

POSTSECONDARY DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR
PERSPECTIVES WITHIN AN INTEGRATED READING AND
WRITING DEPARTMENT AT A COMMUNITY COLLEGE SETTING

by

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all four of my parents and my two children. Thank you for your unconditional love and support for my whole life.

I share this success with you all.

In the words of Kennedy Bailey, I know God loves me because He gave me to y'all.

But they that wait on the Lord will renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they will run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:31

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I presented a case study investigating the perspectives of postsecondary developmental education instructors in an Integrated Reading and Writing (INRW) program of a community college in the Southwest United States. I hypothesized that instructors in this Integrated Reading and Writing Department at this community college would indicate the need for more affective learning methods to effectively teach the students from varied backgrounds and learning deficiencies. The research question centered on how community college instructors and administrators perceived their department meeting the students' needs in assisting them in becoming more proficient students.

Keywords: Postsecondary, developmental education, Integrated Reading and Writing, INRW, affective learning, psychosocial methods, community college, faculty perspectives, responsive pedagogy

I. INTRODUCTION

In the United States, lower levels of literacy have resulted in a call for action by various educational professionals (Kudliskis & Burdern, 2009; Moje, 2008). Kudliskis and Burden specifically called for solutions between instructors and students that will create positive outcomes and growth. Postsecondary education with affective learning can introduce skilled and focused trajectories that could lead to positive educational experiences. Affective learning strategies could help to increase student retention, avoiding possible negative consequences such as being “underprepared for either college or the workforce and consequently suffer[ing] poorer job prospects, worse health, and higher incarceration rates than people who complete high school” (Paunesku, Walton, Romero, Smith, Yeager, & Dweck, 2015, p. 784). For students who want to avoid these potential consequences, affective learning strategies in postsecondary developmental courses may be a solution.

Statement of the Problem

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES), a division of the U.S. Department of Education, created the Reading for Understanding Research Initiative. The IES asked researchers to submit ideas for teaching reading strategies, and the IES set four major universities, the Ohio State University, Florida State University, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Illinois at Chicago, to tackle six areas of research. Reporting on the progress of this study, Douglas and Albro (2014) stated, “The need to improve reading for understanding for students who are not reading at grade level is particularly urgent as many of these students continue to fall further behind as they progress through school” (p. 356). If these students had not been given other opportunities to improve reading skills, their under preparedness would have created a trajectory that continued into postsecondary arenas affecting other outcomes

such as mastering literacy, self-motivation, and retention.

In my positions as a Teaching Assistant, Instructional Assistant, Instructional Associate, and Adjunct Professor in a community college setting, every semester, I encounter students with lower levels of literacy. These adults, mostly recent high-school graduates, arrive in developmental reading and writing courses with reading and writing levels ranging from second grade to ninth grade; however, my own observations can identify that the majority of these students have literacy levels between sixth and ninth grade. Hurst and Pearman (2013) discussed how “reading instruction typically stops at sixth grade, and once that instruction stops, the reading seems to as well” (p. 226). Hurst and Pearman (2013) further explained student’s secondary environments do not support the maintained need for reading and writing lessons, which would prepare students for postsecondary success, as the reasons that students do not progress in reading and writing as they age and move into higher grades. Students would then need to sustain reading and writing instruction while in secondary institutions for exposure and acquisition of higher literacy levels and opportunities for success in postsecondary surroundings.

Literacy is the ability to read and write, but this definition is insufficient, as reading involves complex processes of the brain, and “it includes a dynamic view of how culture, language, social interaction, social practices, and one’s environment mediate literacy and learning” (Ordonez-Jasis & Jasis, 2011, p. 190). Comprehension is a key to reading ability. However, before comprehension can be achieved, students should be able to infer meaning embedded in the text. Comprehension and inferencing abilities go hand-in-hand, and the acquired skill of making inferences makes readers stronger (Cheng, 2009; Nokes, 2008; Carlson, van den Broek, McMaster, Rapp, Bohn-Gettler, Kendeou, & White, 2014; BarreYRO, Cevasco, Burin,

& Marotto, 2012; Bos, De Koning, Wassenburg & van der Schoot, 2016; Baretta, Tomitch, MacNair, Lim, & Waldie, 2009). There seems to be enough research on inference generation, yet not all educators see the importance or know how to instruct students and give them the benefits to improve life for struggling readers. Inferences can help students because they take the tacit knowledge in a student's repertoire of knowledge funds and create explicit knowledge they can use across various curriculums (Elbro & Bush-Iversen, 2013). For this reason, an adaptation for curriculums where educators could help their students gain new skills and insights into their own metacognition to become stronger readers is needed.

Cultivating these reading skills, turning them into knowledge for application and usage across disciplines, effectuates reading and writing, which reinforces understanding because knowledge of letters, words, and sentences do not automatically ensure comprehension. And, in reference to one of IESs research areas that incorporated comprehension, Douglas and Albro (2014) explained that the second purpose of the Reading for Understand Initiative is "to help all students read with better understanding [because] there is a particular urgency to helping *struggling comprehenders*" (p. 346). Students who have lower literacy and students who struggle to comprehend need strong reading and writing skills with the "dynamic views" of responsive pedagogies.

For decades, researchers (Hamilton, Nolen, & Abbott, 2013; Mason, Davison, Hamner, Miller, & Glutting, 2012; McCartney, Boyle, & Ellis, 2015; Pacello, 2014; Paunesku et al., 2015; Yang & Plakans, 2012) have investigated ways to develop reading strategies that create stronger readers and writers. Some of the interventions these researchers have presented helped students to progress; however, the achievements they made did not address the lower literacy issues of developmental

students who could benefit from more affective learning versus a “drill and kill” methodology. Academic transformations require understanding why students perform certain ways through education, and with affective learning methods, these transformations might occur more frequently (Paunesku et al., 2015). Paunesku et al. only provides one solution to a complex problem. Another requirement is that students with a willingness to open up to a class and instructor, who allow themselves the opportunity to make mistakes, and who can accept feedback could have the prospect to increase their metacognitive processes with longer strides towards transitions that would situate them in spaces where opportunities could reach them (Taheri & Jadidi, 2016). Affective learning could provide an atmosphere where students feel more willing to open up and better situate themselves in education. These transformation are what Moje (2008), in her “Call for Change,” explained how “teachers and administrators are aware of the need to do something different in classrooms” (p. 97-98) that can provide greater outcomes and assist in postsecondary retention.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative multi-case study involved understanding the perceptions of faculty and administrators working at a community college in the Southwest. Perspectives of educators are valid data points of research because of their direct involvement with students and their interactions with all areas of educational programs (MacArthur, Philippakos, & Ianetta, 2014; Fisher & Frey, 2013; Kosnik, Menna, Dharamshi, Miyata, & Beck, 2015; Witmer, Schmitt, Clinton, & Mathes, 2017). The instructors and administrators in this INRW Department hold information about the internal workings of the program and how the students matriculate through the various levels within the department. Their first-hand

knowledge could provide an understanding to how the program is meeting its goals in a more humanistic approach than surveys or student tracking. The goal of my study was to explore faculty and administrators' perceptions of developmental literacy within an Integrated Reading and Writing (INRW) Department. I conducted research to hear and understand the voices of developmental literacy educators in an integrated reading and writing program at a postsecondary community college.

Mandates for course changes, department restructuring, or acceptable assessment cut-off scores often came from state legislatures, board of directors, and top-tier administrators who had no contact to minimal daily contact with students in developmental community college classrooms, research studies, or faculty who met with students every day. Because of this top-down reform, instructors held varied understandings of department policies and methods of instruction they needed to use for their students. My research focused on instructors perceptions involved in teaching literacy and assisting students in persisting through INRW courses for achieving future goals of college-level coursework.

The central problem explored faculty perceptions of developmental literacy education, specifically teaching with affective and psychosocial methods within an integrated reading and writing developmental educational curriculum. Psychosocial methods included but were not limited to mind-sets formation, mental visualizations, reframing of ideas, changing states of mind and being, modeling, and effective motivational techniques. All of these methods worked in conjunction to guide one's thinking into deeper metacognitive abilities. The following research question guided my study. How do community college instructors and administrators perceive their developmental literacy education program and how does the program meet students' needs in assisting them to become more proficient in literacy? The data for the

research study consisted of a demographic questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews. I interviewed the community college faculty within the integrated reading and writing developmental education department.

The Setting

The setting for my study was an urban community college in the Southwestern United States that began offering educational opportunities in 1973. This college repurposed and utilized an old high school to create its first campus. With nominal in-district tuition and the success of its first campus, the community college expanded with campuses throughout the city, which led to ten campuses and one under construction as of spring 2018.

Based on the composition of this college's profile between the years of 2011-2015 the student population increased from 22.08% to 23.49% of full-time students who attempted between 12.89 hours and 13.03 hours. The part-time student population increased from 76.51% to 78.28% of students who attempted 6.04 hours to 6.12 hours. The profile indicated the college's total student population was over 41,000 students in all the campuses combined. At the point of this study, the majority of students were part-time, indicating the need for flexible schedules and evening classes to allow adult students to maintain part- and full-time employment, which assist retention. As of 2017, the field site's profile included students who were 55.02% female, 44.98% male, 44.42% White, 31.99% Hispanic, 7.10% Black, 4.72% Asian-American, indicating a diverse population.

The Instructors at the Community College

As of 2018, the instructors who make up this community college's faculty were less diverse than the student populations. Demographically, the faculty was predominately White, 36-50 years of age, female, and held a master's degree. College-

wide, over seventy percent of the faculty, as a group, was adjunct professors. The research for this thesis included the faculty and administration of a newly merged department, now called the Integrated Reading and Writing Department (INRW) of this community college. The participant sub-section of this study provides more information about these faculty members.

Table 1. Reporting Participants' Gender

Participants' Gender	
Females	Males
11	3

Table 2. Reporting Participants' Age Range

Participants' Age	
Range of Age	Participants in Range
31-40 years of age	1
41-50 years of age	2
51-60 years of age	3
61-70 years of age	6
71-80 years of age	2

Table 3. Professional Roles Held by Participants

Professional Roles of Participants		
Role	Degree or Range	Participants' in Role of Degree or Range
Highest Degree	Master's	10
	Doctorate (ABD)	2
	Doctorate	2
Years in Current Role at Community College	<1	1
	4-9	1
	10-20	1
	21-30	5
	31-40	5
	41-50	1
Years in Developmental Education, Literacy	<1	1
	4-9	1
	10-20	1
	21-30	5
	31-40	6
Years Teaching Post-Secondary Education	<1	1
	4-9	2
	21-30	5
	31-40	5
	41-50	1

Terminology

The following operational definitions are relevant for the purposes of this thesis study. Ultimately, these terms are complex and more involved than the scope of this thesis. These terms are used primarily in the literature section of this thesis and are defined here to introduce terminology not part of everyday vernacular.

Affective domains and instruction: Areas and methods that cultivate supportive and nurturing environments for students to build toward greater progress in education. Green and Batool (2017) explain “the affective domain incites and inspires students’ engagement and secures their cooperation towards learning” (p. 35).

DRP: Degrees of Reading Power. It is a standardized test given in the field site’s INRW Department. The results of this test are used to track student progress. It is expected that developmental literacy students who do well on this exam will be able to do well in college-level courses.

Emotional intelligence: An individual’s intelligence level based on an emotional quotient. Individuals with high emotional intelligence have “the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior” (Ebrahimi, Khoshsim, & Zane-Behtash, 2018, p. 574).

Experiential interpretation: An understanding used in qualitative research that seeks comprehension of an instance or event through the examination of the experience being observed. This method was the “inquiry for promoting understanding...[that] researchers have pressed for understanding the complex interrelationships among all that exists” (Stake, 1995, p. 37).

First generational students: Students who are the first in their families to attend college.

Grit: A characteristic of a person’s personality to endure difficult circumstances for achieving a desired outcome. Hodge, Wright, and Bennett (2018) explain grit as having “a direct effect upon productivity and engagement, the path of association is best illustrated as grit-engagement-productivity” (p. 456).

Inference: A coherent thought process of connections of information within a sentence, passage, or text.

Judgments of inferences (JOIs): Decisions students make about the coherent reflections they piece together in efforts to comprehend texts (Nguyen & McDaniel, 2016).

Psychosocial methods: These methods include but are not limited to mind-sets formation, mental visualizations, reframing of ideas, changing states of mind and being, modeling, and effective motivational techniques. These are some methods that work in conjunction to guide one's thinking into deeper metacognitive abilities.

Reframing: Changing an individual's perspective to an event (Kudliskis, 2013). Reframing remains an important tool to aid the mind in making crucial changes.

Responsive pedagogy: A method of pursuing greater educational relationships with students by putting their instructive needs as primary systems in order to provide an individualized teaching. Goodhew and Robertson (2017) add "teachers attend to the meaning that students are making of their disciplinary experiences, assuming a stance of seeking to understand rather than evaluating" (p. 1).

RFU: Reading for understanding. It is a standardized reading test that is used within this community college's INRW Department in conjunction with the TSI to create a better picture of the student's literacy capabilities.

Students experiencing educational marginalization: Postsecondary students who are not able to entirely participate, with equality, in all areas of life, particularly in social realms where there is a difference between those from a high or low socioeconomic status, a status that is created by a richness of resources or a need for more available opportunities.

Students transitioning from high school to college: Students who completed a high school diploma and want to go to a community college or four-year university.

TSI: A state success initiative standardized test given to all incoming students. The results of this exam are placers for students being required to take developmental education courses or being exempt from developmental education courses and able to take college-level courses.

Visualizations: Guided mental exercises to create focus of attention and calming states of mind (Kudliskis, 2013; p. 88) in order for an affective learning environment to have its full effect.

Limitations of this Study

In this study, I foresaw four threats to validity. The first internal threat to validity was the experimenter effect because of the relationships between the faculty, administration, and me, as the researcher. Participants in this study were familiar with me from my years within the department in varying roles; therefore, faculty might have shown some biases when answering my interview questions. The second potential internal validity threat was closely related to the first threat of experimenter effect, because I might emphasize certain aspects of questions to elicit a certain response. I avoided this threat by closely adhering to the interview protocol.

At the time of this study, the department recently transitioned into one INRW Department from two separate departments of reading and writing. This merger occurred because trends in education were moving stand-alone courses of reading and of writing into one integrated course. The state where the community college of this study is located had a House Bill 2223 that handed down a mandate for these two stand-alone departments to merge into a new INRW Department. Because of this department merger, participants may see interviews as a way to push their own

agenda, which might pose as potential threats to subjective validity in terms of offering authentic responses. I maintained confidentiality with my protocol and did not share any information with participants at the field site. These possible threats are identified and specified because no intentional risks were taken during this study.

Researcher's Positionality

In my undergraduate education at a Huston-Tillotson University, a Historically Black College/University (HBCU), I made friends with students who overcame obstacles, educational marginalization, and advanced with academic success. From the point of my experiences and encounters with students, I understand Gee's (2003) comments about how students "were willing to see themselves in terms of a new identity, that is, to see themselves as the kind of person who can learn, use, and value the new semiotic domains" (p. 54). I visualized the process of students discovering new semiotic domains of literacy, leading to greater understandings in academic areas and increasing students' mental funds of knowledge associated with those areas.

I wanted to study increases in semiotic domains and funds of knowledge working together in ways that Moje (2008) explained as important methods for "students to hone their metadiscursive skills" (p. 103) because when students are aware that their knowledge is transferable to many curriculums and communities, they become higher in their own "social positioning and larger power relations" (Moje, 2008, p. 103) and move out of their perceived marginalized realm. Alexander (2006) affirms that literacy "permits individuals to deepen their understanding of other critical domains of knowledge" (p. 414). This "honing" and deepening of students' "understanding of other critical domains of knowledge" are the reasons that I am committed to helping those with lower literacies achieve their potential through their advancement in literacy.

In 2003, I took a six-month Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP) course from a master-level NLP practitioner, Tom Best. I was homeschooling my daughters and perceived NLP could be combined with education to propel my two home-students farther, faster. I tried some of the methods and they seemed to work. When I garnered the opportunity to finish my bachelor's degree, I wanted to continue to investigate my interests involving NLP. At the end of my undergraduate senior year, my senior thesis researched the connections between NLP and building reading skills. Doing well on my undergraduate thesis prompted my interest, and I came into my graduate program here at Texas State knowing that I wanted to study Neuro-linguistic Programming and how it intersects with education, specifically literacy.

I began my graduate education with a quest for finding solutions to the problems I witnessed in postsecondary, lower-level literacy, developmental students. In attempting to move my own tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge for the purposes of helping students become stronger readers and writers, I began to look at what other instructors were doing well and not so well. My experiences in attending college and working with a wide variety of students has helped me realize that despite current solutions to aid these students, the available interventions could be strengthened by methods that offer students a drive to be autonomous with their own literacy growth toward higher goal achievement.

In conducting the research for this graduate thesis study, I soon discovered that NLP did not fit any other research in my literature review or fit in with my findings. I began to search for other topics, and I recalled what one of my thesis committee members, Dr. Caverly, had asked me to research affective learning. As I researched affective learning, I had an epiphany. All of the information I found fit with other literature and with my findings. And in addition to the epiphany, I also

discovered the concept of responsive pedagogy, which worked well with my research. The NLP concept and interest faded into the background, and my interest in affective learning environments coupled with responsive pedagogies became my focus. I am proud of this change because it shows the cultivation of growth through research and the personal connection I have with my thesis.

I also realized that instead of conducting a student-based intervention, I first needed to study the perspectives of developmental literacy educators in the postsecondary educational field within the community college area. The knowledge I gained from the participants in this study created the beginning mechanisms for transferring my tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge. For me, this transference and garnering more knowledge in my upcoming doctoral program are the bases for a future interventional study where students will be the participants.

Research Hypothesis

I hypothesized that instructors in this community college's newly formed INRW Department would express the need for affective learning in the classrooms and methods to teach students from varied backgrounds and academic abilities. Additionally, I hypothesized that instructors will want more information on available methods to retain and accelerate student learning.

Summary of Introduction

The focus of this chapter was instructor perspectives on teaching literacy and assisting students in persisting through course work to reach college-level academics. The purpose of my study was to investigate faculty and administrators' perceptions of developmental literacy education within this department, specifically how they enact teaching with affective and psychosocial methods within an INRW developmental education curriculum. Additionally, in this chapter I highlighted the necessity for

exploring the voices of faculty in the INRW Department of this community college
(MacArthur, Philippakos, & Ianetta, 2014; Fisher & Frey, 2013; Kosnik, Menna,
Dharamshi, Miyata, & Beck, 2015; Witmer, Schmitt, Clinton, & Mathes, 2017).

II. Literature Review

For this chapter, I reviewed original studies for my literature review. The studies in this review supported my hypothesis and covered the following topics: (a) the movement from high school to college, (b) affective learning environments, and (c) psychosocial methods available to faculty. In addition to reinforcing my rationale, the research reviewed in this section highlights the shortage of evidence available from postsecondary developmental faculty on methods to assist students because none of the studies take the experience of instructors into consideration and creating a gap in the literature. My experience involving postsecondary students with lower literacy attending developmental education courses in community colleges identified them as reading and writing below college level and often below high school grade levels. Since students with lower literacies have not achieved literacy beyond a secondary education level, some of the primary research throughout this literature review involved secondary educational research. Lastly, not all of these researched studies involved students in developmental education; however, it is essential to comprehend how these studies effectuate students in developmental educational courses.

Movement from High School to College

Several studies (Herman, Carreon, Scanlan, Dandapani, & McREL International, 2017; Hodara, 2015; Padgett, Johnson, & Pascarella, 2012; Gardner & Holley, 2011; Fanetti, Bushrow, & DeWeese, 2010) involving students from differing backgrounds who were transitioning from high school to postsecondary education, were found to be underprepared for the rigors of college-level education. This led to students who displayed “academic underachievement” (Yeager & Dweck, 2012, p. 302) and did not handle the rigors of college life well and struggled to complete assignments. Students with weak skills or academic underachievement found

themselves in developmental education courses and struggled to meet the requirements set forth by the instructor who worked towards meeting the goals for outcomes in the course. Studies concluded that affective learning methods were needed to meet the needs of these students.

Student under-preparation for college came in many forms. Fanetti et al. (2010) assessed high school curriculums across the United States and found that these curriculums did not provide a well-planned transition to college, since they were centered on quantifiable standards from state mandates on standardized tests while “college education [was] designed to be theoretical” (p. 78) types of learning that would be applied upon graduation. This difference was the cause for “students leaving high school decidedly underprepared for college” (p. 78). College instructors did not fault high school teachers for the unpreparedness of students but did question the need for standardized testing because it limited the methods and time of teaching skills that would prepare them for college. The focus was placed on the gap that situated students, who were underprepared for college, into developmental education courses because of their lack of college readiness.

In addition to educational gaps, other problems were associated with first-generational high school students who became first-generational college students. First-generation students, who transitioned to college from high school, encountered “invisible barriers” (Gardner & Holley, 2011, p. 77), which delayed some high school students from attaining postsecondary, graduate, and doctoral education. Students who transitioned to college encountered difficulties because they came from families of lower income and were supported less than if they were financially contributing members of the household, or the student was required by the family to hold a full-time job during college. Due to these factors, these students spent less time on

campus mingling with their peers and interacting in the college environment (Gardner & Holley, 2011).

A parent's level of education impacted the success in postsecondary institutions for their first-generational student (Padgett et al., 2012). The educational level of first-generation students' parents was important to note because they were "disadvantaged in cognitive and psychosocial measures compared to students whose parents have higher levels of education" (p. 252). Meaning cognitive and psychosocial abilities were found to count against first-generational students because no one had taught them how to study, where to look for information, and who to talk to about educational options. These "good practices" helped advance these students' cognition and improve their acquisition of knowledge, but had no influence on the psychosocial aspects. Due to familial obligations, which preceded scholastic social engagements, first-generation students demonstrated a limited educational experience. This partial educational experience fell in line with the same issues as participants in other studies (Gardner & Holley, 2011).

Other problems existed for students transitioning from high school to college. Upon graduating from high school, students were deemed college-ready, but when tested by a college, these same students were found to be underprepared for university level academics (Franetti et al., 2010; Herman et al., 2017). Factors for determining college preparedness were grade-level English (non-AP) courses, which were not adequate predictors for college success. Testing by postsecondary institutions proved the factors were inadequate, because students were required to take at least one developmental education course in reading and writing before moving forward to college-level courses (Herman et al., 2017).

The studies presented by Franetti et al. (2010) and Herman et al. (2017) informed the rationale for my case study. As a Teacher's Assistant, Instructional Associate, and Adjunct Professor, I experienced students who proclaimed how well they did in their high school courses, yet could not pass the exam mandated by the state for all incoming community college students. Students who are underprepared for college, yet who graduated from high school, were surprised to find out that they were not reading and writing at a college level, and many times, not even at a high school level. From my experience, I believe their surprise in being underprepared stemmed from a lack of an enriched affective environment to support learning in a nurturing way.

High school graduates had other considerations that contributed to their need for developmental education before attending college-level courses. A student's academic accomplishments turned out to be a greater predictor of their college start in developmental education than "sociodemographic characteristics and school-level factors" (Hodara, 2015, p. 1). These predictors consisted of varied high school diploma plans, number of days a student was absent, the number of times grades were repeated, and performance on skills tests were better indicators of the need for developmental education than low income, and other sociodemographical information. This proved highest among recent high school graduates, which indicated the predictors persisted and were not improved. A significant percentage of high school students required developmental education in a community college setting due to high school experiences and high school performance.

Affective Learning Environments

Affective learning environments provided a platform for more personalized teaching and opportunities for students to further their educational potential through

nurturing according to their needs (Maguire, Egan, Hyland, & Maguire, 2017; van Dinther, Dochev, & Segers, 2011). Some of the areas that affective learning includes are cognitive domains, teacher-student relationships, self-efficacy, metacognition, motivation, and modeling. This was important because many classrooms across the United States do not provide this method of teaching, which caused students to lag behind their counterparts (van Dinther et al., 2011).

Cognitive and affective engagements are important considerations for calculating successful outcomes. Cognitive domains, the thinking domain, intersects with affective domains, the emotional or feeling domain, through a relaxed and nurturing environment that allows time to process thoughts for deeper metacognitive abilities (Maguire et al., 2017; van Dinther et al., 2011). Maguire et al. (2017) indicated that emotional intelligence is at the heart of cognitive and affective domains. This indication was significant because the higher the emotional intelligence of students became, from exposure to cognitive and affective learning environments, the greater their acquisitions of metacognitive knowledge, which allowed students to stay engaged in academics for sustained periods of time (Maquire et al., 2017). Fostering emotional intelligence becomes the method through which environments, sensitive to building on cognition through an affective environment, facilitates increased knowledge for students to use towards their persistence in education.

Affective learning also equips students with higher self-efficacy to monitor their metacognition and owning the learning processes for themselves. Among research that focused on “higher educational domains” (van Dinther et al., 2011, p. 99), researchers found that social cognitive theories from psychosocial studies raised student self-efficacy. Building self-efficacy in an affective learning environment requires heuristic principles and instructors with knowledge for moving students past

negative experiences to positive outcomes. This movement places students in better learning situations instead of relying on lower-level strategies that do not create growth through educational experiences.

Self-regulation, through self-efficacy windows, offers students greater opportunities in education (van Dinther et al., 2011). These greater opportunities were analogous to the old saying that teaching a man to fish gives him the ability to feed himself. Teaching students through affective learning environments could afford them strategies to build their own skills and knowledge during times when teachers do not offer encouraging classroom communities. By the time students would be able to monitor their own learning by witnessing the modeling teachers have done, they become active participants in what was modeled to them – perpetuating positive learning to others.

Psychosocial Methods

Psychosocial methods were included as aspects of instruction in seven studies (Gardner & Holley, 2011; Kudliskis, 2014; Nguyen & McDaniel, 2016; Pacello, 2014; Padgett et al., 2012; Paunesku et al., 2015; van Dinther et al., 2011). These aspects included mind-sets, visualizations, reframing, changing states of mind and being, modeling, and effective motivational techniques. Educators versed in developing and teaching these skills ensured students left classrooms with greater metacognitive knowledge to access across many courses (van Dinther et al., 2011). These psychosocial methods were important psychosocial methods because “strategies that guide one to think more effectively...could guide such a student to go beyond a superficial understanding and to grasp deeper and more sophisticated ideas” (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2012, p. 15), which was the progress that students in developmental education needed to possess to move to college-level academics.

Psychosocial methods like modeling behaviors or handling of situations, producing visualizations to create mental paths, changing mind-sets, and motivation to build self-efficacy were the strategies that provided guidance for students to think more effectively (Kudliskis, & Burden, 2009; Lashkarian, & Sayadian, 2015).

In addition to adjusting mental states from negative to positive, self-awareness was situated as an important aspect of the learning process. Pacello (2014) conducted a study for writing instruction based on self awareness focused on prewriting, drafting, proofreading, rewriting strategies, vocabulary in context, lessons and participation on a class blog about students' metacognitive capabilities. Students' metacognitive abilities brought self-awareness to the forefront by making all of these lessons an active part of students' involvement. Students were given opportunities to journal on their metacognitive experiences as they progressed through a class to, "demonstrate ... self-awareness of becoming part of the college environment," (p. 135) and students witnessed how their writing was a recursive procedure. These progressive movements showed that the participants in Pacello's study had developed skills that would aid in school success and demonstrated the need for strategies with psychosocial aspects.

When perceptions and experiences were made explicit, there could have been a greater chance for the transfer of knowledge to other courses, which could have increased prior knowledge, and had a greater impact on learning outcomes. Pacello (2014) discussed how his own experiences as a tutor, instructor, and a reading/writing center coordinator demonstrated the ways students tend to "compartmentalize" (p. 120) reading and writing as different subjects. Students new to college believed that dependence on memorizing facts was the way to pass a course. These students were caught in a mindset that did not support learning as a process, or did not evolve as one

grows academically, which became the wall they overcame to further their learning (Pacello, 2014). For this reason, showing students these processes for mind growth led to updating their outdated maps or windows on their world. This concept of updating mental perceptions was a fundamental teaching and could be classified in what Moje (2008) would call a “different pathway toward goals” (p. 102). Also, readers who were trying out their reading abilities approached passages that were difficult and challenged their new skills (Alexander, 2006), which indicated a need for methods that helped strengthen students in this transition.

Students’ internal mind maps determine their mindset (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). If the map is outdated, it could lead students down roads away from education. Types of psychological methods were available to raise achievement in the United States for students who were underprepared (Paunesku et al., 2015). For instance, knowing a student’s mindset gave educators, trained with psychosocial cognitive skills, greater abilities to alter a student’s interpretation of educational worlds and prepared them with better strategies to face academic trials.

Not completing high school equated to “millions of students drop[ing] out...every year” (Paunesku et al., 2015, p. 784). The dropout rates of high school students in the United States could be harmful to the outcomes of people’s lives because of the bearings on their futures and the futures of family life, which explained a reason for the necessity of including psychological aspects into high school curriculums across disciplines. These psychological aspects in curriculums were based on psychosocial methods combined with affective learning environments to provide better outcomes for students. Often times, students dropped out of high school and returned to education with a resolve to finish what they started, but they were accompanied with more obstacles to navigate such as family responsibilities, a

job, and bills (Gardner & Holley, 2011; Padgett et al., 2012).

Students who returned to continue their education, needed to be taught how to project their vision(s) that brought them back to school. In essence, these students needed to understand and know how to find their “why.” This vision would need to be a solid image that would maintain their self-efficacy and motivation to last throughout their educational journey (Kudliskis, 2013). Visualizations were found to be strong psychosocial and cognitive methods that provided “fundamental processes through which people built their inner models of the world” (Dilts & DeLozier, 2000, p. 1540).

Since visualizations were so fundamental, they existed as incentives for students to make changes to their outdated study habits. When students changed their skill sets, the incentives for these changes were not based on simple exercises, which were easy and based on known strategies, rather, they were based on newer techniques requiring students to focus on practicing (Nguyen & McDaniel, 2016). One type of judgment students learned to make were judgments of inferencing (JOIs) (Nguyen & McDaniel, 2016). Inferences had the potential to help students because the inference takes the tacit knowledge in a student’s repertoire of knowledge funds and create explicit knowledge they can use across various curriculums (Elbro & Bush-Iversen, 2013). The JOIs were significant to promoting solid inference-making skills because the need to create mental images, as one reads, was central to building proficiency in literacy and comprehension of what was read for recall at a later time.

JOIs proved to help students recall more information. Combining JOIs with note-taking skills led students to recall more information and fostered the ability to generate more complex inferences (Nguyen & McDaniel, 2016). With a greater recall for information of what was read, students verified the inference through their

metacognition and developed tacit knowledge. Lastly, the JOI in a lesson is unstated in order to lead students toward the recursive process of checking for textual evidence to generate an inference.

Summary of Literature Review

My research question for this study was how community college instructors and administrators perceived their developmental literacy educational program and how INRW met students' needs in assisting them towards proficiency in literacy. Additionally, my hypothesis was that instructors would want to know more affective ways to reach students. This hypothesis was created because, without psychosocial methods, affective learning environments, and instructors who are encouraged to provide these settings, students in developmental education could continue to struggle from gaps between high school pedagogies and the skills needed to be successful in college.

Five studies (Herman et al., 2017; Hodara, 2015; Padgett et al., 2012; Gardner & Holley, 2011; Fanetti et al., 2010) discussed factors that were reasons for students with lower literacy to need developmental education courses before moving forward with college-level courses. Among these factors were the gaps between high school learning being quantifiable for standardized testing outcomes and college being theoretical and involving areas of study, "invisible barriers" of first-generation students in transitioning to college from high school, the parental education of first-generation students, high school standards for students deemed college-ready not being accurate, and high school experiences being better factors for determining developmental education than sociodemographic factors. Not all researchers agreed in these areas, which showed the multifaceted look into the problem of students matriculating through educational institutions. The research provided an insight into

reasons why more students are directed toward developmental education before progressing to higher postsecondary education.

Increasing student success through the use of affective learning environments was demonstrated in two studies (Maguire et al., 2017; van Dinther et al., 2011). These two studies represented growing concerns for reaching students who lack skills to drive their own educational successes toward reaching future goals. Emotional intelligence, as a result of affective learning, provided students with greater knowledge to apply towards education. Self-efficacy and self-regulation taught students techniques making them active participants in the education they received and created better outcomes in their own metacognition. Creating positive mindsets, using visualizations, reframing outdated thinking patterns, and judgments of inferencing were psychosocial methods to include in classrooms. However, psychosocial skills had the ability to couple with affective learning environments to help students overcome and change fixed mindsets and undesirable thoughts students could have about themselves.

III. Methodology

The method I employed for this research study was case study research. I questioned if administrators and instructors perceived the need for better interventions by examining their academic INRW Department and their methods for addressing their students' lower literacy issues. This lens was important to understand and recognize how instructors were open to providing an affective learning environment with the use psychosocial methods in ways that intersected with education at the time of the interviews. With this method, my research aligned with Stake (1995) in his explanation of understanding multiple perspectives. My study of educators in a particular department where students were underprepared for college academics was best approached through the methods outlined by Stake (1995). Case study methodology was helpful because the emergent data from participants could not be recreated again since participants may change their answers, thoughts, opinions, biases, and emotions about each question within the domains. The perspectives of administrators and faculty led me to a qualitative interpretation of how their department functions for students, which validated this research study. Based on my hypothesis and research question, I anticipated that once postsecondary educators reached an understanding of where a student could be emerging from and how that environment affected their abilities, changes in behaviors could be directed to efficient ways to help students overcome stumbling blocks they may not perceive.

I am invested in learning why instructors see or do not see a need for more affective learning methods to use in the classroom. Stake (1995) discussed evaluating cases to focus attention in order to look for a more in-depth understanding of "some general problem" (p. 3) and "maximize what we can learn" (p. 4). This was where I situated myself with a resolve to investigate and absorb these educators' perspectives

and possibly offer new crops of educators the insight and direction to offer students opportunities with greater educational futures.

Additionally, interview questions were etic in nature. This means I created them with an external viewpoint to explore my research question. The participants' data was emic because it came from their own perspective. Also, in other emic observations, the participants provided data on affective learning environments even though none of the questions mentioned this topic. The words "affective learning" came solely from their interpretation of the interview question and their own experiences.

Research Question

The central problem to explore was to determine faculty perceptions of developmental literacy education, specifically teaching with affective and psychosocial methods within an INRW developmental educational curriculum. The following research question guided my study. How do community college instructors and administrators perceive their developmental literacy education program and how does the program meet students' needs in assisting them to become more proficient in literacy? The data points for the research study consisted of a demographic questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews. I interviewed community college faculty within the INRW developmental education department of a community college.

Participants

At the time of this study, the Developmental Reading Department (DEV R) and the Developmental Writing Department (DEV W) were merged into a new department called Integrated Reading and Writing (INRW). The sampling for this research was a census of the INRW faculty, which was composed of the following

Table 4. Participating INRW Faculty and Administrators' Pseudonyms

Participants' Pseudonyms and Position within INRW Department	
Pseudonyms	Rank of Position
Grayson	Faculty
Kyle	Faculty
Ginny	Faculty
Tammie	Faculty
Ingrid	Faculty
Mona	Faculty
Edith	Administrator
Linda	Faculty
Nina	Administrator
Emilia	Administrator
Bobbi	Faculty
Dinah	Faculty
Sully	Faculty
Lisa	Faculty

Note: This table shows the participants in my study in the order that they were interviewed.

features: one interim dean, two department literacy chairs, eighteen full-time faculty members and thirty-five adjuncts. Of this pool of administrators and faculty members, fourteen individuals agreed to participate in my study, as shown in Table 4. The participating faculty had varied educational background, varied experience, and varied years of secondary and postsecondary teaching.

Data Collection

I emailed and invited faculty and administrators within the department to participate in my study, as shown in Appendix C. Faculty and administrators who did not respond to the email were given a follow-up phone call to investigate their receipt of the original email and to pursue their interest in participating in my study. I scheduled appointments for faculty and administrators who agreed to be a part of my study. Hour-long appointments were conducted in a face-to-face interview or

telephone interview for instructors or administrators who wanted to participate but who were not able to schedule a face-to-face meeting at the field site. The interview was scheduled for one hour to allow participants time to answer questions within each domain. Questions within each domain were open-ended, relaxed, and conversational. However, interviews protocols were adhered to, and the environment was not relaxed to the point where participants strayed from the conversation. A total of 14 faculty members, composed of administrators and faculty, agreed to become participants in my study.

All interviews were recorded regardless of face-to-face meetings or telephone interviews. Conversations were recorded with an application stored on my personal iPhone. The application I used from my iPhone was called SmartRecord. This application allowed for conversations to be recorded and stored on my iPhone as an mp3 recording. One of the features of the SmartRecord application was the ability to transcribe the recording. However, in a test of this feature the quality of the transcription was not deemed trustworthy, and therefore, the feature was not used as the method of transcription.

Interviews

All interviews were converted to mp3 files and stored on my personal computer, which is password protected, and the mp3 files were backed up on my Google Drive account, which is also password protected. All forms in paper format are stored in a locked cabinet in my office at the community college where I am employed. The paper copies were scanned by a Brother 2000 ADS, saved as pdf files, and saved on my personal computer and not my work computer. I used a port cable to connect the scanner directly to my personal laptop computer bypassing my work computer.

Each participant interviewed was given a pseudonym to mask his or her identity, as shown in Table 4. The transcribed interviews were shared, through a Southwestern University's computer system, with the committee overseeing this thesis. My thesis committee did not require shared files; however, I volunteered the information to provide transparency in all my steps toward completing my study.

Lastly, I would like to make a comment on the methods I chose to select faculty and administrator comments. My codebook and theme book did not have the participant's real name or pseudonym listed next to the comment. I reviewed the comments on their own merits and analyzed how each related to my research question and rationale. Then I went back and examined the participants who made those certain comments for inclusion in the findings chapter of my thesis. I maintained this method for all findings for fairness of the voices of faculty members and administrators. My method for selecting participant data was to expand what could be learned from the understandings, assertions, and generalizations offered by participants (Stake, 1995).

Analysis

The data collected in my study was coded qualitatively for each hour-long interview with participating faculty. The qualitative analysis for this study was based on two qualities derived from Stake (1995). The first quality refers to the experiential interpretation "for understanding the complex interrelationships among all that exist" (p. 37), which facilitates the understanding of the "complex interrelationships" through examination of the experiences of each participant. The process of interviewing faculty and administrators demonstrated a "complex interrelationship" between their individual responses and personal comments about the roles they play in student successes and failures, as well as their individual roles in the department

and with each other. Another aspect to experiential interpretation was “understanding...a description of things happening more or less at the same time without expectation or causal explanation” (p. 38). Since these interactions were complex, there may not be a direct and easy explanation that could be mapped out or pinned down with a simple equation. In dealing with participants’ responses, many comments were not easily interpreted without examining the entire interview. This was also helpful because participants answered questions during the interview by telling anecdotes, giving examples, and sometime just by their interpretation of what the question asked.

The second quality, which was based on this global view, lent its interpretation to the empathy of “human experience...[as] a matter of chronologies more than of causes and effect” (Stake, 1995, p. 39). The dominant lens was to understand the path that each instructor or administrator took to arrive at their answer based on prior interactions, or the complex interrelationships they experienced. These qualities of interpretation improved my understanding of what was said in “key episodes or testimonies” (p. 40) and gave me a greater understanding of how faculty members shared their experiences involving students, what they have or have not witnessed in their students as far as changes in behavior or outcomes, and the opportunity for faculty to expand on their perspectives within the INRW Department. These human experiences of the participants demonstrated the “uniqueness of individual cases and contexts as important to understanding” (p. 40). Lastly, I used these keys to formulate an understanding by what was proceeding from my own direct translation of participant data. These mechanisms for understanding afforded me to opportunity to optimize and “gain an experiential understanding” (p. 40) of each case.

Participants shared data about issues that were “not simple and clean” (Stake,

1995, p. 17). The issues, provoked by questions within each domain, were convolutedly woven with their personal ideas about top-down reform, students within the developmental literacy program, assessments, instruction, literacy, responsive pedagogy, systemic changes to help students, and the transition of high school students rising to college. These issues provided a solid path for organizing the data extrapolated from participants.

Summary of Methodology

This section discussed my chosen research method and why it was selected as the preferred methodology for this study. The research question driving the study was restated to reiterate why my study was being conducted and to introduce the idea of psychosocial methods in affective learning environments. Participants' information was provided, and tables were included to give details about the backgrounds of the faculty who participated in the study. The protocols for collecting the data, housing the data, and securing the data were also indicated. Lastly, the stages involving the interviews with the participants were discussed and detailed.

IV. Findings

In the following chapter, I am presenting the findings of my study by themes as they align with my research question: How do community college instructors and administrators perceive their developmental literacy education program and how does the program meet students' needs in assisting them to become more proficient in literacy? I am displaying verbatim interview data from participants; and in this section, I am presenting the perceptions of INRW community college faculty, specifically with regard to teaching literacy with affective and psychosocial methods. I am also briefly positing my findings within the current research, even though an expanded discussion of the implications will appear in chapter five.

In order to investigate to my research question, I interviewed participants with a self-created interview protocol encompassing four domains: (1) demographic information/professional role in developmental literacy education, (2) teaching background, (3) developmental literacy program at their community college, and (4) literacy interrelation within a developmental education program at their community college. I conducted interviews at the community college field site or via a phone for those who were not available to meet at the field site.

The first domain of questions posed questions like age and gender, as well as how long each participant had been in their professional role. This allowed me to obtain a better view of the participant. Opening with these basic questions were the building blocks for creating rapport with each participant.

The second domain involved questions about the participants teaching background and how they came into the profession. Twelve of the fourteen participants became educators because somewhere in their lineage of educational experiences, they encountered an educator who was an outstanding role model. The

other two participants became educators because they came from a long line of educators.

The third domain afforded participants the opportunity to discuss with me any topic about their INRW Department. In this domain, participants contributed data from a variety of topics from top down reform to tests that they liked or did not like to use. Participants also provided data on their perceptions of students in the department and the students' lives in college. This domain also afforded me the occasion to understand their department and how it teaches developmental literacy to students who are underprepared for college-level academics.

The last domain covered participants' perceptions of literacy, literacy practices within the department, and how the department defines literacy. Participants' data revealed varied points about each one of these areas within this domain. The participants provided much discussion over the literacy questions asked within this domain. This domain was entirely about literacy, and participants provided greater data on their method for teaching literacy in this INRW Department.

In relation to the questions within the four domains, it is important to note that no question mentioned affective learning. All references to affective learning came solely from participants. All participants referred to affective learning at one time or another during their interview.

First, I analyzed the data via emergent coding. This means I read the transcripts from my interviews several times to identify themes that emerged with each reading, and I used the themes to compile my data. From the emerging codes, I developed themes and sub-themes from the coding. In this process, as shown in Table 5, I uncovered ten themes within the data. As shown in Table 6, I analyzed a total of 1,075 participant responses from fourteen interviews. I uncovered the following ten

themes from the greatest amount of responses to the least: faculty perceptions, instruction, the INRW developmental education department, responsive pedagogy, teacher history, assessment, systemic changes, transitions, top down reform, and history of the DE Department.

My research explored how instructors perceive teaching literacy in this INRW Department and assisting students in persisting through achieving goals for college literacy. Additionally, participants provided data that highlighted their dissatisfactions with their department and their state's legislature. The sections below detail the data by theme.

Faculty Perceptions of Developmental Literacy Students

Based on the data collected, this theme provided the greatest number of points. Participants shared 317 data points regarding their perceptions about students in developmental literacy education. In this section, all participants provided data, and eight of the participant's data were shared in this section. These data points provided detailed perceptions by participants of developmental literacy student characteristics, needs, and problems. Many of these data points were similar and were still noted because participants were ardent regarding their perceptions. Also, with this number of consistent data, I thought it necessary to include all data points that did not overlap verbatim. Examining all data points of each theme permitted me to "maintain a vigorous interpretation" (Stake, 1995, p. 9).

Data points discussed student issues that were results of state legislature's failings, home environment, and high school related issues. For instance, in a direct response to a question, Edith asserted that one reason students are placed into developmental literacy courses is because they do not have the background

Table 5. Themes, Sub-themes, and Code Names

Themes, Sub-themes, and Codes		
Theme	Sub-theme	Codes
Assessments	Assessments, Literacy	DRP, RFU, TSI
	Assessments, Negative	Assessments are limited, they don't work
	Assessments, Positive	Assessments are accurate, and can be informal
Developmental Literacy Educational Department (DED)	DED, Negative	Developmental Literacy Educational Department weaknesses
Faculty Perceptions (FP)	FP, College	Characteristics of college
	FP, Students	Challenges for students, Characteristics of DE students, Literacy requirements, Problems with DE students, Student home environments, Student needs, Student opportunities, Types of students
	FP, Successes	Student successes
History of the Developmental Literacy Educational Department (HDE)	HDE, Negative	Lack of societal progress
Instruction (Instn)	Instn, Negatives	Classroom work
	Instn, Positives	Teacher Weaknesses, Teacher Difficulties
		Teacher Strengths
Literacy	Literacy, Negative	Catch-22, Literacy is getting worse or staying same
	Literacy, Positive	Literacy is getting better
Responsive Pedagogy		Creating meaning for understanding, Individualized education, Modeling, Rapport, Relating to students
Systemic Changes (SC)	SC, Positive	Changes to help students
Top Down reform		Bureaucratic resistance for faculty, state legislature issues
Transitions	Transitions, Perceptions of high school students rising to college	Adjusting to college, High school issues

Table 6. Theme Occurrences and Frequencies

Themes and Frequencies		
Themes	Total data points	Percentages
Faculty Perceptions	317	30.93
Instruction	164	16.00
Developmental Literacy Education		
Department	150	14.63
Responsive Pedagogy	112	10.93
Teacher History	94	9.17
Assessments	64	6.24
Systemic Changes to aid students	59	5.76
Literacy	50	4.65
Transitions from high school to college	26	2.54
Top Down Reform	25	2.43
History of Faculty in Developmental Literacy Educational Department	14	1.37

knowledge and present themselves in developmental courses with limited schema and stated, “the kinds of experiences they do have are not related to academics. Remember, public school is only one part of the student’s life. There is also the family home, the community and if those experiences are limited and constrained by poverty, it will limit their background experience, which will impact comprehension. Our students have a lot of things going on that have nothing to do with school directly like family issues, personal issues with money, housing, children. The environment in which they are in and the schools they are in are the reasons for their lack of involvement in education. These problems keep them marginalized, and marginalization prohibits them from moving forward in society because they lack the advancement that education affords. And when we get these students, our job is to make sure that cognitively each student rises to succeed in the college classroom.

Edith’s data provided points that supported existing literature on possible home environments for students in developmental literacy education, and some possible

connections with high school related issues.

Many other participants also mentioned the data regarding limited backgrounds in knowledge and home environments. Linda shared,

It makes me sad that so many students are coming to college and don't have a lot of background in reading and they haven't read a book for pleasure in years if ever at all. It could be their family doesn't like reading. It's a perpetual cycle and they haven't been led to see the value of reading in their life and they are not passing the value of education on to their kids. Maybe the parents are not lifelong learners. Maybe the parents could be struggling with working and getting food on the table or rent paid. However, most of the students come to class and work hard and they do their homework and they get successful. It's the other issues like attendance and not doing their homework that get in the way and keeps many from succeeding.

Linda's data illustrated the effects of limited background knowledge caused by not having exposure to reading material and learning various content to store for later use.

Other data revealed participants' perceptions of characteristics about students in developmental literacy education classes and their perceived difficulties. Grayson stated,

You know, college by its nature is accelerated. We cover in one semester what students would've done in a year at high school. This makes learning difficult for the many developmental students who have not had happy educational experiences. Students come to school with a lot disadvantages, and I also have students who have home environments that are not conducive to learning. A lot of my students have been through very bad circumstances. There may not be somebody in the home who has an interest in their being

educated or if there is, they probably don't know how to help. They also come to college with the expectation that it's going to be like high school. These students really have no idea how to learn, and they bring all their problems to class with them everyday. Last semester, among all my classes, I only had two students turn in all of their assignments on time. So, I am having to deal with the weaker student every semester.

Grayson's points supported both Edith and Linda's data by describing the student who did not have the skills to stay active with the rigor of college.

Another perceived characteristic of students in developmental literacy education dealt with students being easily overwhelmed. Lisa provided,

Developmental education students get overwhelmed easily. A lot of them are overwhelmed by the simple fact of stepping into a college classroom. If they get sick or miss class, they get so far behind that they can't see the light at the end of the tunnel and that causes a lot of students to shut down and say, 'I'm not even going to try anymore.' At times they are already overwhelmed by fact that they committed to going to college and then doing all that work on top of life and whatever. But, sometimes they just show a lack of commitment.

This data also explained why some students in developmental literacy education cannot keep up with rigor.

A lack of self-assurance caused academic difficulties as well as being easily overwhelmed. Emilia declared,

I have students that don't think they are good at reading when they actually are. But, they have blocks where they don't feel like they're making progress or that they cannot do it. This is because some students cannot handle the

acceleration, and they really need help – help that gets them self-assurance. Finding out their motivations could be helpful, but even if we find out their motivation, they still have personal problems they are struggling with and that leads to academic problems. It has a lot to do with economics as well as the home environment. Parents have to be there. They have to help them. They have to guide them, so that when they get to college they understand the value of an education.

Emilia's data illustrated the necessity for having support to help students who struggle. If they did not have a home that was supportive to learning, students could experience this in the classroom with affective learning.

Many data points referred to metacognition and self-regulation in addition to self-assurance. Tammie asserted,

Developmental students don't think metacognitively, and so they struggle. I try to teach them what metacognition means and thinking about your thinking, and thinking beyond the surface because they need to know what metacognition means, thinking deeper. Again, so many of these developmental students see failure after failure and don't see success. This is why developmental education students not only struggle with skills, they struggle with self-regulation. And here's the thing, those developmental education students who have had so many disappointments and failures in reading and academics in general that they have not built the confidence to self-regulate. I saw this when I worked at the elementary school that often times if the mother was poorly educated, the child or children struggled too. Negative traits go from generation to generation. These deficiencies just don't come over night; they are built upon. They often don't have models of

success and so when it comes time for them to show success they just don't know what it looks like and they are given very little exposure to what college looks like. So, motivation is key. If they can see a reason for learning they will be motivated to learn. As adult learners, they need to see that their course in reading translates to better skills, which translates to an easier time in school, which translates to more successes, better graders, which translates into graduation, which goes toward employment.

In this data, Tammie delivered points that depicted the necessity for students to think metacognitively and the need for them to visualize what success looks like (Maguire et al., 2017; van Dinther et al., 2011; Pacello, 2014).

Participants' perceived students' struggles and their possible reasons for those difficulties. Sully provided,

When I first started teaching, I noticed that there were just too many students coming ill prepared to class, and they were reading and writing less. There was this failure to read between the lines of what they were reading and writing. They were repeatedly told 'you can't,' and so, they didn't. Their experiences told them they 'can't do things' and they believed the labels. It's such a sad thing that they have this history of being told they can't write and then they come to our classes and they learn they absolutely can write and they can learn to write well. It is all about them embracing their weaknesses, and if we don't value students at that spot, they get lost in the shuffle.

Sully provided data that indicates the lasting effects of labels and also gives the solution of embracing the weakness to overcome it.

Participants' provided data stating the need for students in developmental literacy education to have more methods to help them. Dinah shared,

People are surprised and shocked when they hear that students in college cannot read. I tell them, ‘Oh they can read, but they just don’t want to.’ I feel like part of the problem that we have in terms of the exchange of students who come to us underprepared is that they haven’t been expected to be responsible for their own education. I think giving them more methods, more opportunities to do self-learning is where we have to go. So, we have to deal with this end of things or they will not learn about how to teach themselves.

In this data, Dinah equated methods to opportunities for self-learning to get students to autonomy.

Participants’ data points also revealed that students needed to trust their teachers. Nina shared,

I think a student has to trust the teacher and think that the teacher wants what’s best for them. If the teacher can instill in them that the teacher does want what’s best for them then they will do well. Students need to trust us because they don’t internalize the step-by-step process of making it to the top. The student must believe that the teacher has an interest in them and is attempting to do something and that ‘something’ sometimes works and sometimes it doesn’t.

Nina’s data pointed to a need that students might not recognize as an essential fact, which is a trust in their instructor to guide them through the course for the purpose of success.

Summary of Faculty Perceptions Regarding Students

This section covered participant perceptions regarding the students they interact with in their INRW Department and from what they have personally experienced in their teaching history. There were over 300 data points collected from

all fourteen participants for this theme. Participants' perceptions mentioned in this theme were the failings of the state legislature, the limited background knowledge of college students, the lack of positive home environments of students, the characteristics of students in developmental literacy education, which were perceived as difficulties like being easily overwhelmed, a lack of self-assuredness, the need for metacognition and self-regulation, students believing the labels other have placed on them regarding their perceived skill sets, a need for more methods, and lastly, the need to trust educators to want to help students overcome their educational struggles. In short, Tammie's data reflected an accurate summary of the data from this section, "If our students can leave us with more confidence, a wider range of experiences, various types of literacy, self-regulation, and accountability then they would be headed in the right direction."

Participants' Perceptions Over Their Instructional Experiences

In this section, participants revealed their perceptions about the way or what they teach for the advancement of their students. I collected 164 data points from all fourteen participants. Their data ranged from how participants treated students to the struggles faculty experience within the classroom.

Data showed that participants favored modeling in their lesson plans. Ingrid provided,

I definitely reach out to the student and try to point out how they hurt themselves by not giving themselves 100%. Holding them responsible is just part of our job in developmental education. So to accomplish this, I go over my comments or they can sit down with me and it is very individualized.

Inside the classroom, it's a mixture. I do have to do some lecture and I also do some proof work like I might explain a concept and then say, 'Okay, let's

practice in pairs.’ So, I model what to do after a lecture. Practice. When working on essays, I give them model papers, and I do a lot of modeling myself.

Likewise, Linda stated, “I think they need a lot of modeling and then guided practice and then independent practice. I like when they can watch the modeling and then sometimes the guided practice creates productivity and creativity.” Emilia had similar comments to Linda and Ingrid. Emilia shared,

I do a small lecture, and I do teach them skills, which are secondary. The most important thing I can get across is that they can apply the skills to what they are doing now. I actually have them do exercises with me while I am showing them what they need to do. This modeling gives them more time to process. Students get to practice and work in small groups and work with each other.

In all these instances, modeling was an integral part of the instructor’s teaching methods and opportunities for students to see how work should be completed.

Developing new ways to help students were difficult as reflected in the data.

Dinah explained a method that works for her and several others. She stated,

There is an ongoing process of trying to come up with activities that will do. Every year is spent trying to find more and more ways to give them the ‘aha’ moments. So currently, I directly teach strategies that they will have to apply to actual college textbook material. The textbook that I use has no pedagogy in it. It is all excerpts from college textbooks, because I do the pedagogy and they apply what they learn to the college textbook material. I do a lot of scaffolding, and I try to give them lots of opportunities to learn. I design activities that will help them to discover those things rather than me telling

them those things because that will be more significant to them – what they can discover for themselves.

Methods that created assignments for students to self-regulate gave them opportunities to create the “aha” moments and instill a want to keep pursuing education.

Another skill participants used increased background knowledge to aid in critical thinking. Mona revealed,

About 15 years ago, we did a white paper and what we found was that the entire college indicated our students cannot critically think because people with shallow knowledge, once they finish developmental education, they are still shallow. Our challenge then became how to provide them with more knowledge. I started looking at them for what they are missing. And what I found was that I had to assume the role of a content area teacher and build the background knowledge of my students. I first started by paying particular attention to key words and terms; it's important, but the ultimate goal is for you to acquire that knowledge, that language, so that you can discuss more and read further. All of this is to establish schema and background knowledge because fluency is usually increased if you have background knowledge and that is the way to better comprehension and critical thinking.

Mona's data provided another way to deepen comprehension and develop critical thinking through providing content of topics they would need in future courses.

Background knowledge, mindsets, and growth are also needed for student success. From another perspective, Tammie provided,

I focus on the adult learning theory as I teach, and I try to establish a reason for them to learn. What is their 'why,' ya know? I think my approach is that

students can learn and they just need the methods to learn, but they don't have them. It really helps to have a wider background even in psychology on how the brain works. Students are always interested in that. Because you can have a student trying to learn as much as he or she possible can learn, but if they don't have the grit and growth mindset, and the will, it's just not going to get done. In my classes, we do a unit on grit and growth mindsets. We talk about effective students and what it has to deal with. I had a student last semester and it was her second time in my class, in the same class. We got to the end of the semester and she was failing and dropped again. I talked to her before she dropped and her problem was that she just couldn't make time to do what she needed to do for school. It wasn't that she didn't have the opportunity to do her homework, but she didn't have the grit or the mindset to succeed. If we are not in a state of change all the time, then we are not growing.

Tammie's data added to the other participant's data in this section and provided the aspect of developing the "grit and growth mindset" to create an endurance for getting through college. Her comment regarding being in a state of change was promoting the idea that students can grow through the cultivation of change.

Summary of Participants' Perceptions of their Instruction Experiences

In this theme, the participants provided data points that showed their reasons and preferences for modeling skills in class. The data revealed the need to highlight a growth mindset over a fixed mindset. There were many data points regarding the need to increase student's background knowledge for a variety of reasons. Lastly, they also offered data on the challenges for finding new methods of helping students become successful.

Participants' Perceptions of their Developmental Literacy Education

Department

The fourteen participants contributed 150 individual data points that I located and analyzed concerning developmental literacy educational within the INRW Department at this community college. The remarks I found from participants' data ranged from general information about the department to specific participant experiences and perceptions of department successes. Within the data related to general information and department successes, all participants provided input regarding these themes.

This department faced many challenges within the past few years including new mandates from the state's legislature and the president of the community college restructuring two developmental departments into one INRW Department. These changes have both effected and affected all levels of instructors. Emilia and Jack's comments were typical of the reactions to these calls. Jack stated, "The developmental educational department has the potential for growth if it is allowed." Jack made this statement regarding the fast-paced changes required of the department that leaves no time for growth and development. Likewise, Emilia revealed,

The last few years we have not had time to be innovative because have had to accelerate. We have had to focus on what to cut out and what to keep so that we can move them through the most and get them to move on. We had to move away from the touchy-feely kind of thing where students get to know each other and us and find out more about themselves.

Because of this lack of growth and development, many participants shared Ingrid's sentiments,

I am concerned that there is a movement to discredit what we do, to throw all

students or most students into college-levels, sink or swim. So, I'm kind of looking to the future with some uncertainty about what the legislature is going to do.

Jack, Emilia, and Ingrid's data revealed the frustration all participants were experiencing with the many changes the department had endured.

Another concern demonstrated through the data was a call for change from the present demographics of the department to one that is more represented by the student population. Sully explained,

There is resistance to new blood in the department and that is not good because it causes resistance and includes not keeping up with the times. We need more diversity in teaching. The department needs to open to new ideas over those of the administration, but if the administrators don't support it how can the faculty push for it.

Sully's data explained another frustration of some participants regarding the make-up of the INRW faculty. The level of administration that Sully refers to is the top-tier of administrators of the community college.

The changes that occurred in the merge of two departments into one department have caused difficulties in delivering curricula to students. Ginny shared, "I am so frustrated in the INRW 0430 because I only have four hours to teach two skills. I agree that they should be taught together, but my students are so weak in both of these skills that I can't really cover it all in four hours." Echoing the same sentiments, Grayson stated, "We get students who are behind, yes, and sometimes, they are very far behind in their skill sets and that makes teaching two subjects in one class very difficult." In addition, Tammie reflected, "It took them so long to become deficient in their skills and sometimes we try to remedy them in as little as eight

weeks or by teaching two skill sets in one class. That is not enough time.” All participants provided data on the difficulty of delivering the combined curriculum to students who need more skills.

In focusing on more of the developmental literacy education department and what it provided, participants’ data is supported by Jack’s assertion. He stated,

If the department is working well, it should offer the ability for students who have struggled through high school to be able to increase their ability to read and write, to comprehend and develop literacy skills, as they should have gotten previously. But, for some reason though sometimes no fault of their own maybe cognitive learning disabilities or just some home environment and other problems, they had to struggle through. They weren’t encouraged to study hard and so they didn’t develop good study habits. The courses are designed to make up for those deficits and help them to develop the skills they are going to need to be able to read history, science, or other courses that are heavy in reading and to be able to read literature and write compositions, which are mandatory for college.

Jack’s data stated how the department should run and a description of the student the department needed to help.

Jack’s data provided a segue for participant perceptions regarding more constructive sentiments about the department. Ingrid stated, “We are very sensitive to the fact that the goal is not to hold back students. So, we do move them forward, as they earn it, either at the beginning or end of the semester.” Matriculating students through developmental literacy education “as they earn it” was echoed in Dinah’s data. Dinah provided, “There are so many different ways that we can get them there, and we are constantly coming up with ways for them to succeed.” Ingrid and Dinah

both represented the data from other participants regarding the goal of the department was to create scenarios for success and the graduation to college-level courses.

Other participant data revealed more positive outcomes produced by the department and faculty. Lisa shared, “We really have a unique department. And because we’ve been small, we’ve always worked well together and have been able to allow our instructors to keep their academic freedom, but still remain under department parameters.” Linda highlighted, “The full-time faculty are always going to conferences and keeping up with legislative things involving developmental education and keeping the rest of us abreast.” In another comment about faculty, Tammie claimed, “Our department offers instructors with a lot skill and abilities, which is our departments biggest asset.” Extending what this INRW Department offers, Emilia declared, “We offer students teaching assistants, instructional assistants, tutoring in the lab, and computer labs where they have access to computers – all to help them be successful.” The last represented data for this section would reveal the end goal for educators in this department. Bobbi declared, “We have a very well thought out department that helps our students with the learning strategies and skills for having success in their college-level courses. We really try, and our end goal is helping students to be lifelong learners.” The data here showed a department that shared information, ensured people and places where students could go to help them with their work, and the goal of creating “lifelong learners.”

Participants shared their substantiation for data that indicated faculty are succeeding despite challenges within the department. Jack affirmed, “The majority of students do really well in our courses and come away with a kind of amazed joyous look on their face almost like they didn’t know that what they did was possible.” These expressions were noted by several participants including Ginny who exclaimed,

“It’s the one’s who apply themselves and have that aha moment who go to their other classes and their professors start talking or assign something and the students know how to handle it, how to organize it. They feel so good about it.” Jack and Ginny shared student successes were possible notwithstanding the significant department issues from top-tier mandates.

Participants received visits from students indicating their learning was paying off. Tammie stated, “I see my students in hallways or they come visit me and they share that they use the techniques they learned in class and are doing super well.” Adding to this sentiment, Mona provided, “I usually see my students the next semester and what they tell me is amazing. They tell me that they preview their textbook, their readings, that they get the bigger picture, which is beyond the basics.” Tammie and Mona provided humanizing proofs that efforts in getting students to succeed was being actualized.

These vignettes of success extended to more data supporting participants’ perceptions. Jack claimed, “I have seen my student’s self-confidence rise.” Lisa provided data on the statements she had heard students state, “I see their self-confidence and their self-worth rise. I hear them saying to each other, ‘I can do this.’ That is a huge success for our students.” Additionally, Bobbi stated, “They are so proud that they finally are able to get where they want to go and feel good about themselves and their successes.” Jack, Lisa, and Bobbi gave data that further supported the success students have within this INRW Department.

Participants also provided data to illustrate their parts in their own student’s successes. Emilia shared, “They realize they have some deficiencies in relation to the skills of others. They realize that we can help them. They want to get better, and I think that is a major success.” Talking more about student realizations, Dinah stated,

“They learn to recognize and adopt responsibility for their education and that they can do it.” Lastly, Bobbi revealed, “We turn them on to learning, and I think it’s like a new world for them to explore, and they learn to enjoy it.” The enjoyment created by learning is the success.

Summary of Participants’ Perceptions of their Developmental Literacy

Education Department

This section covered participants’ perceptions regarding their students in the INRW Developmental education department. Participants shared 150 pieces of data varying from dissatisfaction with the new classes that combine skills without allowing enough time, the need for diversity within the department, and perceptions confirming their abilities to reach students and helping them succeed toward higher education.

Participants’ Perceptions Regarding Responsive Pedagogy

Based on data I collected, participants provided 112 points regarding perceptions of their pedagogies and their responsive process to students’ needs. Responsive pedagogies are student-centered learning methods to promote the whole student and provide a more balanced student. Data points were focused on affective domains, building relationships, and healthy mindsets. Twelve of the fourteen participants provided data and five of these twelve participants’ data will be revealed, as representatives for the twelve.

Building relationships were as important as affective environments. Lisa’s data provide more insights into responsive pedagogy. Lisa stated,

A big part of my classroom is having that relationship with my students and having them build relationships with each other too. Building that relationship and following up if they are sick is important, because I think if they know that I care about them then in return they will care as well; and, they will want

to be in class, and they will want to perform. I find that if the developmental student doesn't have the relationship aspect in place, then they will have a really hard time being successful. So, I spend a lot of my time showing my students that they are more than just a student and that their overall success is not just when they are in my classroom but that it continues on. And, another thing I do is to make my classroom more individualized to pinpoint their weaknesses. It lets me better approach them as we go through the semester. I learn if they need more individualized instruction as I give individualized instruction.

Lisa created an aspect of responsive pedagogy by taking the time to develop relationships and provide individualized instruction.

Affective learning environment data points were among the most commonly revealed points. Ginny reflected,

Learning and relationships have to start with an affective domain and there has to be more emphasis on the affective modes. I think there is a great need for methods they can use. Stephanie, it is their self-concept, their mindsets, their self-confidence, their feelings about their abilities, their motivation and all those things. We need to add the psychological component into teaching. I teach them about operant conditioning and looking at reinforcements. If we re-create those feelings they experience when they can't do something, then we can show them how to overcome those negative learned patterns. So, I have them write about their negative reinforcements. What was the stimulus? What was the response? How were they reinforced, negatively or positively? If they can see their selves that way, then they can override it. We need to look at failure as feedback. Professors need to get students into their offices

and hear their stories and listen to them and just visit. I mean, going to their professor's office is not punishment; we need to get them in and just listen to them and build that rapport. They need to hear their professor say, 'I am for you. What do you need.'

Likewise, Edith shared, "Some students really need that one-on-one relationship to get engaged in learning." Additionally, Sully reiterated, "I like to create an environment that is relaxed, and I like to be at arms' length away from my students. This kind of affective learning is important because it helps in the conversation of learning." Lastly, Tammie provided,

We need to focus more on the affective aspect of learning versus the skill, drill, and kill because that doesn't give them comprehension. The affective side of learning is where they are motivated and they enjoy learning. So, you want to build on those affective learning skills.

Four other participants echoed these reflections. There were multiple calls for the use of psychology in the classroom, which not only enrich the affective learning environment but also provide more organic teaching moments for students to overcome their struggles.

Summary for Perceptions of Responsive Pedagogy

Five participants' comments were resounded by the twelve who provided data. Participants indicated data points important to them regarding affective learning and affective environments. One participant indicated that individualized instruction was the necessary catalyst to spark affective learning.

Participants' Perceptions of Assessments within INRW

Based on data, I located 64 assessment-based data points regarding the administration of assessment tests in the INRW Department at this community

college. The remarks I discovered ranged from participants' perceiving standardized tests were accurate, inaccurate, standardized tests did not assure any attainment of literacy, and participants' tests given in class provided more of an accurate picture of a student's progress than a standardized test like the TSI (a state success initiative standardized exam), DRP (Degrees of Reading Power), or RFU (Reading for Understanding).

Participants' Perceptions of Assessments and Literacy

Literacy is an important aspect to INRW developmental educators at this community college, and all fourteen of the participants provided data for the literacy domain. In this section, I have selected data from Nina, Bobbi, Ginny, and Lisa. These participants' data revealed varied sentiments about the DRP, RFU, and TSI. Nina and Bobbi were at opposite ends of satisfaction with the DRP. This bifurcation of satisfaction was echoed throughout the data that applied to the assessment perceptions. Nina was also the biggest supporter of the RFU, and I found no other participants were dissatisfied with the RFU standardized exam. Ginny and Ingrid began the transition of the discussion from the DRP to the TSI, and again, their data was also reflected in the participants' as a whole.

My findings regarding literacy assessments revealed Nina's responses as typical for those participants who found the DRP to be an accurate metric for measuring literacy. According to Nina,

I think the DRP is an accurate way to see and to measure if a student can handle text of varying levels like high school and college. I think if they can manipulate the DRP, that shows that they are ready and can, in fact, handle higher academic kinds of reading.

Nina further expounded on standardized tests by briefly discussing another test she

used called the RFU stating, “The RFU is just natural text with students drawing conclusions, and I think the RFU test shows their ability to reason meaning out of a few words.” Nina was a proponent of the standardized tests, but not everyone felt the same way.

In contrast to Nina and other participants who favored using the DRP, I analyzed responses such as Bobbi’s that indicated dissatisfaction with the DRP. Bobbi shared,

I am not a big fan of the DRP, because I feel like that’s one thing; and, it is pretty biased for white middle-class students. I feel like it does not measure what we are teaching. I don’t think the DRP provides the information we need to collect.

Other participants took a comparative consideration. As an example, Ginny revealed, “I think the DRP is a much more valid reading test than the TSI.” There was some variance in the acceptance of standardized tests the department uses, which was normal because not everyone can like or dislike everything.

However, participants in my study shared an overall dissatisfaction with the TSI test. For example, Ingrid and Lisa’s responses revealed typical participant perceptions about literacy and assessment questions. Ingrid stated, “The problem is that the TSI computer-assessed essay doesn’t work. The TSI doesn’t indicate at all if they can construct or develop an idea. The TSI test is not a good assessment tool.” Lastly, Lisa commented,

Our TSI placement is not always accurate and sometimes you end up with that student whose writing is good and they could be pushed and be in a credit-based course and to the weaker students we have who the process is just way too advanced, but their TSI score puts each of them there.

The lack of confidence in the TSI standardized test is the supporting reason for providing other standardized tests to students in order to obtain a bigger picture of the student's skill level.

Participants' Perceptions over Literacy Attainment

More than half of the participants provided data that showed their experiences with literacy attainment. In this section, I have selected data from Nina, Mona, Edith, Dinah, and Ginny. These five participants' data reiterated the sentiments from all eight respondents who provided the same views. Nina, Mona, and Ginny provided the data that answered my interview question regarding if there were any assessments used to ensure a student's attainment of literacy. Edith and Dinah provided data that provided ways to ensure a student's attainment of literacy.

Within the second domain of questions, I asked participants if they had a "magic wand" what they would change. Two domains of questions later, Nina uses the term to indicate her "magic wand." Nina shared, "Tests never ensure anything. It would be nice if we had something to ensure a student's gain of literacy (pause) that would be the magic wand." In similar responses, Mona related, "A test just shows what they did on that particular day on that particular test. It is a temporary reading and does not ensure anything." While I interviewed Ginny at the field site, I noted her body language, which suggested the frustration illustrated in assessments that ensures literacy. According to Ginny, "I am not sure that there is a test out there that really works. We will still have students end up in lower levels who do not belong there." When the topic of standardized testing was announced, all participants demonstrated irritating body gestures or sighs were noted on phone call interviews.

Participants in my study offered alternative ideas to standardized tests that according to them did not show any attainment of literacy. For example, Edith and

Dinah's responses revealed typical participant perceptions about other ways to solve the problem of more accurate tasks students can perform demonstrating their attainment of literacy apart from a standardized test. According to Edith, "I think testing for the attainment of literacy is achieved by activities of participation in students' learning that show them to be metacognitively aware of the learning process." Adding to the sentiment of this statement was Dinah's continued course of action where she further develops this idea. Dinah stated,

Everyone wants there to be a test that tells them if a student has attained literacy, but there is no such thing. A single individual test is not very valuable. One of the biggest problems we have with assessment is people who want to fix everything with a magic bullet. If you are trying to assess someone, literally, you are much better off with a portfolio type of evaluation.

Participants practiced with other methods for determining the attainment of literacy apart from standardized tests.

Participants' Revelations Regarding their Literacy Attainment Measures

In the previous section, Edith and Dinah revealed what they believed to be better ways for ensuring the attainment of literacy. In this section, half of the total participants indicated methods they used to measure the attainment of literacy in their classrooms. Dinah, Lisa, Mona, Tammie, and Nina provided data that was reflected in the seven participants as a whole.

These participants were more than willing to share the data points on their approaches for the attainment of literacy. As a conduit to introduce the data obtained from participants' revelations regarding their literacy attainment measures, Dinah explained, "I think the best judgment of the attainment of literacy is the professional judgment of the instructor who has been working with the student." This personal

and professional judgment was what Lisa discussed when she stated,

To me, the most accurate assessment is going to be a demonstration of their writing, which is graded by a human and not a computer. To really assess where they are academically and what they have attained is for them to write an essay, which gives me a better picture of the skills they have attained.

Participants all agreed that as instructors, they were better able to determine a student's attainment of literacy over a standardized test.

In addition to Dinah and Lisa, Mona and Tammie dove deeper into specifics of how the attainment of literacy was gathered on their students. Mona shared,

Self-evaluations are very important, and they need to get into the habit of doing self-evaluations. So, all my assessments are open-ended. I ask them to write a question for potential self-testing. I have them do a chapter summary and a ticket out as the metric.

Along this same trajectory of thinking, Tammie stated, "I only use assessments that are open-ended questions. I never give a scantron, fill-in-the-bubble test, because that does not assess their abilities or knowledge." Participants' data revealed the usage of self-testing and using open-ended questioning tactics were stronger methods for assessing the attainment of literacy comprehension.

Lastly, assessments measuring the attainment of literacy were also comprised of informal and low-stakes metrics. Nina expounded on her perceptions of these metrics,

Through informal measures like reviewing their notes, you can tell if they are gaining knowledge, skill and becoming a more expert study type reader. And, by seeing how they analyze the structure of what they are reading, particularly expository text, you can see what they deem as important—giving you more

information on what they actually attain and retain.

Not all assignments had to be high-stakes metrics. A gradual series of low-stakes assignments represented literacy comprehension as well.

Summary of participants' perceptions regarding assessments. This section detailed the perceptions of participants regarding the kinds of assessments the INRW Department at this community college adheres to. The standardized tests this department used invoked a variety of views from positive to negative regarding the reliability for measuring the attainment of literacy. Also, participants' data showed varied preferences of methods for measuring literacy. If I placed all of the quoted data about this theme from participants into one statement, the data point would state that one test did not lead to the conclusion that literacy is attained. Measurements of literacy needed to be performed over a variety of tests and assignments, including low-stakes assignments, which create a whole picture of a student's abilities.

Participants' Perceptions of the Need for Systemic Changes

In this theme, participants revealed data points regarding the changes they wanted to have happen to or for the students in the INRW Department. Systemic changes provided 59 points varying from coaching, neuroscience, and individualized teaching. Five of the fourteen participants made nearly verbatim comments about wanting more time to work with students.

Typical data points dealt with the shortage of time participants experienced with their students. Grayson shared, "I want more time with my students to work on what I do in class, but also the time to coach them. They need that coaching to get the work done that I assign because that's the biggest problem." Ginny, Nina, Mona, Sully, and Ingrid all shared that they needed more time with students as well. Ginny stated, "The INRW class should be six hours long so that we have enough time to

teach what we need to teach. We just don't have them for long enough." Nina shared, "A three hour class is not long enough. We need more time." Mona provided, "They need to spend more time with us on task. I really think they need another semester." Sully reflected, "I need to have students longer than just four months. Many of my students have had very negative experiences prior to coming here, prior to coming to college." Ingrid stated, "There is so much to do and so much wisdom to impart but not enough time to do all these good things." Lastly, Jack asserted,

There are certain goals they have to meet for the course and everything, but what they need more of is individualized teaching to keep them on track. The individualized instruction is to assist our students' needs for the entire course or to work on a specific area of weakness.

Participants wanted more time to impart all the knowledge students would require in order to reach college-level courses.

Other participants provided data that supported other changes they wanted to occur. Nina provided, "Oh, oh. I would like to get inside their brains and tilt their emotions and motivations in the right directions." Along those same lines, Dinah stated, "These students need to be reprogrammed. They really need their brains reprogrammed." Lisa shared, "They need more interventions, they really do." And speaking of interventions, Mona provided, "A lot of stuff is coming from neuroscience that can be applied to the classroom. Third graders are learning neuroscience. Seriously!" Nina, Dinah, and Mona shared sentiments regarding changes that need to happen to help them be successful in making students become efficacious.

Summary of Systemic Changes Perceived by Participants

Participants were most vocal about their perceived shortage of time with their students. However, there were other changes participants wanted to see come to fruition as well. Among these systemic changes were coaching, reprogramming their brains, more time to work with students, more interventions, introducing neuroscience, and individualized teaching.

Participants' Perceptions on Transitions from High School to College

My literature review regarding students moving from high school to college revealed that faculty in those studies had views that varied from the participants in my study. This section covers transitions students make when moving forward from high school to college and more specifically, participants' perceptions of high school. My participants placed blame on the government, the high schools, and the high school teachers.

Participants perceived that high schools are not providing proper education. Grayson stated,

You know, a lot of them have figured out that high school is a scam – meaning they didn't have to do the work but they got passed anyway. This is a big part of our problem in developmental education at the college level.

Developmental students tell me all the time they did more writing in my class than they ever did in four years of high school. So, I've been doing this for a long time; and on the first day of class, I can tell who is going to be successful and who isn't just by their behaviors and by how they approach assignments. All of which has more to do with their successes in academics before they come here. And for some, it takes two to three semesters to really understand what we are talking about and to get into the groove of what they need to do.

These are all kinds of patterns of behaviors they need to master to be successful.

Grayson's data was a representation of all participants in relation to how some students who come straight from high school approach developmental courses.

Other perceived problems include not catching students who need remediation and the STAR test. Mona reflected,

I think the big problem in public schools is that poor readers are not caught and remediated. If you don't use it, you lose it. And, in high school the interaction they have with textbooks is to take a book off the shelf and open that textbook and read from page 17 to 25. But, they never mark in the book and then they put the book back on the shelves. Sometimes, the teachers read the pages to them, so why should they read?

In a similar statement, Linda provided, "I work with students through another entity, and I go to the schools and they are not doing a lot of reading in high school unless we're talking about students in AP classes." In another version of the data, Mona provided information similar to what Dinah shared:

Students are basically being carried through their high school experience. The teachers in high school assign the reading for homework, but then the next day the teacher reads it to them. So, what did they learn? They learned that they don't have to read it, because their teacher will read it for them. My students will actually admit, if I ask them, how many of you passed at your high school by just showing up? And then, a whole bunch of them raise their hands.

In a closing statement, Lisa revealed, "Maybe they did the work, maybe some, maybe more, but they graduated from high school thinking they are college ready. They get here and we tell them they in fact are not college ready." Students came to college

expecting their experience and work ethic to be the same as high school. There was not specific preparation for what college-level courses required.

Summary of Transitions from High School to College

The data points aggregated on this theme were less varied than other research had indicated. The participants in my study found fault within the school systems' inner-workings as reasons why their students were arriving to college in an underprepared state. This lack of preparedness then required more time and stronger commitments to succeeding in college.

Participants' Perceptions of Top Down Reform Issues Within the INRW

Department

As previously mentioned, this INRW Department had recently merged into one department from separate reading and writing departments. These changes created many data points regarding the states' legislative practices and how to cope with the changes. For instance, Dinah stated,

People, like people in the state legislature and even some people on the school board, in a effort to not spend so much money on education, tell us what we need to change about what we do without ever talking to those of us who work with our students and actually know what their needs are. I find that insulting and detrimental to the students, ultimately. Developmental education is not the direction that legislatures have or want things going toward because they are in the direction to eliminate it and that's going to be a big mistake, because they will get even more underprepared students.

The state legislature sent down mandates and the president of this community college enforced those directives. Edith explained that she was unhappy with the manner in which the new provost president made decisions about the department without

seeking input from administrators and full-time faculty in these departments.

Participants, as a whole, felt their expertise was not asked or taken into consideration for how to make developmental education a better functioning department, and they wanted to be valued.

These mandates were felt in other ways, which were difficult for participants. Ginny reflected, “We are constantly having to change the courses we teach. We have to fit in with the new regulations, which would be fine, but so much is being left out with ensuring our students are getting the attention they need and deserve.” Likewise, Ingrid stated, “We have so much pressure coming down from the legislature and that’s getting harder and harder to provide the best for our students.” Participants felt that if their expertise had been solicited, better outcomes would have been possible in creating a better department.

Summary of Top Down Reform Perceptions

Dinah, Edith, Ginny, and Ingrid provided data points, which were reflected among the participants. These sentiments ranged from data regarding the state legislature to the new provost president of the college. The last two data points in this section dealt with participants’ perceptions about not being able to provide the level of education they deem appropriate.

Participants’ History within the Developmental Literacy Education Realm

In this brief but important section, data points were collected from Grayson and Bobbi regarding histories and attitudes of participants within the INRW Department. Generally speaking, these data points revealed aspects of participants’ characteristics. For example, Grayson discussed how he treated students as a rule in his classroom. He stated, “My formal relationships to my students is teacher-student, but more fundamental is one human to another, which is easier to actualize. And, that

relationship of one human to another allows me to have empathy for my students.” In more ways of maintaining relationships with students, Bobbi shared,

Rapport is key. You have to be real. That sage on the stage stuff doesn’t work, and it is more effective to be the guide on the side. I don’t come to class in heels or in a business suit. I really try to laugh a lot. I never raise my voice at anybody or about anything, and most students say that I’m the coolest teacher they’ve ever had.

Cultivating key qualities in teachers like treating students as human beings and taking the time to build rapport were important parts of this INRW Department.

Summary of Participants’ Perceptions Regarding their Histories

Histories were important to note because they provided information about the department and faculty that may be overlooked. Bobbi and Grayson’s data provided insight into the sentiments of seven other participants. The supported data revealed that participants are open to establishing professional relationships and building rapport.

Summary of Findings

This chapter provided participants’ perceptions aimed at the ten themes found in my research study. All participants’ data was cultivated to explain each theme, and all fourteen of the participant’s contributions were considered. Primacy for the data points mentioned in this chapter was based on the participant’s articulation and answer to the prompted question. Many times, participants provided data that were almost verbatim of each other, so I gathered the best-articulated version of the data and used it to represent the theme.

Throughout this chapter, I used the participants’ data to provide insights into their thoughts about the state legislature, the limited background knowledge of college

students, the lack of positive home environments, characteristics of students in literacy education, the need for more metacognitions and self-regulation, and how educators need more methods to help students overcome their educational struggles. Affective learning in relaxed environments was also a main topic of the data. Participants indicated that they strive to create these atmospheres where students are comfortable and invited to learn. This invitation coupled with individualized attention creates the catalyst required for affective learning.

Participants also revealed how the new INRW course that combined two skills into one class created difficulties within the time limit of the course. And, in some ways, this situation also created a greater challenge in coming up with ways to help students succeed. There was also a call for the department to diversify its teaching staff and administrators to reflect the faces of students in the classroom. Most of the participants were discontented with the DRP standardized test that is mandatory from this INRW Department administrators, and participants wanted the ability to give their own final exams that test topics related to material covered in class. Participants also departed from the literature and unanimously departed from other literature cited in the literature portion of this study that indicated high schools had a stake in students' under-preparedness for college. Lastly, participants revealed that they were not appreciative of the way the college handled the department merge without consideration to their input.

Among some of the solutions to participants' perceived problems were coaching their students through developmental literacy education, reprogramming their brains, more time to work with students, more interventions, more individualized teaching, and introducing neuroscience or psychology into the classroom. Mostly, participants shared data that showed how eager they were to work with students, to

build professional relationships with them, and to provide the best educational methods available.

V. Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

This chapter's aim is to connect the research question and the data points from the fourteen postsecondary participants to thoughts drawn from the literature review, rationale, and researcher's positionality. Furthermore, I examined what I learned from this study and how these data points helped me answer my research question. Additionally, I submit a series of implications and recommendations for further research involving practices for educators in classroom settings.

Summary of Purpose

My study concentrated on perspectives of postsecondary participants within an INRW developmental education department of a community college in Southwestern United States. The research question was how do community college instructors and administrators perceive their developmental literacy education program and how does the program meet students' needs in assisting them to become more proficient in literacy? In my study, community college instructors and administrators in this INRW Department had numerous perspectives about the intrinsic worth of the program, its methods, and their own pedagogies in assisting students to become more proficient in reading and writing literacy. One of the most common themes that arose in the data was the association of the participants' views on the under-preparedness of students coming into college from high school.

The research from the literature review implied that students who had "academic underachievement" (Yeager & Dweck, 2012, p. 302) were not able to handle the rigors of college expectations; and, as a result, found themselves in developmental education classes where they continued to struggle. This research finding was fully supported by the participants in this study. By studying participants' responses, it became apparent that the participants were seeing weaker

and weaker students who were deemed college-ready by their high schools but told by colleges they were not ready for college-level academics and required the attainment of certain skills before proceeding to college-level coursework. One reason, cited as a possible reason for students being underprepared for college, was the amount of time spent on practicing and passing standardized tests in high school (Fanetti et al., 2010) versus learning skills and content that would prepare students for college.

Participants in my study revealed the same concerns about why many students find themselves in developmental education as a first stop before progressing onto college.

“Invisible barriers” also played a large part in the success of students who found themselves below college-level academics. An insufficiency of cognitive and psychosocial abilities was found to count against students, because parents or family life did not value education (Padgett et al., 2012). Participants in my study also provided data points of concern with regard to students not having advocates at home to help them study or a home environment that was conducive to learning.

Participants discussed the effects of a parent or parents who have lower literacy and ways that these traits are easily passed down from one generation to the next and keep students in a marginalized situation. Participants also revealed their perceptions about the low demands of high school, which did not place accurate levels of rigor on students to prepare them for college work, and shared how these tendencies did not make the transition easier. These low demands were easily assimilated into a family life that had other stresses. And because low demands could be part of their high school life, participants perceived developmental students as having difficulties in completing assignments because there was no need to develop good study habits. Participants perceived the lack of good study habits as a reason for students in developmental courses occasionally falling behind in their homework and become

overwhelmed, which could potentially lead them to giving up on pursuing higher education.

Based on participants' data, more successes came from instructors who had responsive pedagogies built into their curriculums. These responsive pedagogies situated student needs first and participants perceived affective learning environments as best ways to facilitate requirements. Nine participants mentioned or discussed the need or benefits of affective learning throughout the finding of this research, as shown in Table 7. Likewise, twelve participants mentioned or discussed the need or benefits of responsive pedagogy. And, in addition to these numbers, seven participants provided data that mentioned both affecting learning and responsive pedagogy within the same quoted data. With a majority of the participants providing data that positioned the benefits and needs of responsive pedagogy in affective learning environments made these methods as best practices for the participants. Participant perspectives were worthy of being studied because they are of educators who offer crucial data points. Their daily involvement with students and their interactions with all areas of educational programs (MacArthur, Philippakos, & Ianetta, 2014; Fisher & Frey, 2013; Kosnik, Menna, Dharamshi, Miyata, & Beck, 2015; Witmer, Schmitt, Clinton, & Mathes, 2017) was an integral segment of this study.

Table 7. Affective Learning Environment and Responsive Pedagogy Frequency

Frequency of Participants Providing data on Affective Learning and Responsive Pedagogy		
Method	Number of Data Points	Instructors Providing Data
Affective Learning	16	9
Responsive Pedagogy	16	12
Both Affective Learning and Responsive Pedagogy in same quote	8	7

These affective learning environments provided a system for delivering individualized teaching to help students become accustomed to the accelerated nature of college. This system also matched the research from other studies (Maguire et al., 2017; van Dinther et al., 2011) as a way to ensure students did not fall farther behind their counterparts. Based on the perceptions of the participants, students in developmental literacy education had already accumulated occasions, such as believing labels other bestowed upon them or their capabilities, where they internalized the feedback as failures and did not see models of success and routes for success, as demonstrated by participant perceptions of progress students were making as the student came back to the instructor reporting on their college-level courses they were now enrolled in.

My analysis of the participants' data also showed that affective learning environments could have helped students to increase self-efficacy toward monitoring their own metacognition. This was important, because participants indicated that, when students were given individualized learning opportunities, they could enjoy the personalized attention to gain skills that would help them shift toward more of the "aha" moments that creates a love for learning. Two participants provided data for maintaining grit and mindsets to maintain students' awareness for their strides in becoming effective students and attaining higher educational goals also suggested these educational moments. This kind of self-regulation through self-efficacy could be exactly the window students needed for greater educational opportunities (van Dither et al., 2011).

In the literature of this thesis, seven psychosocial methods were mentioned that were included in seven studies (Gardner & Holley, 2011; Nguyen & McDaniel, 2016; Pacello, 2014; Padgett et al., 2012; Paunesku et al., 2015; van Dinther et al.,

2011), and five of the seven methods were also used by participants in my study. The psychosocial methods that participants used could be instrumental in bringing their students' self-awareness to the forefront and providing metacognitive moments that could have instilled in them the need to become "part of the college environment" (Pacello, 2014, p. 135). Twelve of the fourteen participants stated their use of mindset development, reframing negative thoughts, changing states of minds, modeling, and effective motivational techniques to reach outcomes that could have created students who were successful by inviting them into an environment and relationship that could foster learning according to their needs. Using these methods gave participants the means to ensure that their students left the course with greater background knowledge to use and to be successful in other courses (van Dinther et al., 2011). Additionally, these methods could have moved students beyond the habit of compartmentalizing acquired content into one course and not using it across other courses (Pacello, 2014).

Several participants mentioned a need for college developmental literacy educators to have some background in psychology. One participant mentioned how negative educational experiences needed to be recreated to present opportunities for reframing the mind and teaching methods of overcoming these hindrances. Another declared how she would like to get into their brains and tilt them into a more positive direction. Others stated that student minds need to be reprogrammed and that educators should be taking advantage of the studies coming out of neuroscience. These uses supported the previous research done by Paunesku et al. (2015).

Summary of Procedure

Data were collected from fourteen instructors and administrators in a developmental education INRW Department within a community college in the

Southwestern United States. Faculty members of this department who volunteered to participate were interviewed over four domains of questions. The four domains of questions were presented to participants during interviews at the field site or by phone, and comments were collected and analyzed into data points. My research analysis yielded ten themes, which directly connected to different aspects of my research question and hypothesis. All data was coded and analyzed for themes and sub-themes.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis of the responses by the participants for this qualitative study answers my research question regarding the manner in which community college instructors and administrators perceive their developmental educational INRW program and if the program met the needs of students in assisting them to become more proficient in literacy. This discussion also considers the notion that all fourteen participants in this community college's newly formed INRW Department expressed the need for affective learning methods to reach and to teach students from varied backgrounds and academic abilities. Recall Sully's data that provided his experiences with students in developmental literacy as being told they couldn't do the work, and so they didn't; but to overcome this, the student, from his perspective, had to embrace their weakness learn that they could learn to write well. Tammie also provided data that, from her perspective, students can learn, but they need tools to do so. This was her reason for providing her students with a unit on grit and mindsets along with discussing what successful students do to be successful. Additionally, I hypothesized that instructors would want more information on available methods to retain and accelerate students learning.

Through my analysis, I found that the community college instructors and administrators in this INRW Department perceived the department as functioning well in meeting the needs of students to become more proficient in reading and writing literacy. Success for three participants was found in their perceptions of students returning to them and reporting how well they were doing since moving forward in their education, students successfully matriculating through INRW levels, and in their personal dedication to finding new ways to reach and to teach students from diverse experiences. One participant stated the purpose of the courses were to make up for deficits and to help students become stronger readers and writers for other courses beyond developmental literacy education because those skills are necessary for college success. Despite the issues of department growth from top down reform concerns to internal struggles of hours required in newly combined classes, faculty and administrators shared that their students were having success in matriculating through the department levels of INRW.

Since I began this research, the hours of the courses have been lengthened from three hours to four hours for the advanced INRW course and three hours for the lower INRW course. Both courses also have a lab associated with the course where students use time to work on assignments with the instructor in the classroom, computer lab, or tutoring lab. Participants reported that their former students come by and see them, or are seen around campus and report they are doing well and using the methods and techniques adopted within the INRW course.

Participants provided data points that reinforced psychosocial methods were needed to provide students with greater opportunities to succeed. They mentioned using methods to increase metacognition, self-confidence, self-reflection, self-efficacy, and motivation. All fourteen participants used many psychosocial methods

like mindset development, reframing negative thoughts, changing states of minds, modeling, and effective motivational techniques without identifying them as methods but rather a part of their pedagogical methods. Four of the participants who created learning situations where students needed to discover their “why” for being in college, visualizations were used but were not identified as a psychosocial tool or a pedagogical method for helping students. Participants did not request information on new methods that are available, but three participants did mention the specific need for faculty to have a psychology background and to use the new information that is coming out of the neuroscience field as it relates to education since third graders are now being introduced to teaching methods derived from neuroscience.

Conclusions

Repeatedly, the results of this qualitative study found participants’ perceptions were accurate in their depiction of success with assisting students toward greater reading and writing literacy levels. Since this study is based on the perceptions of instructors and administrators in this community college’s INRW Department, no domains asked investigatory questions regarding documented numbers of students who pass their courses, go onto other courses in developmental literacy or otherwise, and how many students graduated with associate degrees or certificates. The success of assisting students was important, because through the dissatisfaction of state mandates, the faculty and administrators were able to put those issues aside and deliver curriculums that proved their aspirations to help their students by using responsive pedagogies. Regardless of the number of years of experience participants had in prior educational capabilities, they all held views effectuating the positive use of responsive pedagogies.

Within data points, participants revealed concerns about a move to “discredit”

what they do. This concern stemmed from mandates, which adjusted TSI scores, and attempted to minimize developmental education, handed down from the state's legislature about developmental education. The concern did not stem from the combination of the stand-alone reading and stand-alone writing courses being combined into one course. Participants' data showed that the majority of faculty and administrators held beliefs that the two courses should be taught in conjunction with one another for true integration of skill sets.

Participants shared concerns about the home environments of many of the students, and the problems associated with not having an advocate to help them learn. This meant that instructors had to be creative and use methods to help their students overcome these matters by learning self-efficacy. This further extends the need for what participants perceived as a need in their field, which was faculty being equipped with skills, methods, and strategies to make barriers in education less of a blockade. Since participants viewed students in developmental education courses as being easily overwhelmed, barriers could be a mechanism to halt their progress before they reached college-level courses.

I found that developmental literacy educators were adept at providing enriching opportunities, which promoted reading and writing literacy among their students. These results add to literature, since the results point to the perspectives of instructors and administrators who have direct connections with developmental students on a daily basis. Furthermore, the results indicate that responsive pedagogies in affective environments were better suited for students requiring developmental literacy education.

It is unknown if participants received specific training with regard to psychosocial methods for education. Further research is needed to investigate if these

opportunities are available for instructors. Student perspectives about their instructor's pedagogies and usage of methods are also unknown. Future research is needed to investigate student perspectives in conjunction with instructor perspectives. It is also unknown how many of the students in developmental courses are attending these courses directly after graduating from high school or returning after a number of years. This would be a question to be answered in further research.

Implications

Faculty and administrators within the INRW Department of this community college treated the interview and the purpose of this study as professionals. The aim of this study was to determine how educators perceived the workings of their INRW Department to provide literacy advancement for students. Based on the results of this study, participants had positive perceptions of their department's ability to support their students in meeting the demands of reading and writing literacy required for college-level academics. Participants measured their students' successes based on contact from previous students visiting with them after they had moved on from their developmental literacy courses and reported that they were doing well and using strategies and methods taught to them in the INRW courses. Recall that while only one or two participants' data was provided, the choice to pick their data over the others who may have provided the same data was the participant's ability to clearly and succinctly state their perception. In this study, I provided data from two participants regarding how their perceptions of success were measured by visitations from former students, but this data was echoed from two participants out of six.

Since there appears to be a disconnect between high schools and the preparation needed to succeed in college, developmental education is the best location for students who require skills based on individualized instruction in affective

learning environments. Students could benefit from these levels of individualized attention in environments that create a relaxed environment where they can develop relationships with other students and their instructor. Based on the results of this study, the psychosocial methods used by instructors and administrators in completing their TSI status that made them eligible for college-level courses.

Lastly, I would like to address the transferability of this study. I believe that like the participants in this study who wanted to create greater metacognition for their students to use across many areas of development in their skills toward college-level courses, this study also provided me with an awareness to a variety of topics that developmental literacy educators face, are challenged by, and overcome in providing students with the best educational opportunities. As one participant shared, “[Student] deficiencies just don’t come over night; they are built upon.” It is my hope that the deficiencies that participants referred to would be further researched and insight gained for understanding how to help students to be successful in their educational goals.

In stating my positionality, I mentioned that I wanted to move my own tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge regarding ways that could help students become stronger readers and writers. In observing my participants and hearing, analyzing, and organizing their data, I did see what instructors were doing well and not so well. This data has expanded my experiences and has helped me implement new teaching methods into my own classes. My drive is to assist students toward becoming autonomous learners who push their own growth toward becoming students who exit developmental education and move into college curriculums.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study can be interpreted to point to several possibilities for additional research. First, research needs to be conducted to investigate if there are graduate-level opportunities for educators to seriously study psychosocial methods necessary for helping students become more successful. Some graduate level courses may touch on these methods but are not devoted to teaching students how to use them and when to use them.

Secondly, additional research needs to be directed toward student perspectives of their INRW courses, the instructional methods, affective environments, and psychosocial methods used in the curriculums. In this study, no student perspectives were taken into consideration. Student perceptions can help identify which instructional methods, which qualities of affective learning environments, and which psychosocial methods were most liked and easily assimilated for future usage toward other college-level curriculum, as well as which ones were more difficult to master and use. Putting student and educator perspectives together could provide information that would be useful across many platforms.

Third, by studying the results of this study, I am led to believe that there were other ways to prepare students for college. Future research needs to be focused on reasons why students are in developmental educational courses and if students are attending these courses directly after graduating from high school or returning after a number of years. Knowing this information may also inform educators concerning appropriate methods for assisting students, as well as individualizing instruction.

Lastly, the themes, learning environments, pedagogies, and methods affirmed the validity of participants' perspectives and reaffirmed that learning is a social process. Learning could best occur when it can be useful and meaning can be created.

Psychosocial strategies were able to improve students' reading and writing literacies, because students were given abundant opportunities to move beyond their first college educational situation. Educators gave students chances to relate to each other as well as develop professional relationships with them.

APPENDIX SECTION

APPENDIX A IRB Application Approval

My IRB Home | Application Status | Review Application Data

Stephanie Frausto

APPLICATION REFERENCE NUMBER: 2017291

Application status: Application Approved - Exempt

SECTION 1

Title of project: Instructor Perspectives Towards Developmental Education in an INRW Program at a Community College

If you are a student, please provide the following information about the faculty member that you work with on this project:

Faculty First Name:	Emily	Faculty Last Name:	Summers
Faculty NetID:	es33	Faculty Phone Number:	5122452334
Department/Office:	Curriculum and Instruction		
Is the faculty member aware of the project?	Yes		

View/Download Project Documents

1. 20161122S_Frausto_Sample_Email.docx 2. 20161122S_Frausto_Dept_Chair_Ltr.pdf 3. 20161212Frausto_IRB_Explanation_of_Participants.docx 4. 20161122S_Frausto_LitRev_References.docx 5. 20161122S_Frausto_CITI_Program.pdf 6. 20161212Frausto%20Informed%20Consent_B.doc 7. 20161122S_Frausto_IRB_Application.pdf

Office of Research Compliance, Texas State University

APPENDIX B IRB Certificate



In future correspondence please refer to 2017291

December 21, 2016

Stephanie Frausto
Texas State University
601 University Drive.
San Marcos, TX 78666

Dear Stephanie:

Your IRB application 2017291 titled "Instructor Perspectives Towards Developmental Education in an INRW Program at a Community College" was reviewed and approved by the Texas State University IRB. It has been determined that risks to subjects are: (1) minimized and reasonable; and that (2) research procedures are consistent with a sound research design and do not expose the subjects to unnecessary risk. Reviewers determined that: (1) benefits to subjects are considered along with the importance of the topic and that outcomes are reasonable; (2) selection of subjects is equitable; and (3) the purposes of the research and the research setting is amenable to subjects' welfare and producing desired outcomes; that indications of coercion or prejudice are absent, and that participation is clearly voluntary.

1. In addition, the IRB found that you need to orient participants as follows: (1) informed consent is required; (2) Provision is made for collecting, using and storing data in a manner that protects the safety and privacy of the subjects and the confidentiality of the data; (3) Appropriate safeguards are included to protect the rights and welfare of the subjects. (4) Compensation will not be provided for participation

This project is therefore approved at the Exempt Review Level

2. Please note that the institution is not responsible for any actions regarding this protocol before approval. If you expand the project at a later date to use other instruments, please re-apply. Copies of your request for human subjects review, your application, and this approval, are maintained in the Office of Research Integrity and Compliance.

Report any changes to this approved protocol to this office. All unanticipated events and adverse events are to be reported to the IRB within 3 days.

Sincerely,

Monica Gonzales
IRB Regulatory Manager
Office of Research Integrity and Compliance

CC: Dr. Emily Summers

OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

601 University Drive | JCK #489 | San Marcos, Texas 78666-4616

Phone: 512.245.2314 | fax: 512.245.3847 | WWW.TXSTATE.EDU

This letter is an electronic communication from Texas State University-San Marcos, a member of The Texas State University System.

APPENDIX C Informed Consent

Study Title: Postsecondary Developmental Education Instructor Perspectives Within an Integrated Reading and Writing Department at a Community College

Principal Investigator: Stephanie Frausto

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Emily Summers, Developmental Education

This consent form will give you the information you will need to understand why this research study is being done and why you are being invited to participate. It will also describe what you will need to do to participate as well as any known risks, inconveniences or discomforts that you may have while participating. I encourage you to ask questions at any time. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and it will be a record of your agreement to participate. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

➤ **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

You are invited to participate in a research study to learn more about instructor perspectives in a developmental educational department at the community college level. The information gathered will be utilized to better understand instructor perceptions of areas within the department. You are being asked to participate because you are a faculty member of an Integrated Reading Department in a community college that teaches both developmental reading and developmental writing.

➤ **PROCEDURES**

1. If you agree to be in this study, you will participate in the following:
One one-hour interview about your perceptions of your department I will set up a time for you to meet me at one of the community college campuses. You will first complete an information sheet for demographic purposes.
2. If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to participate in one interview between December 16, 2016 and conclude by February 28, 2017. The interview will last approximately one hour. During the interviews, I will ask you questions regarding your teaching experience, developmental education, and literacy. The interview will be audio-recorded, and I will take notes as well.
3. I will invite all Integrated Reading and Writing department faculty at this community college to individually meet with me to discuss their perspectives in a developmental educational department at the community college level. Discussion topics include your teaching experience, developmental education, and literacy. To protect privacy, all transcripts will be coded with pseudonyms and I ask that you not discuss what is discussed in the interview with anyone else. The interview will last about one hour and I will audiotape the discussion to make sure that it is recorded accurately.

➤ **RISKS/DISCOMFORTS**

The interview will include a survey section requesting demographic information. There is no greater risk than in a routine developmental education department meeting. I will make every effort to protect your confidentiality. However, if you are uncomfortable answering any of these questions, you may skip the question.

Frausto Interview Protocol*

Region:

CC District:

Campus:

Interviewee (Name/Title):

Interviewer: Stephanie Frausto

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Location:

Notes:

Interview Sections Utilized: Degree of Fidelity to Protocol (Check if Used/Applicable):

_____ **Pre-Interview**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol ____%

_____ **Topic Domain I: Demographic Information and Professional/Role Developmental**

Background

Degree of Conformity to Protocol ____%

_____ **Topic Domain II: Teaching Background**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol ____%

_____ **Topic Domain III: Developmental Education Program at Community College**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol ____%

_____ **Topic Domain IV: Literacy Interrelation with Developmental Educational Program at Community College**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol ____%

_____ **Conclusions:**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol ____%

_____ **Follow Up/Thank You Email**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol ____%

_____ **Other Topics Discussed:**

_____ **Documents/Artifacts Collected:**

_____ **Post Interview Comments/Concerns/Irregularities:**

_____ **Length of Interview:**

Pre-Interview

A. Introductory Narrative: Purpose of the study, length of interview, possible need for follow up questions/interviews, thank you for participation, etc.

B. Welcome Script: Welcome and thank you for your participation. I am Stephanie Frausto, a graduate student at Texas State University in the Developmental Education Literacy Master's program.

C. Informed Consent: This study should involve minimal risk and discomfort. The probability of harm and discomfort should not be any greater than your daily work as a [insert role]. Risks may include emotional discomfort from answering interview questions.

D. Other Permissions: To facilitate documentation and analysis may I digitally record this interview? Get signed release form. Any artifacts/documents to share, etc.

E. Interview Overview: My interview will not exceed one hour in length. During this time, I will cover three topics, including your teaching background, the Developmental Education Program at your community college, and Literacy interrelation with the Developmental Education Program at your community college. While I value the many diverse aspects of your position, my focus only extends to aspects of your work related to Developmental Reading, Writing or Integrated Reading and Writing. Thus, I may occasionally need to redirect your response or prompt you to a subsequent question, so that I can respect the focus of our discussion and your time while remaining within the one-hour time expectation.

F. Introduction/Rationale: I have requested to interview you because you are an instructor in the Integrated Reading and Writing Department for your community college. When responding, please orient your answers from the point-of-view of your official role as an instructor. If you have additional developmental educational experiences beyond this role and campus, you are welcome to tell me about it in any remaining time at the end of the interview or in a follow up email correspondence.

G. Goals & Expectations: My literacy research, with particular interest in teacher backgrounds, developmental education programs, and literacy will investigate instructor perspectives on the function of the developmental program. My goal is to learn more about your college's experiences with the Developmental educational process and outcomes to date, especially those that help to improve cognitive aspects of the program.

Topic Domain I: Demographic Information & Professional Role/ Developmental Background

Age: 21-30 ____ 31-40 ____ 41-50 ____ 51-60 ____
 61-70 ____ 71-80 ____ 81-90 ____ 91-100 ____

Highest Degree: Bachelors ____ Masters ____ Doctorate ____

Years, Current CC Role

<1 ____ 1-3 ____ 4-9 ____ 10-20 ____
 21-30 ____ 31-40 ____ 41-50 ____ 51-60 ____

Years with CC District

<1 ____ 1-3 ____ 4-9 ____ 10-20 ____
 21-30 ____ 31-40 ____ 41-50 ____ 51-60 ____

Years DEVR/DEVW/INRW Exp.

<1 ____ 1-3 ____ 4-9 ____ 10-20 ____
 21-30 ____ 31-40 ____ 41-50 ____ 51-60 ____

Total Years Teaching of Post-Secondary <1 ____ 1-3 ____ 4-9 ____ 10-20 ____
 21-30 ____ 31-40 ____ 41-50 ____ 51-60 ____

Course Taught/ Courses Teaching

Geography (indicate all that apply)

Rural ____ Semi-Rural ____ Suburban ____
 Semi-Urban ____ Urban ____

Notes: _____

OTHER?

Topic Domain II: Teaching Background

1. What experiences led you to teaching?
2. Tell me about your journey to this community college.
3. Why did you choose to teaching [Reading or Writing or INRW]?
4. I see that you teach [information taken from Domain I]. If you had a magic wand what would you change in the classes you teach?
[Follow Up Probes: How would you change it?]
5. Tell me about your teaching style or methods.
[Follow Up Probes: Are there any methods you would like to phase out or phase in? Have you ever encountered student resistance to your teaching style or methods? Tell me about these experiences. How did you handle them?]
6. Looking out 1 to 2 years, then five years, and lastly ten years, what would you change in your teaching? [Follow Up Probes: Of these changes, which is most likely to occur?]

Topic Domain III: Developmental Education at Your Community College

7. Tell me about the developmental [reading, writing, or INRW] program at your community college.
[Follow Up Probes: What does it offer students?]
8. What could current developmental education students use that is not in their program right now?
9. What successes do student have in [DEVR, DEVW, or INRW]?
[Follow Up Probes: Are there any times when students don't succeed?]
10. If a graduate student were to want to become a post-secondary reading teacher, is there any advice that you would offer the student?

Topic Domain IV: Literacy Interrelation with Developmental Education Program at Your Community College

11. How do you define literacy?
[Follow Up Probes: Is literacy improving, staying the same, getting worse, etc. How do you know? (criteria, evidence)]
12. How does your definition of literacy align with the department's definition of literacy?
[Follow Up Probes: reasons or influences for why it does or does not align]
13. What aspects of literacy do developmental [reading, writing, or INRW] students require?

14. Are there any kinds of assessments that most accurately capture what, if any, areas students are gaining?

[Follow Up Probe: Are there any assessments used to ensure a student's attainment of literacy?]

Conclusions:

Before I conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share about teaching, the developmental educational program at your community college, or literacy and department that you did not get a chance to say?

Post Interview Comments and/or Observations

In the unlikely event that some of the survey or interview questions make you uncomfortable or upset, you are always free to decline to answer or to stop your participation at any time. Should you feel discomfort after participating and you are a Texas State University student, you may contact the University Health Services for counseling services at list 512-245-2161. They are located 298 Student Center Dr., San Marcos, Texas 78666.

*I have placed the protocol for my interview in this document because the master template required me to “*Insert this language for survey and interview questions.*” However, it will not be in the Consent Form I give to participants.

➤ **BENEFITS/ALTERNATIVES**

There will be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study. However, the information that you provide will facilitate a deeper understanding of instructor perspectives of developmental education.

➤ **EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

Reasonable efforts will be made to keep the personal information in your research record private and confidential. Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. The members of the research team and the Texas State University Office of Research Compliance (ORC) may access the data. The ORC monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Your name will not be used in any written reports or publications, which result from this research. Data will be kept for three years (per federal regulations) after the study is completed and then destroyed.

➤ **PAYMENT/COMPENSATION**

There is no payment or compensation for participating in this study.

➤ **PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY**

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw from it at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

In addition, Austin Community College wants you to know that your participation in this study in no way means that ACC’s involvement is an endorsement of this project.

➤ **QUESTIONS**

If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this study, you may contact the Principal Investigator, Stephanie Frausto: 512-992-5543: s_fl126@txstate.edu, or Faculty Advisor, Dr. Emily Summers: 512-245-1743: ejsummers@txstate.edu

This project 2017291 was approved by the Texas State IRB on 12/21/16 Pertinent questions or concerns about the research, research participants' rights, and/or research-related injuries to participants should be directed to the IRB Chair, Dr. Jon Lasser 512-245-3413 – (lasser@txstate.edu) or to Monica Gonzales, IRB Regulatory Manager 512-245-2314 - (meg201@txstate.edu).

DOCUMENTATION OF CONSENT

I have read this form and decided that I will participate in the project described above. Its general purposes, the particulars of involvement and possible risks have been explained to my satisfaction. I understand I can withdraw at any time.

Printed Name of Study
Participant

Signature of Study
Participant

Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date

APPENDIX D Sample E-mail to Faculty of Community College

Dear Professor Last Name,

I am a graduate student at Texas State University, and I am working on my thesis for the fulfillment of my Master's Degree in Developmental Education, Literacy. I am currently conducting interviews for research on instructor perspectives on Developmental Education. I am interested in having you participate in my study. Your comments will be confidential, and your identity will be masked. This interview will take approximately one hour.

Even though I have an office at one of the colleges' campuses, I am able to come to your campus if you are located at a campus different from mine.

If you have any questions about my research, you may email me back or call me 512-223-4710 or contact my Texas State Faculty Advisor, Dr. Emily Summers at ejsummers@txstate.edu or 512-245-1743.

I thank you for your consideration of my request and the time you invest in my study. I will follow up this email with a phone call in a day or two.

Kindest regards,

Stephanie Frausto
Graduate Student
Developmental Education, Literacy
Texas State University
San Marcos, Texas 78666

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