistance they offer students:

> The learners are still getting the institution free
> and basically they have just as much access as
> others with less. They could be paying more or
> paying something for being there.(PM1, p. 20)

Essentially, for policy makers, providing an institution free of instructional fees is a reasonable level of financial assistance for adult learners.

Jack alludes to the different viewpoints teachers hold on this subject of reasonable financial assistance. After all, according to him, teachers operate in the field everyday and understand the students' views on financial matters. On the contrary, policy makers are removed from the environment and often do not share the same opinions therefore their views are more objective and unlike the teachers who establish close relationships with students.

Administrators' Perspectives - Student Support Services
Theme - Fulfilling Institutional Mandate.

For administrators, student support services means providing a number of different services to assist learners to achieve their own personal educational goals. Not only is student support important for the general well-being of the learners but it also fulfills the institutional mission that states:

> Specifically the [institution] focuses on training
> requirements of persons with special needs and
> therefore will endeavour to: Provide programs
> and services designed to enhance the capabilities
> of adult Albertans to participate in the social and
> economic development of the Province.
> (Institutional Development Plan, 1988, pp. 1-2)

Jason, Chairman of the E.S.L. department, stresses that student support services is a major facet of what the institution does to fulfill its

mandate to be student-centred. He points out that the institution is designed to cater to both the students' individual needs and also to those of the community:

> In terms of student support services we provide
> an atmosphere that the institution creates. We are
> here for the students and so we create a counselor
> and we give them a nurse and we give them a
> library and cafeteria and things like that. ... Here it
> is sort of like back to the womb. The department
> encourages us to do that but it does not have to
> come in the form of money. (AJ, p. 8)

Lori, the Assistant Director, discusses the importance of the student advisor position. It serves to provide support for students who have problems managing their everyday affairs. She directly states that this service is one of the many which provide credence to the institutional mission statement:

> It is part of our mission to take care of those kind
> of problems for our students so that they can
> participate in learning. (AL, p. 9)

The President, Myles, also makes reference to the need for student support services:

> You want to get people up so that they can self-
> actualize, they learn because they want to learn,
> they want to reach this plateau. But, by God if you
> are starving and those other fundamental needs
> are not being met you are not going to ever reach
> that upper level. So student support services are
> very important and they need to be multi-faceted
> and they need to cover a number of things such as
> wheelchair access. (AD, p. 8)

Myles, recognizes that students require more than physical aids such as wheelchair ramps. He feels adults also require psychological and

emotional aid too. His solution to this problem is to provide a student advisor. According to him, she acts as a resource, helping people seek the sort of help they need and providing information useful to adult students' everyday needs. Myles justifies the need for this service:

> What student support services do is help that
> student cope. They're important because if you are
> worried about your kid, your mind is not focusing
> on the classroom. If you are worried about where
> the next meal comes from, you are not going to
> learn. If you have had a major fight in the family,
> you are not able to cope with all those things.
> Adults bring to the classroom a lot enthusiasm
> and motivation, but they also bring in the baggage
> as well. (AD, p. 8)

Marvin remarks on how the student advisor's role and responsibilities help newcomers deal with issues specific to them:

> One of the things we do through our student lay
> counselor is we address a number of settlement
> issues. This means having access to a person who
> is familiar with the community and can assist
> them in things like referring students to the
> landlord and tenant advisory board about their
> housing problems. There is a whole variety of
> settlement and acculturation issues that that
> person helps them to deal with. (A, p. 13)

All four administrators comment on how student support services help students cope with learning in a new environment. They emphasize the importance of the student advisor and see that role as a key part of the institution.

A number of years back, the administrators were faced with limited funds and decided to eliminate the student advisor position. After two years had passed, they discovered that the service was too valuable and essential for their students and they reinstated the

position. Myles, the President, explains how the institution was forced into making this decision:

> Funding in post-secondary institutions operates on a
> global budget. This has evolved historically into all
> the discussions we are having right now about
> financial cutbacks. There still will be this finite global
> amount of money but the institutions are expected to
> make certain decisions within that to meet the
> constraints that they face. The caveat being that they
> are not expecting wholesale cutbacks of enrollment
> and that is what the government promised.
> Essentially, the government is saying look we do not
> expect you to cutback on the number of students you
> serve but we expect you to do it in a more cost
> effective way. That in turn impacts on the provision
> of student support services because the number one
> provision has got to be the teacher in the classroom
> and the other services become ancillary. Institutions
> have got to make decisions on their priorities.(AD,
> pp. 9-10)

Reinstating the position of the student advisor, constitutes for the administrative group a sufficient and reasonable level of student support services.

Theme - Reasonable Financial Support Giving Students a Beginning.

Administrators deal with budgets and the operation of the programme and institution and they see financial support to students as having limits. They feel that the level of funds which are already expended on the programmes and the amount of money it takes to educate an adult learner is reasonable enough to provide what adult learners need at this stage of their educational development.

In their opinion, the administrative group believes that the educational goal of the programme is for these adult learners to

become independent learners. Students should learn basic skills that allow them to continue to learn throughout their lifetimes. The programme should not fund these students by providing them with a sustainable support system.

To administrators financial assistance is a limited resource which cannot provide extended support for individuals. When asked individually what they think reasonable levels of financial assistance means, their responses are similar in that they believe that the institution and the government are doing the best they can do and should do. Marvin describes his confusion over the term *reasonable*:

> I do not know what reasonable support is. How
> can you say? It is an individual thing. I mean a
> quart of milk still costs what it costs and there are
> basic living costs. Obviously, that to some extent
> determines what is reasonable. But other people
> come with various skill levels. In other words, if a
> person has some skills that they can market and
> groom on a part-time basis should they qualify for
> the same amount of support as a person who has
> no skills at all. So, it is tough I don't know what
> reasonable is and it becomes an individual
> assessment. (A, p. 12)

He concludes that *reasonable* is a term which can only be determined on an individual basis. The term has many meanings and is quite open to interpretation. Although Marvin recognizes the fact that what is reasonable to one person may not be reasonable to another he rationalizes the idea of reasonable financial support in terms of what his institution and the government can offer:

> In terms of student financial support the
> government is still supporting the program.(A, p.
> 12)

By guaranteeing that the programmes and institutions are funded so that students can access them without spending their own money is

enough to satisfy Marvin that he is doing the best that is expected of him and the institution. Jason, the Chairman of the Department, utters similar sentiments:

> They are reasonab̲ . pported because to study here
> it costs taxpayers $ day per student to pay for the
> lights, the phone, teachers and the rental of the
> building. The students do not see that and at the
> moment they get no support on a daily allowance. It
> would be nice if they got more money and I know
> the government is broke. ... It is not enough but
> when is it enough, they get the course for
> nothing.(AJ, p. 8)

There is a shared feeling among the administrators that they are operating with finite funds. Thus, for them, to provide programmes for free to adult learners is sufficient support. According to the administrators this provides enough support to assist students to learn English. The administrators rationalize this type of funding as a reasonable level of financial support under the circumstances that exist presently at post-secondary institutions.

Teachers' Perspectives - Student Support Services
Theme - Assistance with Settlement Issues.

For teachers, student support means providing counseling services to assist adult learners in resolving settlement issues. They feel that the most valuable source of support for these students comes from the Student Advisor who serves an important role. Yet, they do not feel this is sufficient enough to help students cope with psychological and emotional problems which adult learners face on a daily basis.

The Student Advisor is a referral service and does not facilitate the kind of support provided by trained psychological counselors. The administration makes provisions through its budget for a number of these types of counselors at the downtown campus. But, teachers

believe that counseling is required on a daily basis. For their students to travel to the downtown campus to get emotional and psychological support is problematic for teachers.

Teachers perceive that the students need easy access to a counselor when needed. Annette points out how significant it is for students to have a highly trained counselor on campus in addition to the Student Advisor:

> We also need to have people who have some sort of
> counseling background like they do downtown.
> Frequently, students feel more comfortable sharing
> their problems with us and when they get to the
> point where they are ready to open up they do not
> want to be sent off to another agency. I have seen
> time and time again where students would like to
> see someone within our milieu. (TL, p. 10)

She describes how the Student Advisor's role does not provide the kind of support needed and why:

> The position of Student Advisor is more of a referral
> service.... These people do not want to be sent off to
> an agency. First of all they do not know what that
> agency is all about. Secondly, they have not bonded
> with anybody there and why would they open up
> and reveal their private lives to total strangers. If the
> person had some sort of counseling background they
> could spend at least a little time with the student and
> give them a chance to discuss or ask questions to get
> them to open up and then can communicate with
> the teacher. (TL, pp. 10-11)

Annette says that often she must take the time to offer the emotional support needed by her students and this "takes away from one's energy"(TL, p. 11).

Teachers feel that extra demands are placed on their time when the Student Advisor position does not exist. They view that position as the most important form of student support in addition to others:

> We are doing a lot in terms of student support.
> Teachers, programs, the student advisor, the nurse
> and the various units that are in the curriculum
> are all geared toward student support.(TMM, p. 5)

In fact, Margie describes student support services as supplying almost everything that an adult learner could ever need while going to school:

> We deal with needs that the students have for
> information to access programs and funds and
> how to pay their bills and how to do banking and
> all kinds of things. We help them to learn to
> communicate, how to deal with problems that
> they encounter daily and if they have medical
> problems we help them to access the medical
> system. It is like a big baby-sitting service in lots of
> ways. If I had to move to another country then I
> would hope to God I would find something like
> this. We are very charitable in that sense. (TMM,
> p. 5)

Patrick, a senior instructor, is more direct in expressing how much support should be given. He believes that too much support would make students dependent on the institution:

> If you give too much support then it defeats our
> purpose of giving them independence or
> "empowering students" to do things on their own.
> The teacher and Student Advisor are not going to
> be with them forever, twenty weeks and that is it.
> (TE, p. 7)

Overall, in their comments, the teachers' group believe that the institution is providing adequate and reasonable student support services.

However, one teacher, Marlene, believes that the institution fails in supporting students who have difficulties expressing their problems to the Student Advisor because of a language barrier. She

offers a suggestion which in the past has worked for her low level
students:

> The lower level students do not feel like they can
> go and talk to the Student Advisor because she
> only speaks English. We have had a Vietnamese
> student advisor, I think probably she was more
> approachable to people. They could explain their
> problems in their own language. Perhaps support
> services could have bilingual counselors or on
> certain days have counselors that have more than
> one language.(TDM, p. 8)

For teachers, the adult learners' problems are not as easily solved by
providing a Student Advisor. They see their students' problems as
more complex and realize that E.S.L. students require more individual
attention because there are issues that are unique to the adults they
teach. Solutions to these issues may not resolved by the type of student
support services which currently exist in adult development
programmes.

Theme -Reasonable Financial Support It Depends.

For teachers, the issue of what constitutes a reasonable amount
of financial support for students varies among their own group. They
are evenly divided into two groups of opinion. One group believes that
the way in which students are funded presently does not allow them to
cope adequately with their educational and adult responsibilities. In
contrast, the other group strongly believes that support should be kept
to a minimum because it can stifle a student's motivation to learn.

Both groups agree that financial resources are limited and
sympathize with the governments' inability to provide more funds.
Where they disagree is in how much student support is enough.

Fundamentally, both groups of teachers share similar philosophies on how students learn and why they choose to. Those teachers who feel that students should receive more funds point out that adults have more responsibilities outside of the institution which often interfere with their capacity to succeed in class. These teachers conclude that students' lives would be eased and their problems minimized if they were provided with more financial support. Three of the teachers point out that their students have had to take on part-time employment to make ends meet. Josie outlines how this part-time employment affects student performance in class:

> The majority of my students are working part-time
> while going to school. Therefore they cannot
> concentrate and spend the necessary time needed to
> study. They are only here for twenty weeks and
> should be full-time students, studying full-time but
> because of the lack of financial support they have to
> get part-time jobs. Ofte you cannot get them to do
> their homework beca ᵣ right after school they go to
> work and as well as   weekends. It has a reverse
> effect because they ar   not learning as much as they
> could be if they were not working. (TT, p. 4)

For Josie, better financial assistance for her students would result in students' better performance in the programme. According to her, developing fluent English speakers would be made easier by taking away her students' worries over satisfying their basic needs:

> In the long run it would be better for the country if
> the government realized at the beginning to put
> more money into the initial cost of an immigrant's
> education. If students studied full-time for a year and
> increased their English proficiency then they could
> go and get decent jobs and start paying taxes as
> functioning members of our society. Instead, what is
> happening is that most of these students are going
> on welfare just so that they can get another English
> course encouraging people to go on welfare.(TT, p. 5)

Josie concludes that the current system of accessing E.S.L. courses forces students into welfare. According to her, financial problems cause students to either quit their programme or complete them poorly.

Among this group of teachers the general consensus is that financial support for students is insufficient. Jolene suggests that students' basic needs are not met:

> There are not enough funds to meet their basic
> needs - food, shelter and rent, bus passes, and so
> on.(TMJ, p. 5)

The other group of teachers do not share Josie's opinion. In fact, they believe that the amount of financial support is sufficient and motivates students to learn quicker so that they can get out of their present predicaments. Basically, they believe that students perceive education as the key to a better life. So, if students want to do better in society they will overcome obstacles such as financial hardship. According to them, if students are in a difficult situation they will be more motivated to improve by learning English. After all, the teachers believe that learning English will allow their students to become fully functioning and contributing members of society.

Margie, a long-time instructor, gives her opinion as to how much money is enough. Her focus is on the words reasonable financial assistance and she points out that these have different meanings for different people. She asks a rhetorical question as she responds to the policy statement:

> There can never be enough money. Is there
> anyone who thinks they have enough money?
> (TMM, p. 5)

Philosophically, she believes that too much financial assistance can hinder students rather than support them in their goal to learn English:

> We should not give these people enough money
> that they can live comfortably on.... People who
> live on government money whether they are
> immigrants on Social Assistance or on
> Unemployment should be a little bit on the
> hungry side. If you are comfortable on the training
> allowances and government money you are never
> going to be motivated to do anything. They should
> be able to survive on it and that is what it is there
> for as an interim help like a crutch to get people
> onto the next stage.(TMM, p. 5)

She shares sentiments on the matter similar to the administrative group who believe that financial support should serve to assist people in getting a good start on their education. Funds are not there to support adult students in every way and satisfy all their needs during their programme.

Meredith, the Student Advisor, views the limited financial support to students from a slightly different angle. For her the amount of financial support that students are receiving is appropriate. She believes that students should share in the responsibility for their education. She explains that the government is not solely responsible to ensure that students achieve their educational goals:

> Tell people look we are going to do this for you
> and this is what it is costing us. We are paying a
> lot of money to retrain you so think about what
> you are going into by looking at the job market. ...
> We should not give them everything they want.
> They should know what it is costing and what
> their options are afterwards. (TD, p. 9)

In fact, she criticizes the government for providing too much financial support. Meredith suggests that the government fails to make these students responsibly committed to participating in decisions surrounding their education:

> But, they (the government) have done the worst
> of both things. They are being paternalistic - I
> know students here have no idea what it is costing
> or what is expected of them. Quite a few of the
> students do not know because nobody tells them.
> ... Students quit the programme and they have not
> really thought out that they have made a
> commitment for twenty weeks and this is what it
> involves. ... I really believe that people should
> really know what they are taking on and then they
> should be responsible for their education. (TD, p.
> 9)

These two diverging interpretations of what constitutes a
reasonable amount of financial support for students is one which can
be attributed to each teacher's own philosophy on and style of teaching
and learning.

Fourth Policy Statement - The Formation of Partnerships

The fourth policy statement in the *Foundations for adult
learning and development policy* (1991) states that "the Government of
Alberta will encourage cooperation, collaboration, and the formation of
partnerships between and among the public, private and voluntary
sectors in the delivery of adult development programmes" (p. 7). In
this statement, policy makers hope to invoke all interested partner
groups to be involved in the educational development of adults.

Policy makers believe that programmes cannot be developed and
supported without the cooperation and shared responsibility of all
those who stand to benefit from them. Primarily, there are many
organizations in the private sector who will gain better qualified
workers as a result of the government's efforts to better equip those
entering the workforce with adequate skills.

In the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy*
(1991), policy makers address the need for partnerships with other

groups as part of a joint effort to improve opportunities for adult learners in the world of work:

> Addressing the needs of adult learners with low
> basic skills requires a comprehensive approach
> and the commitment and participation of all
> sectors of society. (p. 7)

According to the policy makers this sort of shared responsibility not only requires a commitment toward the development of appropriate programmes for adult learners but also "the mobilization of available resources and the development of linkages through cooperative action" (p. 7). Sharing of financial resources to promote programmes is beneficial to both government and the private sector. These partnerships are especially important when it comes to preparing students for the job markets:

> Business, industry, labour, and government are
> important partners in identifying needs in the
> workforce and in creating learning opportunities
> for under-skilled workers. (p. 7)

The policy document also addresses a need to involve voluntary organizations in planning, preparing, and producing viable programmes for adult learners needing to improve their educational skills.

In conclusion, this policy statement stresses the hope that future partnerships will succeed in preparing adults to become contributing and participating members of society. It is hoped that partnerships will assist the government and institutions in providing better educational programmes to serve the community at large.

Policy makers' Perspectives - Partnerships
Theme - Achieving Best Results with Limited Resources.

Policy makers believe that in order to produce and provide the most suitable programmes for adult development there needs to be a direct link with partner groups. It is hoped that a symbiotic relationship between partners groups and government will result where both parties would reap benefits of a programme's outcomes.

Basically, both policy makers realize that financial resources and expertise are limited. They rationalize that if everyone pooled their resources together to develop programmes and assist in their delivery more students would be better served. Also, this shared responsibility would result in better programmes. From a financial perspective, Bart explains how these partnerships benefit programmes:

> Cooperation and partnership do not necessarily
> mean that there is going to be more money spread
> around to everybody. It may mean that you get
> new partners on board which can in a sense
> generate new resources.(PM2, p. 18)

Before partnerships can be created, Bart believes that there are a number of measures to be taken. One of these measures is

> to get business and industry to see that they have
> an active role to play in the training and
> development of the workforce.
> (PM2, p. 18)

According to Bart, if you can get the private sector to participate in the educational development of adults the ultimate outcome will be access to more resources:

> You are in fact possibly putting more resources to
> use in the system than ever before. (PM2, p. 18)

Bart hopes that these added resources will enable institutional administrators to prepare and provide courses better suited for adult learners. In addition, Bart concludes that more funds may translate into programmes which satisfy the private sector's needs for better educated and more employable personnel.

Policy makers indicate that as the economic scene becomes bleaker for education, the demand for partnerships between institutions and other partner groups will increase in order to ensure that current services will continue. Bart candidly points out that institutions have got to be cooperative with one another in order to survive and maintain a high standard in their educational offerings:

> Post-secondary institutions are always trying to carve out their own niche. But to a certain extent they are having to change because there are limited resources. When push comes to shove people realize that they are not going to make it financially if they are not going to cooperate with other institutions. (PM2, p. 19)

Bart notes that institutions must be motivated into cooperating by

> setting up programmes in such a way that people will have to cooperate to get money. (PM2, p. 19)

He goes on to propose that institutions would be less competitive with each other if they did not duplicate programme offerings from one institution to the next. He suggests that institutions should

> submit a complete plan on a yearly basis.... They have to investigate what is happening around them to avoid the duplication of services in the communities. Government can affect things to a certain extent through mechanisms like that.(PM2, p. 20)

Jack deviates from Bart's opinion in that he views competition as a positive notion. According to him, building partnerships with the private sector not only increases the resource base but it also promotes more competition. For Jack, competition is beneficial in providing better services:

> The issue of competition has got to be just a red
> herring. Competition in and of itself in this area is
> going to be a solution to the problem not the
> problem itself.(PM1, p. 9)

Jack believes that competition will raise the status of post-secondary education to where it is considered an essential service for society. Up until this point, he asserts that this type of education has been perceived by the public at large as being marginally important to society. He states that non-competition in the post-secondary educational community has resulted in a "monopoly of that area that gave the post-secondary area consequently little reason to change behaviours" (PM1, p. 9).

Fundamentally, Jack believes that institutions have not kept up with changing times. He concludes that no change rather than change has created problems for all of post-secondary education. He explains:

> We have made ourselves vulnerable to the
> criticisms that we are not producing an educated
> workforce. One way of improving that is to bring
> some competitors in so that we begin to see adult
> education as a field of endeavour. One that has many
> providers and deliverers all the way from private
> enterprise to private contractors and neighbourhood
> associations. At the moment, frankly, private
> enterprise, labour unions, and professional
> associations deliver more adult education than do
> colleges and universities combined. (PM1, p. 9)

In general, both policy makers believe that partnerships will benefit all of those involved with adult learners. They believe that

institutions dealing with rapidly shrinking budgets will benefit the most from partnerships. Both policy makers conclude that partnerships will reduce duplication of services and result in a pooling and sharing of resources. They also believe that sharing resources allows institutional administrators to redirect funds toward equally important tasks such as research and development projects which will improve courses.

Administrators' Perspectives - Partnerships
Theme - Partnerships are Incompatible with Competition.

Administrators believe that cooperation and collaboration with partners can exist with other agencies, institutions or organizations where there is no competition for the same resources. For them, sharing programme materials or resources with those groups they are being asked to develop partnerships with is inacceptable in a competitive situation. They blame this atmosphere of non-cooperation on the present government structures which create and foster competition. Lori, sums up what she describes as a common feeling among most administrators of institutions such as hers:

> It is a long road back to expecting us all to cooperate, to collaborate and form great partnerships when we are still vying for students. ... That is what we are doing. We are scrambling by putting in proposals in different places hoping they will get accepted so we can keep jobs.(AL, p. 12)

Marvin shares similar sentiments:

> There is an element of competition because there are limits for resources. There are always people wanting, coveting our resources and we are always coveting other people's resources. (A, p. 15)

Lori explains that competition extends beyond public institutions to include the voluntary sector. She spells out how teachers and administrators perceive volunteers and their organizations as threatening their institutional programmes and jobs:

> The rest of us worry about volunteers. The feeling
> is the same at all the schools, that the volunteers
> are going to take over. People say the same about
> church basements "well, there is some good E.S.L.
> programmes happening in church basements."
> Unfortunately, it is free so people say, "Oh, my
> God, they are not going to come here because they
> go there."(AL, pp. 12-13)

As a result, in this atmosphere, administrators believe that there is a fear of losing funds from their programming budgets. They foresee that a growth in the voluntary sector's involvement in adult education will result in lost jobs and programmes. To allow this to happen is for administrators a failure to live up to what they understand their roles and responsibilities to be. Ultimately, they believe it is vital to maintain the status quo in the number of programmes and employees in their institution.

For administrators, cooperating and collaborating on programmes happens with those groups and organizations that do not pose a threat to the institution or any of its programmes. Jason describes why certain groups do cooperate with his institution:

> They cooperate with us because we bring new
> blood into their programmes. We do not give out
> our curriculum to anybody but we used to. I think
> people only cooperate when need be they don't do
> it for altruistic reasons. ... Ultimately, people are
> people and they are looking out for themselves
> and they are trying to promote their institutions
> and the public selects the best. (AJ, p. 9)

Administrators have a strong need to protect the ownership of programmes and institutional jurisdictions. As a result, they believe that partnerships cannot exist in a competitive environment because as the situation now stands the two concepts contradict each other. Until beliefs change, partnerships where joint and open sharing occur will not result in the way in which policy makers hope they will.

Teachers' Perspectives - Partnerships
Theme - Sharing, Collaboration and Trust.

For teachers, sharing materials and ideas is an important part of the way in which the; operate. They rate collaboration and cooperation as virtuous activities so long as they do not threaten their livelihood.

Eight of the twelve teachers do not support sharing of resources such as curriculum and programme materials within what they believe to be a competitive market. They feel that the competitive partnerships that policy makers advocate cannot exist in real life. For teachers, these types of partnerships are parasitic in nature and do not foster the kind of teamwork and trust that would mutually benefit both parties.

For teachers students benefit the least in competitive partnerships. They conclude that administrators are far too territorial about their institutional domains to the detriment of adequately satisfying student needs. To keep institutions operating, teachers feel that administrators are often too quick to give a lower priority to improving programmes. Despite their negative comments about administrators, teachers understand why administrators act as they do. They understand that administrators face difficult decisions everyday in their efforts to keep the institution operating.

Teachers view administrators as guardians of both the programmes and ultimately of their teaching jobs. Jason, one of the administrators, shares sentiments similar to those of the teachers:

> The picture is not rosy because people are very
> territorial. There is a lot of competition out there.
> It is very cut-throat and lots of people don't like us
> much because we share the market.(AJ, p.9)

Partnerships, in this instance, are for teachers, institutional arrangements designed to maintain communicative networks with other adult education centres. They are not meant to promote sharing of materials as would be the case in what they feel are true partnerships.

Consistently, teachers indicate in the interviews that successful partnerships must have two ingredients. The first requires institutions to unconditionally share resources and personnel without obligations among themselves. For Annette, an Intermediate level instructor, sharing is only significant if it is given freely:

> Sharing to me is giving but at the moment there is a
> price attached to it and that isn't sharing.(TL, p. 15)

The other ingredient is to build partnerships where services are provided freely by one institution for others to access.

Overall, teachers are positive about partnerships between their institution and those institutions not directly in competition with theirs. However, they do not look favourably upon those partnerships with institutions that pose a threat to their jobs or programmes. Sherry relates how unrealistic the policy makers' assumptions are about collaboration and cooperation in a competitive marketplace:

> The assumption is that various sectors are going to
> get together and cooperate. You have got to have
> cooperation but if you have one institution and they
> have their thing they may guard it very jealously.
> They don't want another institution whether it be
> public, private, or voluntary to tap into what they
> already know. They guard it carefully because it goes
> back to funding and finances and where there is
> competition.(TV, p. 8)

Patrick rationalizes as to why so little sharing of materials happens:

> We spend a lot of time, a lot of money and a lot of
> effort developing curriculum. For us to just go
> and give it to our competitors in this new
> competitive world is sort of defeating our purpose.
> (TE, p. 9)

He points out that a variety of resources are required to produce quality
programmes. To give these resources away freely jeopardizes the
operation of the institution and its programmes. His underlying belief
is that a competitive environment is incongruous with establishing
the trust needed to promote healthy partnerships.

Marlene, an instructor of low level intermediate students, goes
so far as to suggest that a competitive environment can force
institutions into promoting and providing mediocre programmes. She
gives reasons why she thinks students are funneled by government
agencies into programmes that according to her are substandard in
quality:

> We are in competition, we are not trying to
> cooperate.... Sometimes where students are sent is
> a question of where it is cheaper and they do not
> look at the quality of the programme. (TDM, p. 11)

For teachers, the competitive market they function in results in a
general mistrust of others outside their environment. Materials are not
shared, but ideas can be because they do not cost the institution money
or energy to develop. Safekeeping materials is a survival tactic to
preserve the status quo which the teachers believe is better than the
alternative, a potential loss of programmes and jobs.

They agree that cooperation and collaboration between groups or
organizations should occur in conferences, forums, and information-
sharing associations such as E.A.C.E.R. (Edmonton Associations for

Continuing Education and Recreation). Most of the teachers value
participating in partnerships aimed at benefiting E.S.L. and adult
education. Patrick gives an example of the kind of sharing that does
occur:

> Our Chairman attended the last E.A.C.E.R.
> meeting, a good idea sharing forum, where any
> institution involved in E.S.L. is represented as an
> E.S.L. sub-committee of E.A.C.E.R. There our
> Chairman will advertise a new programme. (TE,
> p. 9)

For Patrick, sharing with an organization such as E.A.C.E.R. is a
positive step. According to him, sharing information leads to a better
understanding of what is happening in other adult ~ducation
programmes. To share ideas rather than materials and personnel is
considered worthwhile for teachers and they accept this activity as part
of functioning in this type of marketplace. Patrick, in particular, views
this type of sharing as valuable in that it does not benefit one
institution over another. Keith also points out another form of this
type of collaboration and cooperation:

> This institution does a lot of collaborating with
> other groups. All these groups get together at
> conferences like T.E.S.L. (Teachers of E.S.L.).
> Everyone is aware of everyone else and no one is
> competing with anyone else. They are all saying,
> "Well, we supply this need, you supply that need
> and why not work it out together." (TW, p. 8)

The teachers agree that their institution is successful in
garnering its market share of adult students. They believe this is due to
the high quality of the programmes provided. In fact, several of them
state that they receive requests for materials from groups who wish to
start their own programmes.

In the past, the teachers, actively assisted other organizations by giving them materials created specifically for their own programmes. Phyllis gives a synopsis of what used to happen and what happens now:

> Now we sell our curriculum. We used to share
> more. All those binders, institutions and individuals
> can purchase them and use them as far as I know.
> (TF, p. 12)

The teachers' reticence toward giving materials away reflects the fear they have about losing their jobs. Even though the teachers believe that the E.S.L. education community should be united in its effort to provide better language programmes, they do not condone freely sharing materials to achieve it. Jolene sums up what she believes to be the role of E.S.L. teachers in sharing:

> It is up to the individual teacher to take the initiative
> and go and create the partnership.... I do not think I
> would just box my stuff together and send it. I would
> get together with that person and share some of my
> ideas because it has happened here that experienced
> teachers did it with me. It has to continue because it
> is the normal thing to do.... Institutions cannot force
> individuals to do it. I find that E.S.L. teachers are
> generally willing to share and they are very caring
> people to begin with and it is going to benefit
> everybody. (TMJ, p. 7)

Summary.

Teachers want to share because they view it to be part of their teaching culture but they feel they must restrict themselves from doing so. They cite several reasons, in particular, they believe that the competitive market they operate in restrains them from effectively collaborating and cooperating with similar institutions like their own.

On the other hand, they do feel that as teachers they openly share ideas with other E.S.L. teachers because it is an accepted norm for their group. Information is shared in many arenas using various media so if something new is happening the whole teaching community is aware of it.

The Fifth Policy Statement - Promoting the Concept

The fifth policy statement in the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) states that "the Government of Alberta will promote the Foundations for Adult Learning and Development concept and provide information about the availability of adult development programmes and services" (p. 8).

In this statement, policy makers have a desire to do two things. One, they want to educate the public and those involved in adult education about the policy and its guiding principles. They state this in the first assumption:

> Public information about issues and programmes
> related to low levels of basic skills helps to address
> the problem by encouraging potential students
> and by stimulating public understanding,
> involvement, and support. (Alberta Advanced
> Education, 1991, p. 8)

Second, policy makers want to provide valuable information for students wishing to access the programmes. They make this clear in the second assumption listed below the policy statement:

> Adult learners desiring to improve their basic
> skills may require assistance identifying their own
> learning needs and should be provided with
> information about available programmes and
> services relevant to their needs.(Alberta Advanced
> Education, 1991, p. 8)

In this statement, the policy makers point out that their aim is to make this policy and its concept accessible to all and in particular to those participating in adult basic education. They see their task as educating the public about issues in this educational environment.

Policy makers' Perspectives - Communicating the Concept
Theme - Information In The Right Hands.

For policy makers, the policy had to state why these policy statements should be made public. To them informing the public about the policy and the issues it intends to address means putting the information into the right hands. Jack explains why

> the intent here is to be able to have enough
> information in the hands of the right people so
> immigrants would be counseled or advised that
> there are opportunities available as a result of
> Government programmes on adult development.
> (PM1, p. 21)

He lists who should be informed:

> counselors in the institutions; the officers in the
> career or employment centers; people ' ho work
> in settlement agencies or work with i.amigrant
> serving agencies. If these people can be made
> aware of all the options available in the case of
> E.S.L. then part of the objective of that principle or
> that policy would be met. You cannot put this
> thing in the hands of everybody it would not help
> anyway. (PM1, pp. 21-22)

Even though both policy makers believe it is important for each teacher to have this policy, they rationalize that it is an unrealistic task. Bart explains how the policy was distributed:

> You distribute it as broadly as you have the means
> and distribute it to all the people who contributed
> to it. You send out multiple copies and you hope
> for the best. (PM2, p. 20)

He cites financial constraints as the number one reason why the policy
was distributed to a limited and specific number of people. He hopes
that teachers and students will be given the information in this
document by those people receiving it.

Jack points out that not everyone would benefit from having the
policy made available to them. He suggests another more useful and
appropriate format for sharing policy information:

> What you hope to get in the hands of everybody is
> an informational brochure written in their own
> language telling them what we are attempting to
> say. (PM1, p. 22)

Jack does not indicate when such a brochure is to be developed. His
hesitancy to do so reflects his personal views about how much
information the public should know about the Foundations of Adult
Learning and Development concept. Bart, also, suggests ways of letting
the public know about what is in the policy:

> It is our job to promote this concept wherever
> possible and sometimes it may be through
> literature. (PM2, p. 21)

He believes that the best way to fulfill this last statement's goal is to

> ideally try to do that in as many ways as you can
> such as by presentations with speakers. (PM2, p.
> 21)

However, the policy makers understand that the ideal is not necessarily
what occurs in real life. Comments they make, about how policy
information should be distributed to the public, displays their

dissatisfaction with the present situation. Jack points out that the reason for this lack of communication between the policy level and those who should receive the information is because the "information conduit" is not operating as it should be. He describes how unique the E.S.L. environment is and how that can be a problem:

> Certainly, people who use teachers as a way of
> getting to students should keep teachers informed.
> We would like our institutions to guarantee that
> teachers will know about all the things they
> should know and yet it is tough to keep a part-
> time teacher apprised of things. (PM1, p. 22)

For Jack, the root of this problem is that institutional programmes are staffed by part-time temporary teachers. This situation creates difficulties for those who must inform teachers of any changes that might have occurred.

Ultimately, according to policy makers keeping key people informed is the role of the institutional administrators. After all, they feel that administrators are the ones who are most familiar with the changing needs of their teachers and student population.

Administrators' Perspectives - Communicating the Concept
Theme - Promoting the Concept.

According to administrators, communicating the concept goes beyond distributing the policy. For them promoting the foundations of adult development means offering programmes at the institution which reflect what that concept is all about. Jason, Chairman of the E.S.L. Department, describes the institution as the concept in action:

> To be quite honest if you see the institution as the
> government then we promote the document. I
> don't see how we could not. It is like promoting
> the ten commandments. (AJ, p. 10)

Marvin, Dean of Adult Development, agrees that the government
promotes the concept:

> The Alberta government has done it in a variety of
> ways. Certainly, with our students they are referred
> to us by various government agencies. So, the
> Alberta government is doing that in a sense it is
> promoting our institution's services.(A, p. 15)

Marvin explains that the institution is a government agency. The
institutional staff promote this policy statement's intention through
involvement in several activities:

> Also, there is promotion through our general public
> awareness campaigns. There is an immigration week
> and a literacy week so, there are various public
> awareness efforts. We have open houses and
> sometimes, we target them for a very specific group
> like a social service, a settlement agency or just a
> very small group.... We have done other things too.
> We participate in a number of things where we
> promote ourselves and our cause.(A, pp. 15-16)

He defines the cause and explains how they promote it:

> The cause is to provide educational opportunities for
> new Canadians or native Canadians or
> disadvantaged Canadians. Many of us sit on many
> boards. I am on the E.A.C.E.R. board and on the
> Provincial Secretariat for E.S.L. Other people here are
> involved in other kinds of ways as well. We
> promote in that sense. (A, p. 16)

For Myles, the President, the government is advancing the area of
adult education and development by providing

> information about the availability of programmes. In
> fairness to government they do put out a pretty good
> brochure, with descriptors of the various
> programmes. The existence of the institution is all
> part of that so they do promote it. There is a lot of
> information available on the whole notion of adult
> development and that is positive. (AD, pp. 12-13)

On the other hand, for Lori, the Assistant Director, the policy and any information on it should have been provided to all teachers and students. She does not believe that the information is up to date nor has it been made available to those who need it most. Even though the institution is there as part of this effort to further adult development it sometimes does not do enough for promoting the endeavour. Lori explains that at the institutional level

> we are so busy scrambling on a day to day basis,
> just trying to keep our programmes going. We do
> not have the stability or security needed. That is
> the bottom line so how can we be worried about
> promoting all this.(AL, pp. 13-14)

For her, promoting the policy and the cause requires that all partners have the time and energy to take part in the process. But, because of an insecure employment situation for her staff and the possible loss of programmes, Lori believes that the policy makers' vision cannot occur. People, such as teachers and administrators, according to Lori, are so preoccupied with maintaining their programmes and jobs that they do not have the time or desire to concern themselves with promoting a concept.

Jason too, believes that staff is overburdened with work so sometimes valuable information they need never reaches them. Personally, he feels he is to blame for teachers not receiving the policy:

> I see that as my fault. Maybe I should have pushed
> it.... Leaving it on the lunchroom table maybe is not
> enough. (AJ, p. 10)

He descibes the problem of keeping up with the information crossing his own desk:

> It is really difficult because part of this is information
> overload. We have so many documents floating
> around. Each week I get two bulletins from the
> federal department of immigration and memos and
> leaflets from other sources. Do I put those on the
> dining room table? How do we get citizens to be
> cognizant of all the issues? (AJ, pp. 10-11)

He attributes the problem in communicating the policy to the medium used. He believes print is not the way to inform teachers:

> Maybe it is the way we do it. Maybe the print
> medium is wrong I do not really know what is
> coming up and cannot keep on top of it. (AJ, pp. 10-
> 11)

Summary.

Overall, the administrators value the fifth policy statement. They believe promoting the concept of adult development is important. They understand that to spread information about the concept requires that it be done in several ways.

They all agreed that the institution and its programmes serve the purpose to promote the concept. Although, two administrators feel that advancing the cause cannot be done solely through the medium of print. Sharing of information like the policy itself requires that all those involved have access to a copy and also have a shared understanding as to what it means and how it can be accomplished.

Administrators suggest that the communication problem is attributed to two causes. First, staff is overworked and often do not

have the time to keep themselves informed about changes such as this policy. Second, the information shared should be in an easily understood and accessible format. So that teachers can, without much effort, keep abreast of the information overlo ul.

They suggest that this situation can be remedied by using various means of communicating and promoting the concept. In addition, administrators point out that teachers and students should be kept informed of matters which affect them such as the policy. Promoting the adult development concept through means such as providing the institution and its services is not enough. They belie e that more needs to be done so that everyone in the province acquires a shared understanding of the policy goals and what it means in practical terms to support adult education and the philosophy of lifelong learning.

The Teachers' Perspectives - Communicating the Concept
Theme - Spreading the Word.

The teachers believe that it is their task to keep their students well informed. According to the teachers, informed students are more apt to share the responsibility of accessing and deciding which programmes best suit their needs. For the teachers the question remains, "who should be the prime provider of this information?" For Sherry it is obvious that

> the information is provided by or limited to the
> knowledge the instructor has. So if an instructor is
> knowledgeable about what is available they can
> provide that to the student.(TV, p. 9)

In the case of the policy, eleven of the twelve teachers interviewed had not seen the policy document. So, according to the teachers the policy makers failed to reach the fifth policy statement's objective.

On the one hand, the teachers agree that the institution and the programmes are promoting the concept of adult development. Josie discusses how this is being done:

> Our institution is trying to do that. They hold the
> open house and things like that to let students
> know that we have a programme and what we
> have to offer. (TT, p. 6)

Annette describes what open houses are:

> Opportunity for the public, our competition and
> any agencies to come in and see what we offer. We
> have booths that are set up so they know what is
> going on. ... There's an opportunity for people to
> go into the classroom ᵃ ᵈ sit in for a few minutes
> and see exactly what approach is being taken.
> Students man the booths and we have a few
> administrators or teachers who happen to not be
> teaching to be responsible to answer questions.(TL,
> p. 15)

But, the teachers view this type of promoting or spreading the word as not sufficient in giving students the information they need to make informed decisions about their future learning experiences. Josie discusses the assumptions both the policy makers and the government have made in the fifth policy statement:

> I assume they are assuming that they are readily
> giving out all this information as soon as the
> students quote unquote get off the boat. They are
> saying we have all of these things which I do not
> think so, and that I have seen this document, and
> that everyone else has seen it. (TT, p. 7)

Margie shares a similar opinion. She discusses how students are not properly informed:

> I do not think they realize that there are
> alternatives, that there are other programs
> available. (TMM, p. 7)

For Marlene, the teachers cannot be the sole source of information for students because they lack the time needed to inform themselves and their students properly:

> We do not have enough time to provide
> individual counseling about each students'
> future.... Our students are not aware of what is
> available. They would like to take more training.
> They would like to take more English but
> sometimes they are unaware of what is
> available.... There could be more information
> provided about programmes and services. (TDM,
> p. 12)

In contrast, Jolene believes that students are well aware of the institution and the programmes it offers. She mentions how there is an informal network which operates within cultural communities allowing information to spread. This information does not reach everybody it is intended to reach but does provide an adequate system to let people know what is available:

> I do not think it reaches everybody and it is
> idealistic to say it would reach every single person.
> But, from my experience with the students, I have
> met people, immigrants that have never studied
> here but they have always heard about it.... I have
> heard a lot of them talking about our institution
> so I think it reaches people from former students
> who have been here by word of mouth because
> this is a government institution that is recognized.
> (TMJ, p. 8)

Keith too, discusses how important it is to rely on informal networks:

> Eventually things happen through the system. All
> it needs is one person to go out and tell their
> community and they will find out. This is
> happening all over, in Edmonton and in other
> places. (TW, p. 9)

Even though Jolene and Keith believe that their students are informed through systems which operate in their own communities both agree that this is not due to any government action. To them students are the links to the community and they should be made aware of vital information which promotes concepts such as the adult development one. Keith asks several pertinent questions:

> I have not seen the document nor am I aware of it.
> How are they promoting it? ... I would like to
> know about it. I wonder how much feedback or
> how many teachers have had a say in it. Do they
> know what is going on? Do they know the
> problems that we are having in our classes? (TW,
> p. 9)

Keith, as a beginning teacher, wonders why teachers have not been involved in the policy documents' development. This, he surmises could be the problem why so few teachers have heard about the document and its five policy statements.

Phyllis concludes that teachers were not made aware of the document because of the way in which it was made available. As she explains:

> There is a literacy conference at which it was
> promoted, discussed, and so forth so, those
> teachers were made aware of it. ... That conference
> was a one-shot deal. Great, if you attended but if
> you did not, well? (TF, p. 13)

For Phyllis, the idea of one-shot events to promote a document is an inadequate way to inform the intended audience. Even though

informal networks exist, there is no way to expect information to reach the greatest percentage of the teachers by informing a few.

Patrick, the only teacher who saw the policy, explains where he discovered it:

> It [the policy] was on the coffee table in the
> lunchroom so it was made available. I remember
> seeing it. (TE, p. 10)

He did not comment further on whether he read it or passed the information onto his colleagues or students. He does make a point of stating that he is not sure that the concept is being promoted:

> Again, this is being done but not necessarily by the
> Government of Alberta.... There is an assumption
> that it is happening. (TE, p. 10)

Summary.

In conclusion, the teachers feel that the fifth policy statement is not fulfilling its intended goal. Foremost, the policy was not communicated to those who were to be most affected by it. The fact that almost all the teachers and their students had never seen the document or heard of it is a problem.

Even though the teachers believe in informal networks of communicating information they feel that more should have been done to promote the concept and its programmes. They feel that sporadic open houses and presentations at annual conferences are inadequate arenas for communicating such a policy. To promote the concept of adult development requires reaching and informing those who will implement the policy statements - the teachers. As one of the administrators, Jason, put it that

> each project has to have its champion but if it does
> not then you put it in with the rest of what you
> receive and it is dead. (AJ, p. 11)

Discussion

In analyzing the three different levels - the policy makers, administrators, and teachers, one sees the varying perspectives each group has on how they understand and interpret policy. Essentially, the policy statements' words were interpreted in many ways depending on which group the person belonged to. In some instances, members of a group would interpret a statement in the same manner as that of another group.

All the respondents were positive on the policy statements' aims. The question for many, especially the teachers, is whether the policy can realistically be implemented as is. Adjectives such as utopic, unrealistic, and idealistic are used to describe some of the policy statements.

Overall, the respondents felt comfortable enough to share their feelings on other matters relating to the subject and this provided valuable information for the study. Their environment is a complex and ever-changing one. For them to make sense of it, they as members of one of the groups, have devised different ways of coping with change.

Their perspectives on the policy in general varies depending on which group they belong to. Their own roles and job responsibilities often overshadow what they feel ought to happen in adult basic education. Often the reasons relate to financial constraints or their own personal philosophies on education which it seems colours their perspectives on how policy affects them and how they feel policy should be implemented. Often, what people believe to be workable is not necessarily what is ideal. One respondent describes policy as "shooting for the stars and then hoping it will somehow reach near that goal"(PM1, p. 10).

Chapter 7

Major Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter sequentially answers the general research question and its five other subsidiary questions. In drawing conclusions from the data analysis and linking it to the theoretical underpinnings of research in the area of policy development and implementation, there were several recommendations that policy makers, administrators, and teachers need to heed in order for policy to be acceptable and successful in positively impacting the policy environment.

The recommendations are aimed at future policy makers, administrators, and teachers, who are affected by a policy. There are for the future consequential implications for the field of adult basic education. A major implication is that government policies should be developed as documents which are dynamically amenable to change during the implementation phase and can be mutually adapted to better serve the needs of those they are intended for (Berman, 1980; Pressman & Wildavsky, 1979).

Another major implication is found in conclusive evidence that points to how policy is viewed by those who implement it. In this case the policy is seen by the implementers as an opportunistic venture rather than one which will solve a problem (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976). Local participants, particularly the teachers, do not value the document as a positive step toward change. They believe that the policy has little benefit to their students and that nothing has changed to stabilize an environment which remains highly unstable. For the teachers the document is seen as pure rhetoric rather than as a concrete move toward bettering the plight of adult basic education.

Problems were encountered as the document was interpreted differently depending on who was reading it and the role they played in the policy environment (Berman, 1980). Not only that but the most

significant problem was the information breakdown which resulted in only a few teachers knowing about the document and its contents. The breakdown was a result of the policy system's gatekeepers not forwarding the document to those who have to implement it (Tushman, 1977).

There was no open dialogue with the teachers nor was the document distributed to them. Those who were entrusted with forwarding the information did not understand the importance of the document nor believed it to be important enough to expend the teachers' valuable time to discuss it (Tushman, 1977; Dunn, 1981; Bosetti, 1990). The policy makers created these information breakdowns because they did not consider the importance of knowing how meaningful it is that "policy makers ... be aware of the power associated with the management of formal and informal communication networks" (Bohac, 1989, p. 7).

The key problem in this policy environment which added to the information breakdown and the misinterpretation of the policy and its statements rests in the question over the instability of whether personnel and programmes are granted permanent status. Even though teaching staff are dedicated in making the best of a difficult situation which exists in adult basic education in general they are always aware that their programmes and jobs are in jeopardy of disappearing or changing. This scenario makes it difficult to attain change over time where policy can be mutually adapted to better serve the students and the system that supports them in achieving their educational goals. After all policy should be a process which takes a lot of planning and time rather than it being developed as a single event to be managed and implemented as such (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984).

The constant flux in this open policy environment presents another problem which in a closed policy environment might not have occurred had all the considerations been dealt with to make the policy implementation successful and beneficial to all. Personnel in this case study are always changing and information does not reach

those it is intended to and in addition there is the problem of interpretation caused by what Berman (1980) described as "passages" of interpretation that policy must go through to reach the policy player. In this case, new teachers are left to interpret what has been told to them by another teacher who has gotten the information from another and so on creating biased interpretations rather than a common shared understanding (Fullan, 1991). In order to understand these problems answering the research questions aids in elucidating the common concerns which have resulted in the research findings.

The General Research Question - Answered

There are several significant points of interest in the data which answer the general research question: *How are macro-policies that regulate full-time E.S.L. programmes for adult immigrants in Alberta understood and interpreted into an educational institution's programmes?* In order to answer this question a close look at how the three groups under study view the policy reveals that they come from different perspectives with varying values and goals. Subsequently, these values and goals influence how these policy players interpret and choose to implement or not implement the policy or parts of it. This finding answers the first subsidiary research question: *How do the different stakeholders' goals aid or impede macro-policies' intent to bring about a change?*

The often conflicting interpretations impede the macro-policies' intent to bring about change. There are other reasons such as level of awareness and of shared understanding of the policy that also influence how effectively the policy statements will be translated into practice at the student level of the policy environment (Fullan, 1991).

Major Findings

Respondents' Roles - Effect on Policy's Interpretation.

The roles respondents play in the policy system influences how they react to and relate to the policy, its statements and the implementation plan. Terese Crane (1988) states that

> one reason for discrepancies in understanding
> may reflect different kinds of assumptions which
> ground policy makers, researchers and
> theoreticians from those which ground
> practitioners. These assumptions are not mutually
> exclusive to either group, but policy makers,
> researchers and theoreticians seem more focused
> on predictive assumptions whereas practitioners
> operate on perspective assumptions. (p. 8)

She goes on to describe what these assumptions are:

> Predictive assumptions are concerned with
> theoretical 'shoulds'. They are kinds of ideals....
> Perspective assumptions, on the other hand, are
> concerned wit' what is. (pp. 8-9)

These two approaches -- the practical versus the predictive approach to policy and programme operationalization -- are demonstrated in the kinds of words each of the three groups use to describe their understanding of the policy statements. Subsequently, the words in the document also influence how these policy stakeholders understand and interpret the policy and the policy statements. Crane (1988) maintains that how a word is "defined is often a function of who is defining it" (p. 4). There are also connotations attached to a word's meaning or a history of what the word has come to mean to a particular group in a particular context.

In the study, all these factors demonstrate how a person's positional perspective can influence a policy's implementation. It also

determines whether the intended change will achieve the policy makers' intended goals.

Administrators and Teachers - Practical Perspective.

For both the administrators and the teachers, the data reveal that these groups have a practical outlook on how the institution can be operated. Both apply theory and policy into practice as they function on a daily basis in the institution.

Administrators - Fiscally Responsible.

The administrators as a group are unique in that their primary concern and focus is to provide programming to the students. They administer and manage the institution and its programmes in a fiscally responsible manner so as not to compromise jobs or programmes. They make future plans by predicting how effectively and efficiently they can maintain the fiscal health of their institution. Myles points out what determines how administrators plan:

> Part of the problem is that there is a finite amount
> of funding available to support and we are
> constrained by that. (AD, p. 5)

Marvin gives reasons why administrators make the kinds of decisions they make in order to keep the institution and its programmes operating:

> What distinguishes the E.S.L. programme delivery
> is its ad hoc nature because of the federal-
> provincial agreements or because of the lack of it.
> As a result, things in E.S.L. are very fluid, very
> temporary. Budgeting is ad hoc, it is very difficult
> to establish something and assume you have it in
> place for a long term. (A, p. 1)

With these kinds of factors and the role that administrators play, their perspectives on how they interpret policy has to be fiscally and resourcefully practical. Principals in public schooling are not dissimilar to the administrators in this study and they face similar challenges and constraints. Fullan (1991) indicates how principals as school administrators view their roles:

> Many principals expect or feel that they are
> expected to keep everyone happy by running an
> orderly school, and this becomes the major
> criterion of the principals' ability to manage - no
> news is good news, as long as everything is
> relatively quiet. (p. 146)

For the institutional administrators, stability in maintaining the status quo is preferred. Their focus is to ensure that the institution, its programmes, and its staff are maintained and that appropriate decisions are made about the type of programmes offered and the types of limitations they must place on how best to use the resources available to them.

Administrators believe that they have two primary roles. One role is to be effective managers of limited resources and the second to be promoters of the institutional mandate which advocates being student-centred. They are torn between these two roles and during the study's interviews displayed the conflict this created for them. On the one hand they operate from a financial perspective but on the other they believe in catering to individual student needs. Often, they rationalize this discrepancy in their roles by stressing that they are being fiscally responsible by maintaining the operation of the institution and its programmes. It is suggested by Myles that a possible solution to their dilemma may be to provide a different delivery system:

> We need to be more flexible in what we offer both
> in terms of time and in the method of
> delivery.(AD, p. 6)

The administrators' believe that it is important to provide programmes that help students to cope with settlement and acculturation issues. For them providing tuition free programmes is a reasonable amount of support for students because their conception of reasonable is a balance between what you can do and what you cannot do. Jason describes this type of support as like going "back to the womb:"

> We provide an atmosphere that the institution
> creates. We are here for the students, so we create
> a counselor and give them a nurse and a library
> and cafeteria.... Here, it is sort of like back to the
> womb and the department encourages us to do
> that but it doesn't have to come in money.(AJ, p.
> 8)

They justify decisions they make based on these two perspectives; to provide a student-centred atmosphere and at the same time to maintain stability in the institution. This in turn influences how administrators interpret and translate the policy and its statements.

Teachers - Student-Oriented.

Teachers base their decisions on an educational perspective which considers how well students' educational needs are served. Ultimately, they wish to cater to their student's individual needs. Their primary goals are centered around raising the self-esteem and confidence of their students so that they will continue to learn once they leave the institution. They are interested in the general well-being of their students and rate how well these programmes and policies assist students in achieve their goal to learn E.S.L.

Daily, teachers interact with their students on a daily basis and sense the triumphs, frustrations, and other feelings students have toward how well the programmes suit their individual needs. Teachers are more sensitive to the individual needs of their students and therefore rate the success of a policy or programme according to how their students feel about them. They believe that students require E.S.L. programmes as a necessity for living because this type of education affords the students the ability to function in their everyday lives. Keith, a beginning teacher, best reflects the teachers' perspectives toward the policy as he describes what his feelings are toward his students and teaching them:

> A lot of things they believe in, I do too, like that part of just letting them plan their own way. The Chairman of the E.S.L. department said to me in the beginning, if you want to teach a certain way and your class is dead against it you might as well forget about it because its not going to work. You cannot force upon them a system of learning.... I have some students who if they do not like what I am doing they will tell me.... I actually reinforce that to a certain extent. I want their feedback but it does not happen too often and they seem to have accepted me for what I am doing for the most part. (TW, pp. 3-4)

This attitude and perspective is prevalent among the teachers as a group. Teachers want feedback from their students to ensure that they are providing the best programmes and most effective teaching strategies possible. As educators, the teachers want to ensure that sufficient support is provided to students within the educational system to give them the skills needed to achieve success. To them the two most important forms of support are the curriculum and the student advisor.

The curriculum provides the skills and learning strategies required to allow students to continue to learn how to communicate

effectively in Canadian society. The student advisor acts as a resou ce
network for students who encounter problems during time spent in
the E.S.L. programme.

Because their students are adults, Keith and the other teachers
understand that older students are motivated to learn for reasons other
than those of their younger counterparts. This is especially true for
E.S.L. adult students who are highly motivated to learn English in
order to function in society. So, if an educational programme is not
successful in providing that for them they will either quit or partake in
other programmes that are more suited to their needs. This practical
stance stems from the close relationship teachers have with the
learning environment, the classroom and the students. They are the
ones who understand what works and what does not and therefore are
apt not to interpret the policy statements objectively but rather
subjectively. Fullan (1991) describes how teachers differ from policy
makers as they interpret policy (as seen as an innovation)

> [as] "rationally" advocated from the point of view
> of what is rational to the promoter, not the
> teachers. Sometimes innovations are rationally
> sold on the basis of sound theory and principles,
> but they turn out not to be translatable into
> practice with the resources at the disposal of
> teachers. Other times, innovations are strongly
> advocated in terms of the supposed benefits for
> students, without clear evidence that the
> particular teacher's students would share the
> benefit. (p. 130)

Teachers are influenced by what Fullan (1991) states as

> processes that foster sustained professional
> development over one's career and lead to student
> benefits. (p. 131)

These motivations and differing roles from policy makers greatly determine how effectively the policy and its statements are understood and put into practice.

Policy makers - Hope for a Better Future.

Policy makers are motivated by goals to provide more opportunities for adult learners and direction to those affected by the policy. For them, education is a vehicle for adult learners to achieve the freedom and independence to satisfy their own individual needs. Their reasons in developing the policy center around their desire to provide a framework for the future development of basic adult education in the province. Bart, a policy maker, provides a rationale for the policy as he responds to a query about what the policy is intended to do:

> Intent sounds like it is in the future but, it is to a large extent, it reinforces all the existing programmes. ... The policy not only tells or states what exists but also provides statements of intention for the future. (PM2, p. 4)

The policy makers' key goal is to create a culture promoting lifelong learning and thus resulting in a positive change in the public's attitude toward adult education in general. Bart reflects this:

> One of the principles of the document is that learning is change for people. This is a recognition of that and that you need to learn for various aspects of your life. It is not totally geared toward work and employability but more toward adult development. (PM2, p. 8)

They understand that there are limited resources but feel that there needs to be a balance between what communities want and what government can in fact endorse or deliver.

Their hope is to give individuals in the general public equitable opportunities to access whatever educational programmes they need to satisfy their educational goals. Prioritization, according to the policy makers, is what institutions should use as a decision making strategy as they decide which programmes to fund and where they will be offered. For policy makers, resources are limited so they believe that institutional administrators have to decide how best to serve their communities with what resources are available at that time.

Policy makers believe that basic adult development programmes should be starting points for the educational development of adult learners. The provision of programmes and the institutions they are housed in is considered by the policy makers to be reasonable enough support. These programmes allow adults to become functional citizens of society. To them, the programmes should not be complete career development training packages. Policy makers believe that providing a basic education for adults is sufficient enough that they will have the rudimentary skills required to become successful independent tax-paying citizens.

Different Interpretations - Different Roles and Values.

In attempting to recognize which major factors and constraints appear to influence decisions made to interpret the policy document, the analysis reveals that respondents' roles and values are the major stumbling blocks to understanding what the policy means. Whether the document will serve its intended outcomes is determined by how the respondents understand what the policy means to them and how it will affect them. At present, there is little indication that the respondents have a common understanding about what is meant by the policy statements. As a result, little will change because most of the respondents' beliefs and values about their roles will not change in the way policy makers had hoped. The evidence in the data supports Fullan (1991) who states that

real cha:.ge involves changes in conceptions and
role behaviour, which is why it is so difficult to
achieve. (p. 38)

The most evident example of the respondents' belief systems
bearing on whether a policy statement is going to be implemented or
not is exemplified in the interpretation of the fourth policy statement.
This policy statement advocates the promotion of partnerships, "The
Government of Alberta will encourage cooperation, collaboration, and
the formation of partnerships between and among the public, private
and voluntary sectors in the delivery of adult development programs"
(Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, p. 7).

There was a lot of discrepancy in how the three respondent
groups interpreted the fourth policy statement. Policy makers believe
that partnerships are collaborative ventures that result in better
programmes. For them, competition is a valuable activity in that it
results in a better product for adult learners. Also, they assume that as a
result of these partnerships there will be a reduction in duplication of
services and there would be more effective sharing of resources among
the adult education community. Over time, this would result in
improved services to the community at large.

Conversely, administrators agree with the teachers that
partnerships cannot be achieved in the competitive environment they
live and work in. According to administrators, promoting their
programmes and trying to sustain and maintain what they already
have in place is enough of a task considering the limited and ever-
shrinking resources left to operate the institution. They cannot foresee
any real benefits to sharing resources within an environment which
condones competition. Non-cooperation between other institutions,
the private sector and themselves is a reality which administrators and
teachers accept readily. Myles surmises why the ultimate goal of
administrators leads to non-cooperation:

That is a pretty fair assumption because being very
honest, there is more competition than there is
cooperation. I mean why is Grant McEwan College
doing E.S.L.? Because it brings money into the
institution even though we have an E.S.L. centre.
(AD, p. 11)

For teachers there is an added dimension to what they believe
sharing ought to be. For them, trust is a required ingredient in order for
real sharing to occur. And in a competitive environment the safe thing
to do is to share minimally with other inst   so as to ensure a
stable work environment for themselves ai   guarantee that the
institution will be able to attract students to their programmes.

Real sharing for teachers means unconditionally motivated
mutual sharing where services and programmes are provided freely
without expecting anything in return. They believe that administrators
are there as the guardians of their jobs and programmes to ensure that
other institutions do not take anything away from them.

Sharing ideas is a safe activity for the teachers to do but, that is as
far as they are prepared to go with collaborating and cooperating with
other institutions and private sector industry. There are several
forums, conferences and joint meetings between institutions, where
this type of sharing can occur. They believe that this type of sharing
does not threaten their livelihood like sharing curricula, resource
materials, and programme manuals would.

Competition for student enrolments and funding does create
problems for teachers. They believe that competition erodes the quality
of the services and programming the teachers and institution can offer.
Marlene explains how quality is compromised in a competitive
environment:

> We are in competition, we are not trying to
> cooperate. Sometimes students are sent to Alberta
> College where for example they can offer an
> English program cheaper maybe because they only
> have 25 students per class. Sometimes, where
> students are sent is a question of where it is
> cheaper and they do not really look at the quality
> of the program. .... People at the decision-making
> level sometimes look at the financial end of
> things. ... A lot of the private sector institutions,
> their purpose is to make a high profit and the one
> I am familiar with ... they are predicting is going to
> make massive profits and provide low quality
> English instruction. (TDM ˉ˘˘. 11-12)

For teachers, compromising quality   .congruent with an educational
perspective nor is it a goal. In order to remain competitive, teachers
believe that quality programming is often compromised.

Conclusions.

For teachers the loss of quality is a direct result of funding cuts.
Subsequent staff reductions while student enrolment numbers increase
or ˉˉˉˉˉˉr ˉthe same and place added strain to already overworked
ˉcaˉcˉherˉs. Tˉhey blame the - two year loss of the student advisor on
fiˉˉancˉiaˉ ˉˉˉmˉˉeˉtitiˉˉn. According to them administrators were forced
ˉˉˉto clˉˉˉinatˉˉng thˉˉˉ major support service for students which in turn
ˉˉˉ ˉˉˉˉˉˉˉd in further ˉourdens being placed on teachers' already busy
schedules. How they understand this loss of quality is linked to how
they interpret the policy and whether they believe that the policy has
significance for them and their work. If the policy has no immediate
solution to their problems it is of no use to the teachers and what they
aim to do for their students.

Second Subsidiary Question - *How are the Policy Goals reflected in Programme Goals?*

The analysis of the data revealed that how respondents understand the policy statements answers the second subsidiary question: *How are policy goals reflected in programme goals?* For the most part, the teachers and administrators were the ones most able to assess whether the policy's goals were being addressed in their programmes. They know the contents of the material used in their programmes. Once exposed to the policy document both the teachers and administrators were able to decide what was meant by the policy statements.

Both the teachers and the administrators believe that the policy's principles and in particular the lifelong learning philosophy were congruent with the focus of their programmes. This belief was particularly evident when they were asked to comment on the fifth policy statement in *the Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) which states that "the Government of Alberta will promote the Foundations for Adult Learning and Development concept and provide information about the availability of adult development programmes and services" (p. 8).

The fifth policy statement deals with the promotion of the overall concept of the policy and the lifelong learning philosophy. Both the administrators and the teachers credit the institution as being the concept in action. Marvin, an administrator reflects a common respondent sentiment about how the concept is being promoted:

> The Alberta government has done that in a variety
> of ways. Our students are referred to us by various
> government agencies. So, government is promoting
> our services.... There is also promotion through our
> general public awareness campaigns—there is an
> immigration week, a literacy week, and others. We
> have open houses and we target them for a very
> specific group like a social service agency, settlement
> agencies, or a very small group. Sometimes we
> invite the whole community, and sometimes we are
> celebrating something like an anniversary. We have
> done other things to promote ourselves and our
> cause which is to provide educational opportunities
> for new Canadians, native Canadians, or
> disadvantaged Canadians. Many of us sit on many
> boards. I am on the E.A.C.E.R. board and on the
> Provincial Secretariat for E.S.L. Other people around
> here are involved in other ways as well.(A, pp. 15-16)

Therefore, they believe that the concept has been promoted and as a result the programme goals do, to some degree, reflect the policy goals. Conversely, they do not believe that they were well informed about the document considering that only one teacher knew the policy existed.

However, there are teachers who feel that students are not getting a reasonable basic education. Their understanding of *basic* and *reasonable* varies greatly with that of the other two groups. Teachers want students to be far more equipped with basic skills than is happening at present. This is especially true for students who enter at the Special Basic Level. Some of these students are illiterate in their own language and in some instances these students have never experienced formal schooling.

According to these teachers, students who enter Special Basic require more than the standard time to learn basic English. Often, they are not able to become functionally independent within their new society and continue to be dependent on others to assist them in communicating on a daily basis. These students' requirements far exceed what the policy hopes to achieve and that is to give these adults

a reasonable level of basic skills. No consideration was made within the policy for adult learners who completely lack literacy skills. Even though catering to individual needs is a policy goal shared by both the institutional administrators and the policy makers, teachers feel that for illiterate newcomers the policy and the institutional programmes are unsuccessful at achieving it.

For the teachers, defining the term *appropriate* is a problem. They view the programme offerings as appropriate but do not feel that the twenty-week time limit imposed on the students is sufficient. Marlene, a Low/Intermediate Level teacher, discusses what appropriate content of programmes should be and how the constraint of time limits creates problems:

> Appropriate programmes meet the basic skills of
> adult learners. A twenty week programme is
> perhaps not long enough for some adult learners
> to get them to a basic skills' level. They are sort of
> scratching the surface at twenty weeks. (TDM, p. 7)

She explains what she sees happening to her students in the programmes at the institution:

> Some people start at a certain level and do not
> improve that much within the twenty weeks
> because you know language is a skill that some
> people are gifted at learning and some people are
> not. (TDM, p. 4)

For Intermediate to Advanced Level students, the teachers agree that those people achieve enough basic skills to function and deal with the requirements of daily living. Annette, a long-time teacher at the institution, explains why the Special Basic programme does not fulfill the policy goals:

> I do not feel that our programme has a lot to offer.
> This sounds awfully negative.... The programme
> promotes light conversation, a little bit on
> vocabulary development but, students do not
> leave our programme with the skills needed to
> feel confident enough to do much with that
> language. They have only 20 weeks.(TL, p. 5)

She suggests reasons why the programme is offered even though she feels it does not accomplish much in terms of providing basic skills. She attempts to provide possible solutions to this problem:

> It makes us a bit more marketable that we can
> have a programme with a curriculum developed
> for everybody from the illiterate to the advanced
> level. But, I cannot see how any student with 20
> weeks who is totally illiterate, never been to
> school a day in their lives, can achieve that. We
> almost need to build another component into our
> programme whereby after 20 weeks they are placed
> in some kind of a job whether it be cleaning or a
> workplace type project where learning can
> continue. (TL, p. 5)

Even though some of the institutional programmes have their shortcomings, the teachers and administrators agree with the policy makers that programme offerings are appropriate from the perspective of providing a wide variety and range of programme offerings. This wide range of programme offerings allows the institution to provide opportunities for all students to access E.S.L. and satisfy their educational needs. Sherry, a teacher, reflects this notion:

> The materials are good in the sense that they are
> geared to the level of the student whether they are
> beginning, intermediate, or at the more advanced
> level. (TV, p. 5)

Here, the policy makers' goal of ensuring the provision of appropriate
prograr   -ings is consistent with the programme goals. There
are prog. ...   n place to suit all levels. Jack, a policy maker, defines
what his gr.   means by *appropriate*:

> Appropriate is one of those nice undefined terms
> but I think that in the sense of what we are
> looking for is to match the situation to the
> student, or the teaching situation to the situation
> of the student. That should be an over riding
> primary consideration. (PM1, p. 18)

Conclusions.

To summarize, policy goals are reflected in programme goals
depending on whose perspective is being evaluated. For policy makers,
the policy goal to provide a wide range of appropriate programming for
all levels of educational ability is satisfied by the type of programmes
offered at the institutional level.

Conversely, teachers have a differing opinion when it comes to
defining the term appropriate from an educational perspective. They
believe that students are not given the appropriate time to acquire basic
skills and therefore the programme structure is not appropriate. Fullan
(1991) suggests a reason for this:

> Teachers are uncertain about how to influence
> students, especially about non-cognitive goals, and
> even about whether they are having an influence;
> ... teaching decisions are often made on pragmatic
> trial-and-error grounds with little chance for
> reflection or thinking through the rationale; ...
> they constantly feel the critical shortage of time. (p.
> 33)

Third Subsidiary Question - Understanding ↳ ↗ Institutional Objectives, Individual Goals ↗ Practitioners and ↗ Goals Differ or are Similar

The policy establishes several goal aimed at promoting the concept of adult development. For them to be implemented successfully one of the prerequisites is to ensure that institutional objectives and individual practitioner's goals are not undermined in the process. The third subsidiary question addresses this concern: *How do policy goals become reinterpreted into workable programmes that fit institutional objectives and the individual goals of the practitioners implementing the policy?*

The institutional mission statement reveals the institutional objectives:

> To ensure that the quality and accessibility of its
> specified services are developed and maintained to
> provide: educational, skill training and service
> initiatives responsive to local, regional and
> provincial needs. Specifically the [institution] focuses
> on training requirements of persons with special
> needs and therefore will endeavour to: Provide
> programs and services designed to enhance the
> capabilities of adult Albertans to participate in the
> social and economic development of the
> Province.(Institutional Development Plan, 1988, pp.
> 1-2)

Here, it states that the institution aims at providing programmes for "persons with special needs" so as to "enhance the capabil es of [these] adult Albertans to participate in the social and economic development of the Province." This is similar to the *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) goal which emphasizes

> providing consistent direction for meeting the
> learning and development needs of individual
> adults with low basic skills, and for meeting social
> and economic demands for informed and
> participative citizens. (p. 1)

Major Findings

The goals and objectives of both the institution and the policy
parallel each other. So, the institution and its programmes can be
viewed as the concept of adult development in action. Study data
reveals that the main participants in the policy environment - the
teachers – have significantly similar goals except that th , do not
believe that the current status of adult basic educational development
is effective in achieving these.

Teachers believe that not all students are gaining the necessary
skills required to become fully participating members of canadian
society. They blame part of this problem on several factors, in
particular, on the length and structure of the programmes and the
diminishing quality of instruction students are receiving. To them
policy makers and institutional administrators' goals are idealistic and
unattainable unless there are positive steps taken toward supporting
what they promise to achieve. Teachers offer proof of this belief in the
adjectives they use such as *utopic* and *unrealistic* to refer to the policy
makers' and administrators' goals. The teachers, blame part of this
problem on the length and structure of the programmes and also on
the quality of instruction students are receiving.

Teachers attribute the decrease in quality of instruction to the
fact that they are so busy trying to maintain their jobs and justify their
existence that they are not able to expend the time and effort required
to provide quality teaching. They blame this predicament on the
constant need to prove their worthiness for employment purposes.
Their jobs can be terminated at any time if there are insufficient
student enrolments. Marlene, a teacher, describes her frustrations:

> What is it like teaching here? A lot of people are
> very frustrated about the insecurity of their
> position, myself included. We don't know until a
> couple of weeks before our last day if we're going
> to be given another contract. Even when we're in
> the first few days of a new session, when they're
> testing students, if there were a lot of no shows
> then somebody might be laid off. (TDM, p. 1)

Annette, another teacher, adds to this by describing how teachers are
forced into taking certain actions in order to sustain active
employment within the institution:

> The approach taken in letting people go is one that
> everyone considers unfair. Seniority is not
> considered and ... criteria that would not normally be
> the norm is being used. It leaves people feeling
> uncomfortable in terms of security and of the level at
> which they want to work. Now, they are jumping
> around getting experience at all levels strictly for this
> new system called 'Checkmark.' It does not
> necessarily bring out the best in people. In the past,
> people frequently requested to work at certain levels
> because ... they would like to take on a new
> challenge. Now, people are jumping around like
> rabbits to get check marks and in the long run that's
> not going to serve our programme well. (TL, p. 1)

She points out how and why the quality of instruction is compromised
as a result of this 'check mark' system. From Annette's comments, it
can be concluded that she believes that teachers need to have freedom
over their own decisions to pursue challenges and their own
professional development without worrying about keeping their jobs.
Undeniably, according to her and several other teachers, the system
which exists and the insecurity around the employment issue does not
promote quality programming. Annette, a teacher, suggests why there
has been this significant shift

at one stage we were really promoting excellence and
now the strategy is a marketing one.... I feel it is no
longer focused on excellence but on quantity.(TL, p.
3)

Conclusions.

The data reveal that the teachers' goals are definitely similar to
those of the policy makers and institutional administrators in that they
too wish to develop adults with special needs into participative citizens
of society. The only difference is that teachers do not believe that
current programmes' structure and emphasis are achieving that
intended goal.

Teachers want their students to receive a quality educational
programme which allows them to acquire the basic skills needed to
function effectively in society. Until the teachers come to view the
policy as a concrete change for the better, non-implementation will be
the result.

Final Subsidiary Question - Problems at the Interpretation Stage and How these Influence Decisions Made in Developing Appropriate Programmes

The data analysis reveals there are problems at the interpretation
stage of the policy. But, there are also conflicting respondents' roles,
values, and perspectives that influence how effective the policy will be
in determining the development of future programmes. Answering
the final subsidiary question -- *What are the problems presented by the
policy in question at the interpretation stage and ultimately how do
these problems influence the decisions made in developing the
appropriate programmes?* -- helps to clarify why the policy may have
little effect on present and future programmes.

Major Findings

Each group's values and roles creates problems at the interpretation stage. Obviously, none of the groups have had any experience attempting to implement the policy. Teachers are not aware that the policy exists nor were any efforts made by the administrators to set aside any time for discussing it or its implications for teaching. Fullan (1991) suggests that policy as change requires advocacy:

> Initiation of change never occurs without an advocate, and one of the most powerful is the chief district administrator, with his or her staff. (p. 54)

The main reason for this is obvious to Fullan (1991)

> teachers as a group have less opportunity to come into contact with new ideas and less time and energy to follow through on those that they do become aware of. (p. 55)

Jason, the administrator directly responsible for directing the teachers, accepts the blame for not being an advocate of the policy:

> I see it as my fault maybe I should have pushed it. To say hey this is what ultimately we're all about but leaving it on the lunchroom table maybe is not enough. I am not a practitioner so, pushing government policy, not that I don't agree with it but, I am not good at it. Maybe, I need in-service in it.... Part of this is information overload, we have so many documents floating around. Twice weekly I get bulletins from the federal department of immigration. Do I put those on the dining room table? ... How do we get citizens to be cognizant of all issues? Maybe we cannot or maybe it is the way we do it and maybe the print medium is wrong.... Well, there has to be a personal touch. (AJ, pp. 10-11)

This failure to pass on information or to discuss the policy's implications creates differences in how it is interpreted and stifles a

shared understanding of the policy intent. The differing themes elicited from the analysis of the data demonstrate that each group has varying perspectives.

In some instances the policy creates new problems in that the practitioners, the teachers, see their programmes being threatened by these changes. This is evident in the comments they make relating to the creation of partnerships with other institutions and with the private sector. Teachers and administrators are working so hard at maintaining the fiscal health of their institution and its programmes that they view sharing of resources as an erosion of their own jobs.

The fear of loss of jobs and programmes is an overriding concern for teachers and administrators. This poses a problem in the implementation of the fourth policy statement which advocates the pooling of resources throughout the province to provide better basic adult education. For this fear to disappear, demonstrated examples of successful partnerships in action and a common shared understanding of the rationale for this type of activity are essential. Accordingly, the practitioners, must come to view partnerships as having a positive effect on practice.

At present, because teachers were not made aware of the policy there is nothing to indicate how future decisions will be made to develop appropriate programmes. This study reveals how the three groups interpret policy. With this information predictions can be made about how that will affect future decisions regarding programme development in this area.

Conclusions.

The differing ways in which the three respondent groups interpret the policy statements reflects the values, goals and roles each of them plays in the policy environment. The differences alone create problems when making important decisions regarding programme development. To a large degree, financial, programme structure, and

time constraints pose problems for the way in which the policy is interpreted.

Practitioners – the teachers – view the policy's intended outcomes from a practical "trial and error" perspective as they operate in the real world everyday testing theory. They are the ones who put theory into practice.

Final Conclusion

In conclusion, policy makers need to dialogue closely with those who are to implement policy at all the stages, not just at the developmental phase. In this study the major constraint was that the three groups studied had different interpretations of what was meant by the policy statements. In some instances, however, there was consensus on what the policy meant. This common understanding of some of the policy statements or parts of them does not necessarily result in the intended positive benefits for the adult basic educational environment, in particular in this case study, adult E.S.L. for newcomers. It is evident in the data that the teachers suspect that the policy makers have an agenda which does not necessarily reflect theirs. Keith, one of the teachers, asks a series of reflective questions pondering why the policy makers seem unaware of the problems encountered by the classroom teacher:

> I would like to know about it. I wonder how much
> feedback or how many teachers have had a say in
> it. Do they know what's going on? Do they know
> the problems that we're having in our classes?
> (TW, p. 9)

To avoid this type of thinking, it is important for policy makers to realize that policy making requires more than having a few teacher representatives provide input at the development stage of policy.

Also, policy makers cannot presume that stating the underlying assumptions of the policy statements add clarity to the document. As a

result problems are encountered in misrepresentation of intended outcomes and misinterpretation of the statements as the document is read by those who must implement it. What is needed is a shared understanding between those implementing and those policy players who designed policy. This understanding is acquired through a shared dialogue over a period of time. Written words often do not answer the questions that they evoke in the reader.

To avoid these problems, policy makers should view policy not as a one-shot event but rather as a process. Crane (1988) metaphorically describes what the process ought to be like:

> The process is akin to remodeling a building while people are still using it; redesign and reconfiguration need to be carefully staged to keep the building functional. (p. 15)

A policy such as the one studied should be a living document rather than a single event imposed on policy players. Imposing the policy on the practitioners, without consultation, is dysfunctional in terms of achieving important goals. Bond (1994) sums up the importance of flexibility in policy making and implementation:

> The more flexible a policy, the more effective it can be for long periods of time. The more easily words convey meaning, the more likely there will be agreement on major issues; ... Much depends on the personalities of interpreters and implementors. .... Language and process are intertwined. (p. 15)

Recommendations

Recommendations which resulted from the findings are of most importance to those who develop and design policy. In this case study there were several recommendations which support pursuing a philosophy of policy development which views policymaking and

implementation as a process rather than an event (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984).

Recommendation #1

There was much discrepancy in how the three respondent groups interpreted several of the policy statements in order to avoid this there must be dialogue between all three groups about how the policy will and should affect them. As a result it is imperative that all policy players should have a shared understanding of what the policy statements mean so that meaningful change can result (Fullan, 1991). Conflicts may arise in gaining a common understanding but that should be planned for in the policy's development so that all who must implement it have ownership of the process. Sometimes, differing perspectives lead to disagreements which in turn may result in a better and improved policy which aids and benefits those it is intended to benefit. Perhaps the policy makers should follow Fullan's advice (1991):

> *Understand the subjective world - the*
> *phenomenology - of the role incumbents as a*
> *necessary precondition for engaging in any change*
> *effort with them* (author's emphasis). (p. 131) (p.
> 181)

Recommendation #2

Policy makers must realize that policy that interferes or attempts to change the belief systems of those who must implement it is less effective than one consistent with their beliefs. In order to alleviate this major constraint to successful implementation, belief systems of all the policy players should be considered in the development of the policy. These beliefs should be central in the minds of policy makers when they are in the design phase and they should ensure that the policy can be mutually adapted to suit the needs of all those involved in that policy environment (Berman, 1980). In this case study, successful and

meaningful implementation will only occur when the teachers' beliefs change or when they come to view the policy as a concrete change for the better. This means ensuring that there is more flexibility in the policy and that teachers take on a major ongoing role in both the development of the policy and its implementation.

Recommendatio #3

In order f the policy to effect positive change the perspectives of all the policy players and the roles they play must be understood and this information must be used in the policy's development (Bohac, 1989). This will ensure that all policy players are properly informed and that gatekeeping roles administrators play do not result in communication breakdowns and misinformed policy players. This breakdown leads to policy non-implementation (Tushman, 1977). To eliminate this from happening policy makers must inform all levels in the policy environment and understand the structure of the organizations in which the policy players operate (Dunn, 1981; Bosetti, 1990).

Recommendation #4

Policy makers must understand how policy will be implemented in order to understand how it will operate. For this to happen policy makers must empower practitioners -- the teachers -- to test the policy's merit on a trial basis. Policy makers must be flexible enough to allow the policy to adapt to suit the needs of those it is intended to affect in a positive manner. If practitioners are not empowered to effect meaningful change in the policy it will be partially implemented or not at all. Processes must be established in order for policy players to test, understand and change the policy. Crane (1988) believes that to ensure success in such processes all policy players need to:

Develop a common language and conceptual picture of the processes and goals of change among diverse stakeholders (author's emphasis). Once stakeholders can see the issues and perspectives of the others, they are better positioned to take actions that will support and enhance others' specific situations. (p. 192)

Recommendation #5

It is recommended that policymaking not be opportunistic but rather be geared toward solving significant problems (Berman & McLaughlin, 1976). The type of policymaking found in this case study provides little in the way of positive change or solutions to ongoing problems in the policy environment. In this policy environment the most pressing problem that leads to ineffective partnerships with other institutions, a decline in the quality of instruction, insufficient support for some of the students, and partial achievement of educational goals is the temporary nature of both the programmes and the staff who maintain them. Continual instability in the educational environment and ad hoc development of programmes creates both real and perceived problems which policy implementers believe will not be solved or changed by the current policy. The practitioners -- the teachers -- demonstrate the least amount of faith in whether anything will change to improve the plight of adult basic education. Until the problem of an unstable environment is resolved, the current policy will do little for improving practice.

Recommendation #6

In order to address the idea of mutually adaptable policymaking it is recommended that technological media such as the Internet be used to effect better implementation and development of policy. Networks which allow users to discuss and impact on decision-making in policymaking may impact positively in dealing with the common

problem of misinterpreted policy statements and ultimate mass confusion.

The Future of Adult Basic Education

The adult basic educational system can achie.. public merit if policy makers will reform the policy and reconside.. the principles they used to design the policy — *Foundations for Adult Learning and Development Policy* (November 1991). These principles are significant in that they have educational value for all those interviewed in this study. All three principles — individual learner context, changing learning needs, and shared responsibility — promote a philosophy of lifelong learning (Alberta Advanced Education, 1991, pp. 9-10).

However, this promise to promote and instill in adult learners a desire for lifelong learning is one which teachers disbelieve. They feel that many of their students leave the institution unable to fulfill that desire because they do not gain a foundation of basic skills required to continue learning. According to the teachers, current programmes do not supply an adequate level of education required by students to move into other levels of learning E.S.L.

The E.S.L. programmes as they exist will do little for those students aspiring to become functioning and fully participating members of their new society. They need far more basic education. This problem of ensuring that students have equitable opportunities to access programmes appropriate to their individual learning needs is a difficult one. The situation will not be remedied by the policy because it does not address the problems existent within the adult basic education system. Until the system changes and adult basic education is valued as a meritorious public service by those who fund it and guide it, nothing will change, and the guiding principles outlined in the policy will not become reality.

Therefore the question remains as to whether policy such as this one — a policy of intent — will ever have an impact on the system of education presently in place. Data analysis and the findings

demonstrate that the policy will have little or no impact on the situation existing in adult E.S.L. programmes for newcomers.

Policy makers should have considered more closely the real barriers to implementation. In this case, the main barrier to policy implementation is the unstable and ever-changing nature of the environment of basic adult education. This is a challenge that requires that all policy players be involved in policy development in order to resolve some of the issues created by the environment itself. Until policy makers face this challenge, as they design and develop policy, they will be unsuccessful in their efforts to effect significant and meaningful change for students accessing adult E.S.L. programmes for newcomers.

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Appendix A

June 10, 1992

Dr. M. Andrews
President
Alberta Vocational College
Downtown Campus
Edmonton, Alberta

Dear Dr. Andrews,

This is a formal request to conduct research and collect data relating to the E.S.L. programme for adults held at your Winniferd Stewart Campus. I have included with this letter a copy of the dissertation proposal approved by my supervisory committee consisting of Dr. Ken Ward, Dr. Don Richards, and Dr. Jim Parsons. I have recently been informed by my advisor, Dr. Ken Ward, that the Ethics Review Committee has also approved the proposal. The case study involves the recent policy document - *Foundations for adult learning and development policy* (1991) issued by Alberta Advanced Education Ministry, and observing how it has been transformed into programming. Implementation of the policy and how it has been interpreted into viable and working programmes will be the focus of the investigation.

I am interested in observing and interviewing both your administrative staff who oversee the programmes and also those who teach them. Staff will be formally asked to participate in the study via a letter and if they agree they will be asked to comply to a one hour interview, a limited amount of time for observations in their classrooms and a subsequent review of their interviews. I would like your response as soon as possible due to the fact that I would like to commence collecting data in the next intake period of July and August. The period of data collection will entail the ten-week period and I promise to in no way interfere or disrupt the programmes as they are operating. The study as it is devised will pose no harm to the institution nor its members. I appreciate your time in this matter and hope that this endeavour will be approved. If you have any further questions please feel free to ask by calling me at 456-1129 or 456-6558.

Sincerely,

Anna Clyburn

Request for Participants

Dear E.S.L. Programme Staff,

My name is Anna Clyburn and I am a PhD student at the University of Alberta in the Department of Educational Administration. In order to answer my general research question I must collect data based on my investigation. My area of interest involves E.S.L. for adults and implementation of policy which affects this type of programming. I am asking you to give me some of your time for a one hour interview and the possible observation of your classes.

My study proposal has been approved by both my supervisory committee, the University Ethics Review Committee, and your administrative staff. These measures I have taken are to ensure that the study is viable and **does not harm any individuals or the institution**. My study is not evaluative, instead its purpose is to look at how policy is interpreted into programmes. The policy document used for the study is Advanced Education's *Foundations for Adult Learning and Development Policy*. I am researching how individuals interpret policy statements and whether those are reflected in the programmes they teach.

If you become a participant you are guaranteed that any dialogue between you and I is kept as strictly confidential. I am the sole person who will have access to the interview's audio tapes and observational notes. Not only are the interviews confidential but, so too, are participants' names not to be included in the text of the study. The procedure is as follows:
1. Approval from participant
2. Appointment made to suit individual needs and schedules.
3. Interview - Questions relating to policy (listed on next page)
4. Post-Interview (a few weeks after interview) - I will give you a copy of the dialogue so that you can make changes or eliminate material from the typed transcription.

For observations:
For those of you who grant me access to your classrooms, I will observe you interacting with the students and teaching your programme. Remember, I am not there to evaluate your performance but merely to fulfill my research requirements. I would appreciate it if ideally I could spend an entire day with you but if you find it too intrusive half a day would be fine. I will

not interfere with your teaching and you may ask me to leave at any point.

The purpose of this study is to learn more about the area of policy implementation in adult E.S.L. In other words, this study is interpretive and not evaluative of either the practitioners or the programmes. I would be delighted if you could become part of this interesting research. I chose AVC and the E.S.L. programmes at Winniferd Stewart Campus because I had an opportunity to teach here about three years ago and enjoyed it. I have included in this information package the list of questions I will be asking during the interview so that you are aware of the nature of this study. I will be conducting these interviews in the months of July and August. If you decide to participate you will be asked to set up a one hour interview and if you do not mind an additional half day for classroom observations. If you do not wish to be observed but only interviewed it is your prerogative. If you have any questions please feel free to call me and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Questions

General Research Question:

How do policies that regulate full-time English as a second language programmes for adult immigrants in Alberta become interpreted and operationalized in an adult educational institution?

Questions for the Interview

1. What does the phrase "learning is a lifelong responsibility" mean to you in this institution?

What do the following statements mean to you as an instructor/administrator and how do they relate to your programmes?

1. "The Government of Alberta will provide adult Albertans, who so desire, reasonable and equitable access to programmes that establish a foundation of basic skills."

2. "The Government of Alberta will provide appropriate programmes to meet the basic skills needs of adult learners."

3. "The Government of Alberta will facilitate the provision of student support services and will ensure that a reasonable level of financial support is provided to those otherwise unable to participate in adult development programmes because of financial barriers."

4. "The Government of Alberta will encourage cooperation, collaboration, and the formation of partnerships between and among the public, private and voluntary sectors in the delivery of adult development programmes."

5. "The Government of Alberta will promote the Foundations for Adult Learning and Development concept and provide information about the availability of adult development programmes and services."

Thank you for your time

Anna Clyburn