

TEACHERS, PREACHERS, OR...: GOALS OF
VOLUNTEER CHURCH-BASED
ESL INSTRUCTORS

by

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A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

For many years, Christian churches have been used as sites for education, including language education. Within churches, ESL classes are often staffed by volunteers who provide tutoring for adults. Recently, the ultimate end of Christian ELT in general has been a subject of debate among academics and professionals. On one side, researchers are concerned that certain Christian educators are more devoted to the prospect of converting students to Christianity and Western values than teaching English. Conversely, researchers who support the work of Christian educators argue that moral devotion to one's faith augments rather than hinders teaching, and that the hallmark of a Christian teacher is love for students. This study does not evaluate the appropriateness of incorporation of faith or the ethics of Christian educators. Rather, this research attempts to determine whether the speculated goals of Christian ELT in this debate are corroborated by church-based ESL instructors. The study consists of a survey of 14 educators or former educators at Baptist, Presbyterian and Catholic churches in central Alabama, along with three supplementary interviews. Participants were asked to rank a list of goals according to importance and accomplishment in the classroom and explain their motives for teaching. Overall, it was determined that teaching-based goals are significantly more important than faith-based goals for this group of educators, allowing for limitations regarding self-reporting and disclosure. Further inspection suggests that Baptist educators may incorporate more faith-based goals into their teaching than Catholic, Presbyterian or non-denominational educators. It was also found that teachers identify themselves as teachers only or occasionally friends to their students, and building relationships with students is important to this community of practice.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, who has loved and encouraged me throughout my graduate career, and my parents, who have dedicated their time and energy to helping me succeed. Lastly, this thesis is for my daughter, who has inspired me to be the best mother I can be. I couldn't have done this without all of you.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

<i>ESL</i>	English as a Second Language
<i>ELT</i>	English Language Teaching
<i>NAMB</i>	North American Mission Board
<i>SBC</i>	Southern Baptist Convention

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INTRODUCTION

Theoretical Framework

Communities of Practice

Like any community, volunteer English teachers working from Christian churches are perceived as having a shared set of values and beliefs that influence their practices. Their practices, in turn, influence their students. From an educational perspective, church-based ESL teachers can be considered a community of practice. According to Wenger's definition, communities of practice are "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly." (2015). In this sense, church-based ESL instructors share a domain, or specific interest, that unifies them. This definition is apt for church-based ESL teachers, many of whom have not taught in a formal setting and must therefore become "self-taught" teachers, relying on the skills and resources of more experienced volunteers and sharing practices that have been successful with students. Within a church program, volunteer instructors may discuss their practices among each other, fostering the interaction (i.e. community) necessary to form a community of practice. (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Instructors may also share ideas and collaborate via religious conferences and networking, thus building a larger community.

Here one must consider a possible conundrum of definition. Certainly if instructors within a church interact and share ideas, they would be considered, by the above definition, a community of practice. But if they do not interact with any other instructors, are they part of a larger community? The simple answer is no, but this study does demonstrate evidence that this

group shares ideas and interacts, if not via direct communication between instructors, then through less formal interactions that nevertheless serve to strengthen instructors' skills and beliefs. While this study did not address inter-church communication directly, at least one participant mentioned interactions between churches within a denomination. Within this study overall, we can postulate that each church serves as a community of practice that works within the domain of church-based English teaching.

A community of practice does not relate simply to shared skills, but rather to a shared set of beliefs, cultural norms, and identities (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Since this group is made up of volunteers, their "payment" as it were is the fulfillment of their passion to work with English learners. This framework, in turn, perceives learning not simply as a cognitive function, but also that of social interactions—interactions from instructor to instructor, instructor to student and student to student. To put it succinctly, learning is a "social learning system" (Wenger, 2012; p. 1). As a result, classroom interaction is informed and shaped by the beliefs of both the instructor and the student.

Identity Theory

The second pillar that forms the theoretical framework for this study addresses the identity of the instructors within the classroom. Along with students, instructors come to the classroom with beliefs and self-concepts, and those beliefs, be they spiritual, political, sociocultural, etc., are not separated from the act of teaching (Purgason, 2004; Duff and Uchida, 1997). According to Duff and Uchida (1997), "...language teachers are very much involved in the transmission of culture, and each selection of videos, newspaper clippings, seating plans, activities, and so on has social, cultural, and educational significance." (p. 476). Such beliefs about teachers' roles as instructors and their ultimate purpose can drastically influence the

formation of goals in the classroom and the manifestation of those goals. However, just as identity is not static, it is also not neatly bound simply by presence in a certain social or cultural group (Giles & Byrne, 1982; Gumperz, 1982). In other words, in all groups, there is room for individual variation, and the values of this group of instructors may not be as unified as an outsider might deduce.

Once we have acknowledged the social nature of teaching and learning, we must then acknowledge the effect that identity has on that process. Neither social interaction nor identity is static, which can lead to negotiation of identity based on the parameters of a certain interaction (Duff & Uchida, 1997). In regards to faith, which is a primary focus in this study, we can see how the faith identity and teacher identity of the instructors can be coexistent, or at odds.

According to Morgan (2009), while research on teacher identity is readily available, a particular focus on spirituality and religion in regard to identity formation lags behind other sociocultural facets of identity. Wong (2013), in studying three Christian Caucasian teachers in China, found that four major factors contributed to teacher identity formation over the course of 10 years: “baggage brought,” including faith, teaching experience and gender; “hand dealt,” including teaching and administrative atmosphere; “support system;” and “political climate.”

In this thesis, we also see that denominational variation, and not simply spirituality, may influence instructors’ dual teacher identity/religious identity, with some instructors integrating the two identities while others are compelled to separate them entirely. In one case, we see that the faith identity of the students, rather than the teacher, informs classroom practice, further indicating that identity formation, and in turn practice, cannot be separated from two-way interaction.

Defining the Identity of the Church English Language Instructor (from Without and Within)

The influence of Christian church-based teachers on English teaching, both in the United States and around the world, cannot be denied. For centuries, churches have been sites of education, and the work of missionaries spreading both English and Christianity is well documented. However, the goals, effects and ethics of church-based English teaching have been hotly debated in the past 15 years. Despite Christianity and ELT's long history, there is a relative dearth of empirical research on Christian English language teaching and teachers. On one side, researchers (many of them non-religious) criticize Christian organizations for operating an objective of religious conversion and spreading conservative American values along with Christianity, rather than English (Pennycook & Coutand-Marin, 2003; Edge, 2003). On the other side, researchers (many of them Christian) argue that Christian organizations wish to serve and meet student needs, and that being a dedicated teacher and establishing relationships based on respect, rather than attempting to convert, is the hallmark of a Christian English language teacher (Baurain, 2013; Pasquale, 2013). Varghese and Johnston (2007), both of whom identified themselves as non-religious, pointedly address the schism between critical and supportive researchers: "We are concerned that many nonevangelical ELT professionals have little real understanding of evangelical Christianity, and that much of the recent literature takes a hostile approach to its topic, condemning without seeking to understand." (p. 28).

The text that seems to have kick-started the debate between critical and Christian researchers of late was not empirical per se, but its subsequent popularity within the field, and the criticism of it that followed, indicated that the topic of Christian English language teaching was ripe for debate. In this text, Edge (2003) argued that Christians' goals in English teaching are both imperial and also surreptitious, and that all students should be able to rest assured in the

fact that student needs are the teacher's primary concern, and not some other pressing desire or agenda. His assertions are linked to the then-recent invasion of Iraq under the Bush administration, in that Christian English teachers to the Middle East are spreading both Christianity and Western imperialism in the same lesson, so to speak. In lieu of empirical data, Edge writes that exchanges with Christian colleagues suggest that overall, teaching English for the primary purpose of conversion is an accepted Christian practice (2003). In response, Purgason described Edge's conflation of political imperialism and Christianity as "simplistic," in that it ignores the fact that many Christians do not agree with the political beliefs of the administration that invaded the Middle East, and in fact that most Christians today "are from Asia, Africa, and Latin America." (2004). From this scholarly dialogue, one can see that word choice, tone and veiled assertions of judgement without data can lead to heated debate. Like Edge, Pennycook and Coutand-Marin (2003) expressed deep concern over those who "teach English as a missionary language" (TEML), particularly in regard to using English teaching not as a goal, but as a vehicle for the ultimate goal of proselytizing. In the field of missionaries who teach English, the authors report that, "all" see English as a way to spread Christianity, and all see English as a field for mission work. The authors condense their concerns to four issues: the number of mission groups teaching English; the connection between Christianity and certain political views; "trust and disclosure" of missionary goals and values; and the implicit "global spread" of English as a form of cultural imperialism. Like Edge's article, this article was written soon after the Iraq invasion under the Bush administration, and condemns the "extreme Christian right" of the Bush administration--"promoting creationism, inequality, homophobia and militarism, and denying the significance of evolution, welfare, intellectual activity and the right

to be different.” In contrast, the authors describe Christians who teach mission English as an act of service as “more liberal” and also more forthcoming and trustworthy about faith motivations.

At this point, one can begin to see a certain divide among scholars that hinges on the motivations (and, interestingly, politics) of Christian English instructors. In “Evangelical Christians and English Language Teaching,” (2007) Varghese and Johnston attempt to address this debate empirically by interviewing 10 English teachers in training at two Christian universities. This article addresses the “paucity” of research related to evangelical Christians despite the wealth of work this group does within the field, argues that a “lack of clarity and simple knowledge on both sides” has led to unchecked stereotypes, particularly in regard to “evangelicals,” whom the authors define as Southern Baptist, Pentecostal, charismatic and fundamentalist. The authors noted that most participants didn’t agree with the notion of direct conversion, and instead believed in “planting seeds.” Interestingly, the study reports that most participants were not “particularly concerned” with denominational markers, although the authors redefine the participants’ understanding of “Christian” as actually meaning “evangelical Christian.” Ultimately, the authors found that these teachers-in-training were “wrestling” to reconcile the desire to respect students and not directly convert, but also not ignore or deny their beliefs (2007).

The question of whether the debate surrounding Christian English language teachers can be resolved, or in fact if dialogue is even feasible, was addressed in a book-length compilation at the end of the 2000s. (Wong & Canagarajah, 2009). This work, again, is not empirical in nature, but rather serves as a textual forum in which both critical and Christian researchers address their concerns and beliefs. Johnston (2009) included a chapter in this work, which was aptly (though perhaps not surprisingly, considering assertions his previous study) titled “Is Dialogue Possible?”

In this chapter, he urges evangelical Christians to avoid publishing “by and for Christians” if they want to be seen as transparent rather than “furtive” by non-evangelical colleagues, although he acknowledges that a lack of interest from non-evangelicals might also be part of the problem. He also challenges non-evangelicals to neither “essentialize” nor “dismiss” both the work and beliefs of evangelical colleagues, and encourages both sides to “admit that the other side may sometimes be right.” (Johnston, 2009; p. 43)

Aside from Varghese and Johnston’s interview data, little concrete data existed on this subject until 2013, when researchers Canagarajah, Shepard Wong, Kristjánsson, and Dörnyei compiled relevant research into *Christian Faith and English Language Teaching and Learning: Research on the Interrelationship of Religion and ELT* (2013). In the introduction of this text, the editors assert that at least part of the motivation behind the compilation was influenced by the dissolution of TESOL International Christian caucus. Thus, “As a former leader within the Christian caucus, Mary [Wong] started to consider how more rigorous research on faith and teaching, including publications in peer-reviewed journals, might help to legitimize the area of faith and ELT, by means of publications and conferences not only within Christian circles, but also outside them.” (Canagarajah, Wong, Kristjánsson, & Dörnyei, 2013, p. 4). Hence, the editors assert, increased empirical data may help legitimize the work of Christian English language teachers, and also, as Johnston implored, increase the perceived transparency of the work of this community of practice.

Additionally, from research in 2013 and 2014, Chao found that volunteer church ESL programs served as a site for family literacy promotion and community building, but also as a “figured world” that promoted Christian values, leading to curiosity in some students and resistance in others. These studies focused primarily on the perceptions of the students in a

Christian program and the semiotics of that environment, rather than the stated goals of instructors.

English language learners and faith-based programs

According to the U.S. Department of Education, under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act approximately 1.5 million adult learners received government funded education in 2014-2015, and 44% of those adult students were English learners, with 64% of those learners being of Hispanic or Latino origin (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). However, in 2011 the U.S. Census Bureau found that 60.5 million people in the United States speak a language other than English at home, 9.3 million people report speaking English “not well” and another 4.2 million people report speaking English “not at all” (Ryan, 2013). While naturally one cannot assume that this section of the population wants to learn English, the difference between approximately 660,000 English learners and 13.5 million people who speak little to no English in the United States is fairly staggering. There are a number of factors that can affect English learners and their ability to take organized classes, including financial and work responsibilities, familial responsibilities, class availability and class location. (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2010). Many faith-based programs are formed because of their proximity to non-English-speaking communities and a community need for English learning programs. The U.S. government has also acknowledged the potential usefulness of faith-based services, and has provided government funding in some cases (and, arguably, blurring the line that separates church and state). The White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives was established by George W. Bush in 2001. It was supported by Barack Obama and renamed the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships under his administration.

This organization acts a bridge of sorts between government and faith-based organizations, in which those organizations serve needs within the community with the possibility of government cooperation and funding (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). To aid programs focusing on teaching specifically, the Department of Education also distributes an education newsletter to faith-based and secular community teaching programs.

In this study, the issue of government funding was unaddressed, as all participants worked on an entirely volunteer basis through volunteer programs.

Motivation and design of this study

This study focuses on volunteer ESL teachers who work out of Baptist, Presbyterian and Catholic churches in central Alabama. I have found this population to be worthy of study for a number of reasons. Since this group works entirely on a volunteer basis, they have no career-driven or monetary motivation for espousing any particular beliefs--unlike, say, a missionary being paid by a mission organization or an instructor in a language academy. While faith-based motivations can be powerful, there's also no question that financial security and maintaining one's career are powerful motivators—motivators that this group of instructors do not have. I believe that makes them somewhat singular. Also, I have personal motivations for recognizing and legitimizing the needs of the students whom these instructors teach, many of whom would not receive outside instruction otherwise, due to monetary constraints, compromised legal status or pressing outside responsibilities. I believe that if we do not first research the work of this group of teachers, we will not identify what the teachers do as legitimate teaching. Therefore, we may not identify their students as legitimate learners who need support, study and resources in order to succeed. Due to constraints of time and resources (which will be discussed in greater

detail under Limitations and Further Study) it was deemed necessary to focus on instructors for this study. However, in an ideal setting, student perspectives and beliefs regarding instructors' incorporation of faith in the classroom and the most appropriate goals for classroom instruction should be analyzed and included in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of this issue.

This data derived from this study were deemed necessary and useful considering the debate that exists among scholars who speculate or assume the goals and motivations of instructors, sometimes without directly addressing instructors themselves. This study seeks to examine the driving goals and motivations of the community of practice of volunteer church English teachers, and how those goals are accomplished in the classroom. Overall, with the data from this study, I seek to answer these questions:

RQ1: What goals do volunteer church-based ESL instructors identify as important within the classroom?

RQ2: What motivations do volunteer church-based ESL instructors report that influence their practice?

RQ3: How do volunteer church-based ESL instructors identify their role in regard to their students?

METHOD

Design and Recruitment

This is an exploratory study involving a study of 14 instructors at church-based ESL programs and interviews with three instructors. The survey was designed to determine what goals this community of practice finds important in the classroom, and also what goals are manifested in classroom practice. This survey also attempted to determine how these instructors perceive their identity in the classroom—i.e. whether they are English instructors, spiritual guides, cultural guides, etc. The guiding theories of communities of practice (how this community sets and achieves goals as a whole) and teacher identity formation (how teachers shape and perceive their own identities as instructors in this setting) were used to design and inform survey questions. Regarding the survey design it was initially considered a possibility within this study that instructors could simply report their goals, but it was soon realized that purely individualized responses could easily produce data in which few correlations were possible. So, a list 17 goals was created based on the researcher's own experienced and observed goals within the field. With this list, it was important to understand which goals were paramount to teachers, but also which goals were truly unimportant, and which goals carried some importance but were not crucial to the class. To this end, participants were asked in Question 1 to rank only their top five goals, from most to least important, which was far more manageable than ranking 17 goals from most to least important. A Likert-scale question was developed for Question 2, in which the participants were asked to rank the relative importance of each goal, with 0 being Not Important and 10 being Extremely Important.

There is also the possibility of discrepancy in goal importance versus manifestation of goals within the classroom. To address this possibility, Question 3 is also a Likert-scale question, but participants were instead asked to rate each goal in terms of how often that goal was manifested, or accomplished, in the classroom, with 0 being Never and 10 being Always. To address the possibility that participants may have goals that were not mentioned, Question 4 asks if the participant can think of any other important, and heretofore unaddressed, goals.

Questions 5 through 9 ask for elaboration related to Questions 1, 2, and 3. Within these questions, participants were asked to explain what motivates them to teach (Q5), what role they play in regard to their students (Q6), when the participants meet with their students, and if they meet outside of class (Q7), what materials they use (Q8), and how they recruit or spread information about their classes (Q9). Questions 7, 8, and 9 may not appear particularly relevant to a study regarding the goals of this community of practice, but they are designed to provide additional insight regarding the instructor/student relationship. If instructors and students in this community meet outside of class or spend significant time socializing beyond the classroom, approaching the subject of faith may be viewed in less of an instructor/student paradigm and more in a peer-to-peer paradigm. Conversely, if the relationship between instructor and student is largely confined to the classroom, discussion of faith could be perceived as teaching faith rather than simply a discussion among friends. Question 8 concerns whether instructors use biblical or faith-based texts, if they use a widely available secular text, or if they rely on self-designed materials. Question 9 concerns whether instructors look for students from within the congregation (who are therefore more devout or at least more open to faith-based teaching), or if they look for students beyond the congregation. In the case of outside recruitment, one might

argue that inviting students to the church, even for language classes, may be a form of proselytizing. The complete survey is provided in the Appendix.

Since the participants would be operating via institutions outside the university (i.e. churches), it was necessary to obtain support from the churches themselves. Internet resources were used to find free ESL classes within Alabama (most of which were churches). These churches were then contacted and support was obtained from seven. As the study progressed, other independent participants were sourced via word of mouth, and the researcher was able to modify the study such that recruitment via word of mouth was acceptable. Then either a church representative was contacted via email, who then disseminated an email with a link to the survey in Qualtrics, or the researcher contacted the potential participants themselves if their contact information was directly given. Through this process 14 viable participants were obtained from several churches of Baptist, Presbyterian and Catholic faiths. All participants either were currently teaching ESL through a church or have taught ESL through a church.

Each participant was also given the option of consent to only the survey or to both the survey and a follow-up interview. Four of the 14 consented to the follow-up interview, and three responded to post-survey requests and were interviewed. While the interviews were individualized based on the instructors' survey responses, each instructor was asked similar questions, primarily related to their beliefs on incorporating faith or Christianity in the classroom.

IRB approval was obtained for all aspects of the study (IRB letter included in Appendix.)

Analysis

This study provided both numerical and descriptive data that served to support each other in a deeper understanding of this group of instructors. The instructors' most important goals were

organized by their overall popularity. The ratings of the instructors' importance of all 17 goals were also averaged and analyzed as a group rating for each goal. The ratings of goal manifestation in the classroom were also averaged and analyzed as a group rating for each goal. Statistical analysis was also performed to determine significant differences in goal ratings. Additionally, the data were organized into Baptist instructors and instructors of other faith backgrounds and then analyzed to determine if significant denominational differences existed.

Descriptive responses were carefully read and then organized according to common themes—ESL instructor as altruist, ESL instructor as spiritual ambassador, and ESL instructor as cultural insider—using identity construction and communities of practice as guiding theories. When necessary and illuminating, direct quotations from participants were used to support analysis. Finally, the interviews were conducted using questions based on reported survey data. The data from the surveys of the three interviewees was examined to determine to what extent the interviewees valued faith-based goals, community outreach goals and language teaching goals. The interviewees were then asked to elaborate on the goals they determined to be most and least important, and they were asked to elaborate on their motivations in the classroom. The interviewees were also asked the question, “What does ‘share the love of God’ mean to you?” Interview answers to these questions were then carefully deconstructed and analyzed with particular scrutiny whenever they either supported or contradicted survey data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study have been organized into two larger sections. The first section contains the numerical responses for this study, which contain data gathered from survey Q1, Q2 and Q3 and analysis and explanation of this data. This section features several figures and tables that facilitate presentation of the data in an accessible way. The second section contains reporting and discussion of the open-ended section of the survey and data from the three interviews. This section is split into several subsections that examine the data first from an identity approach, and then from a communities of practice approach.

Numerical Responses

This data served primarily to determine what this community of practice values in the classroom, and what goals are accomplished in classroom practice. The data from Q1, a forced-choice question in which instructors ranked their top five goals in the classroom, was organized in two ways. Firstly, the goals that instructors ranked as most important was analyzed separately (See Fig. 1). Since this was the goal that instructors reported was most important to them, one may surmise that this goal informs this community of practice to a great extent. Then the total top five goals were ranked from least common to most common (See Fig. 2). Some goals were not included in any instructor's top five ranking. Survey Q2 and Q3 asked instructors to rank the importance and accomplishment, respectively, of all 17 goals listed. This data was analyzed to determine classroom values overall (Fig. 3 and 4), and also to analyze differences between Baptist and non-Baptist instructors (Fig 5 and 6).

Overall, teaching English for daily communicative purposes ranked far and away as the most important goal, with nine out of 14 participants ranking this goal as most important, and another four participants ranking it within their top five goals. Below is a chart of the most important goals (the number 1 goal reported, or first goal reported), by the 14 participants.



Figure 1: Instructors' most important reported goals.

Teaching students speaking and listening was also a popular goal; three participants listed it as their most important goal, while the remaining nine listed it in their top five goals. In contrast, leading students to join a church, teaching students English from the Bible, preparing students for citizenship tests and preparing students for English-based testing were never reported as top five goals. However, one participant reported that sharing the love of God was

his most important goal. Below is a chart of the top five goals overall, by number of total responses given.

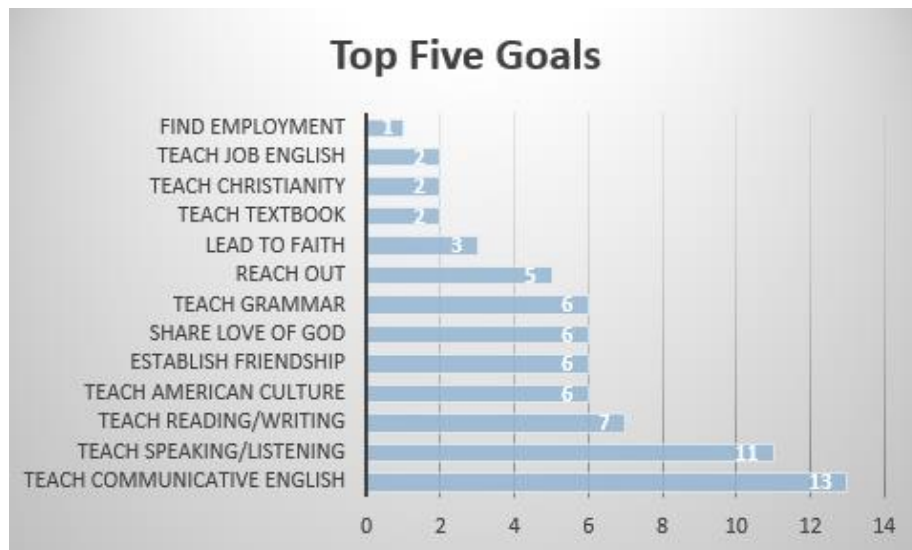


Figure 2: Instructors' top five reported goals.

Likewise, in Likert scale ratings, teaching English for daily communicative purposes was the highest rated goal in regard to importance, following by teaching speaking and listening, establishing friendships with students, and teaching reading and writing. “Lead students to join the church” received the lowest score, followed by “Teach students from the Bible,” “Lead students to your faith,” and “Teach students about Christianity.” As expected, the correlation between goal importance and goal manifestation was related, but not direct. Across the board, no rating of classroom manifestation equaled the importance of any goal. Interestingly, “Establish friendships with your students” scored highest in terms of accomplishment, while “Teach English for daily communicative purposes” scored third highest. Faith-based goals were the only goals that rated in the single digits in classroom manifestation. Below are charts providing the averaged “scores” of each goal in terms of importance and classroom accomplishment, respectively, out of a possible 10.

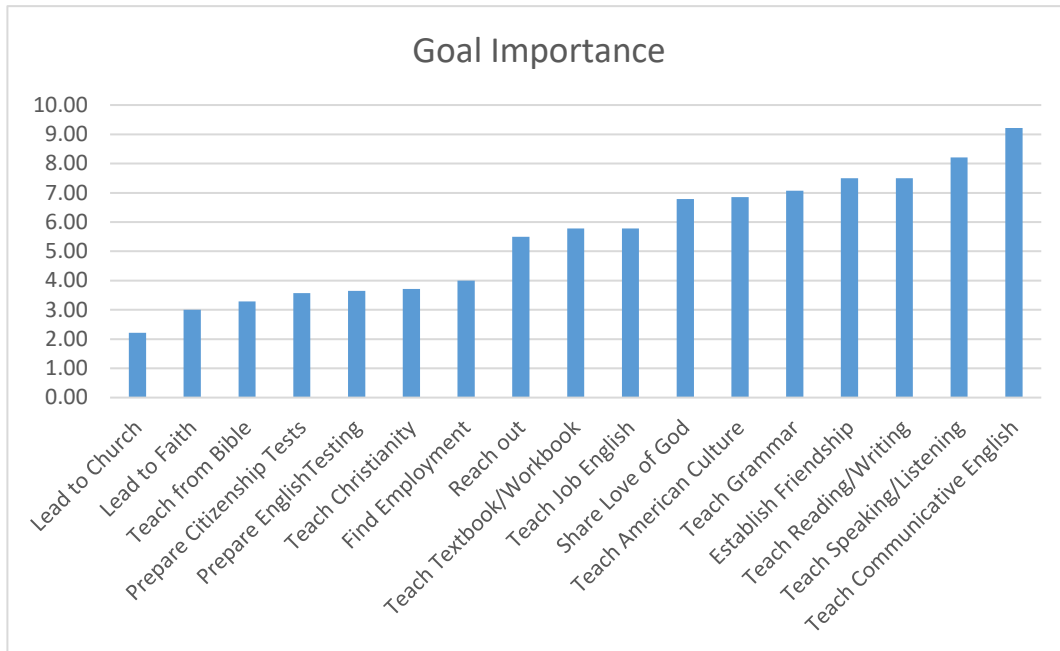


Figure 3: The average rated importance of each goal, from lowest to highest score.

In order to further analyze the data, a paired-samples T-test was performed to determine if the difference in importance ratings between goals could be deemed significant. The difference between teaching communicative English (9.21) and teaching speaking and listening (8.21) was not deemed to be significant, but the difference between teaching communicative English and teaching reading and writing (7.50) was significant. Additionally, the difference between teaching speaking and listening and establishing friendship (7.50) was not significant, but the difference between teaching speaking and listening and sharing the love of God (6.79) was significant. Overall, it can be gathered that there is a greater emphasis on language-based goals over faith-based goals throughout this group as a whole.

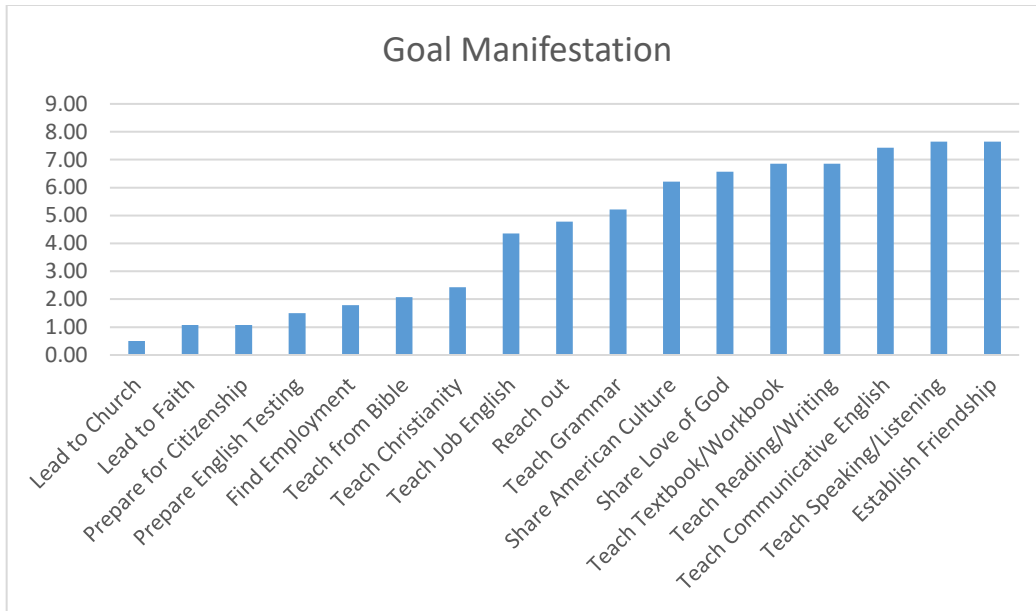


Figure 4: The average rating of goal manifestation from lowest to highest score.

According to analysis with a paired-samples T-test, there is no significant difference in the ratings of goal manifestation of the seven highest rated goals (establishing friendship [7.64] through sharing American culture [6.21]). Ultimately, within this small sample of instructors, proselytizing was not a highly reported goal, although it was included. Of the 17 stated goals, “lead students to join your church” and “lead students to your faith” ranked the lowest in terms of classroom importance and classroom practice. However, the goal “Share the love of God” received a moderate to moderately high rating overall, the reasons for which will be considered in the Discussion section.

Varghese and Johnston (2007) categorized evangelical Christians as those of Fundamentalist, Baptist and Pentecostal denominations, among others. Edge (2013) and Pennycook and Coutand-Marin (2003) identified the evangelical Christian position as pertaining to those Christians whose primary goal it is to convert “by means fair or foul” (Pennycook & Coutand-Marin, 2003). Neither of these classifications reference a specific theological doctrine,

but they do highlight the complexity and variable interpretations of “evangelical.” While there is theological debate regarding what “evangelical Christian” means, not all Baptists or Southern Baptist can be categorized as evangelical, and this study does not attempt to give its own definition of evangelical, it was noticed that certain faith-based assertions were more prevalent among Baptist participants. Therefore, it was deemed useful to examine average ratings of goal importance and goal manifestation among those who identified themselves as Baptist (seven of 14 participants) and those who identified themselves by other denominations: Catholic (three participants), Presbyterian (two participants) non-denominational (one participant) and one participant who did not specify denomination. It should also be noted that one instructor through a Catholic church identified as not religious, though involved in a faith-based teaching program (which will be analyzed under Open-Ended Responses). Those results are shown in the figures below.

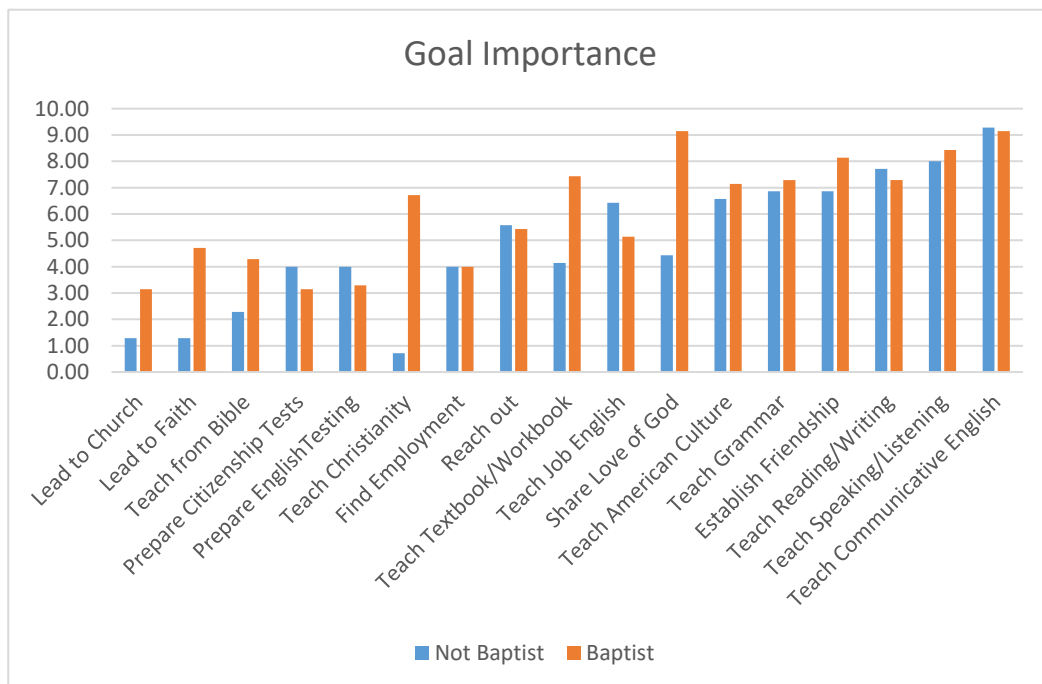


Figure 5: Average rated goal importance of instructors who identified as Baptist versus instructors who did not.

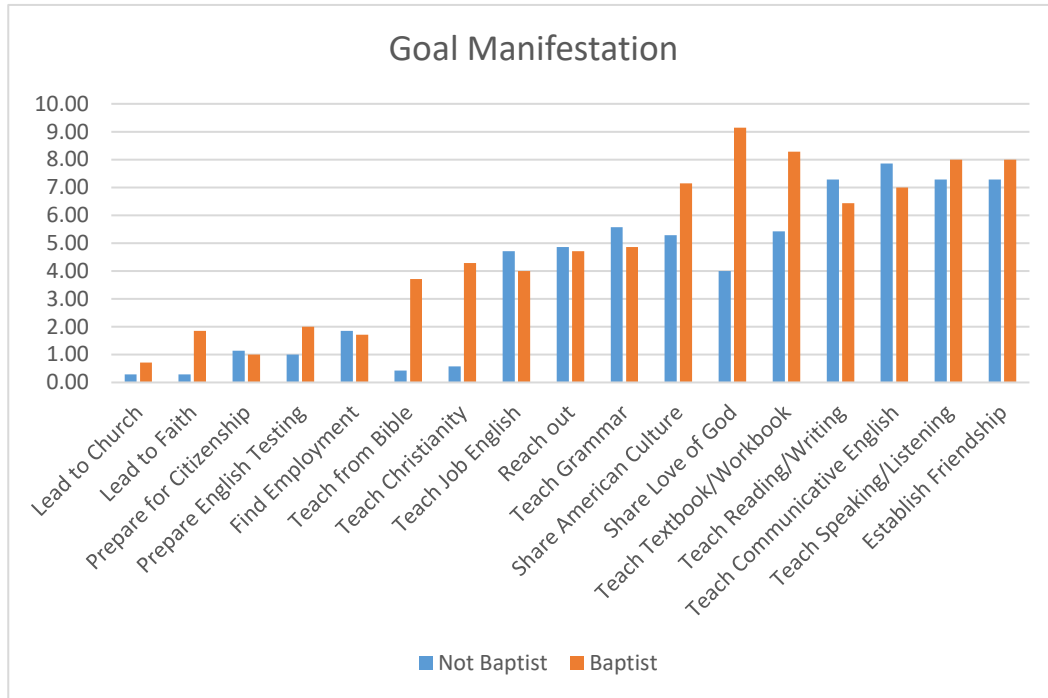


Figure 6: Average rating of goal manifestation among instructors who identified as Baptist versus those who did not.

In these graphs, one can see similarities between Baptist instructors and instructors of other denominations in regard to certain goals, but stark differences in regard to other goals. For example, in regard to goal manifestation, establishing friendship, teaching speaking and listening, teaching communicative English, teaching reading and writing, teaching grammar, reaching out to students' community, teaching job-specific English, helping students find employment and preparing students for citizenship tests were comparable between the two groups. However, we see that among Baptists, leading students to join your church, leading students to your faith, teaching from the Bible, teaching Christianity and, interestingly, teaching according to a specific text- or workbook are rated as more important compared to ratings from non-Baptists.

In order to further analyze these findings, an independent samples T-test was run to determine the significance of differences between Baptists and non-Baptists. In terms of goal importance, the difference of responses regarding teaching Christianity, sharing the love of God, and teaching from a textbook was found to be statistically significant. Baptists ($M = 6.71$, $SD = 3.35$) rated teaching Christianity as significantly more important than non-Baptists ($M = .71$, $SD = 1.11$), $t(12) = 4.49$, $p < .001$. Baptists ($M = 9.14$, $SD = 2.27$) also rated sharing the love of God as significantly more important than non-Baptists ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 3.10$), $t(12) = 3.25$, $p < .007$, and regarding teaching from a textbook, Baptists ($M = 7.42$, $SD = 2.23$) rated this as significantly more important than non-Baptists ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 2.79$), $t(12) = 2.43$, $p < .032$. In terms of goal manifestation, the difference among the two groups regarding teaching Christianity, sharing the love of God and teaching from the Bible were considered statistically significant. This may indicate a greater focus on faith-related goals among Baptist instructors, which may be supported by interview data. Tables 1 and 2 show the analysis of all 17 goals in terms of importance and classroom manifestation.

Table 1: *T*-test results comparing goal importance ratings of Baptist versus non-Baptist instructors

Goal	Baptist			Non-Baptist			<i>t</i>	p
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Teach Comm. Eng.	7	9.14	0.90	7	9.29	0.76	-0.32	0.753
Teach S/L	7	8.43	2.37	7	8.00	1.29	0.42	0.682
Teach R/W	7	7.29	3.35	7	7.71	1.89	-0.30	0.773
Friendship	7	8.14	1.46	7	6.86	2.27	1.26	0.232
Teach Grammar	7	7.28	2.63	7	6.86	1.77	0.36	0.727
Amer. Culture	7	7.14	3.24	7	6.57	1.99	0.40	0.698
Share Love of God	7	9.14	2.27	7	4.43	3.10	3.246	.007
Teach Job Eng.	7	5.14	3.80	7	6.43	3.78	-0.63	0.538
Teach Textbook	7	7.42	2.23	7	4.14	2.79	2.43	.032
Reach out	7	5.43	4.08	7	5.57	3.51	-0.70	0.945
Find Employment	7	4.00	2.77	7	4.00	2.71	.00	1.00
Teach Christianity	7	6.71	3.35	7	0.71	1.11	4.49	.001
Prep for Tests	7	3.29	2.87	7	4.00	2.52	-0.50	0.629
Prep for Citizens	7	3.14	2.54	7	4.00	2.08	-0.69	.503
Teach Bible	7	4.29	3.35	7	2.29	2.69	1.23	.242
Lead to Faith	7	4.29	3.86	7	1.71	3.68	-1.28	0.23
Lead to Church	7	3.14	3.76	7	1.29	1.80	1.18	.261

Table 2: T-test results comparing goal manifestation ratings of Baptist versus non-Baptist instructors.

Goal	Baptist			Non-Baptist			<i>t</i>	p
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD		
Teach Comm. Eng.	7	7.00	3.56	7	7.86	1.86	-.56	.583
Teach S/L	7	8.00	1.73	7	7.29	2.69	.59	.566
Teach R/W	7	6.43	3.05	7	7.29	2.50	-.58	.576
Friendship	7	8.00	1.63	7	7.29	2.14	.70	.496
Teach Grammar	7	4.86	3.80	7	5.57	3.31	-.38	.714
Amer. Culture	7	7.14	3.48	7	5.29	2.81	1.01	.294
Share Love of God	7	9.14	1.86	7	4.00	2.83	4.02	.002
Teach Job Eng.	7	4.00	3.87	7	4.71	3.73	-.35	.731
Teach Textbook	7	8.29	2.06	7	5.43	3.21	1.98	.071
Reach out	7	4.71	4.57	7	4.86	3.72	-.06	.950
Find Employment	7	1.71	1.50	7	1.86	1.68	-.17	.869
Teach Christianity	7	4.29	3.55	7	0.57	0.79	2.71	.019
Prep for Tests	7	2.00	3.21	7	1.00	1.15	.78	.454
Prep for Citizens	7	1.00	2.24	7	1.14	1.35	-.15	.887
Teach Bible	7	3.71	3.55	7	0.43	0.79	2.39	.034
Lead to Faith	7	1.86	2.41	7	0.29	0.49	1.69	.117
Lead to Church	7	0.71	1.25	7	0.29	0.49	.84	.416

Open-ended responses and interviews

The open-ended portion of the survey addressed any additional goals (Q4) the motivation of the instructors (Q5) the perceived identity of the instructors (Q6), the interaction of the instructors with students (Q7) the materials used to teach (Q8) and recruitment methods for the class (Q9). Some common themes emerged in regard to motivation that could also be related to instructors' perceived identity. Overall if the numerical data in this study provided some interesting insight as to what this group of instructors values in the classroom, the open-ended section of the survey provided a more individualized, deeper understanding of each participant's motivation and role (Instructor 1 [male, Baptist] provided no open-ended responses.).

Open ended responses and interview responses were analyzed using teacher identity and communities of practice as guiding theories. The following discussion is split into three sections, with several subsections. The first section will analyze the data from open-ended responses and interviews using an identity approach, by exploring instructors' roles and motivations in the classroom and how instructors incorporate religious identity in the classroom, including their identities as Christians but not necessarily evangelists. The second section will explore instructors as a community interacting with students. The final section addresses political implications, both past and present, of this community of practice. It should be noted that in some cases it was difficult to separate identity-based analysis from the community of practice as a whole. As interaction with students and motivation affect community practices, so, too, do they affect identity formation and expression in the classroom. Since identity and community are inextricably bound (as each member of the community brings his or her identity to the practice)

some overlap between communities of practice and identity approach will be evident in the sections.

“Love him as yourself”: Defining teacher identity.

When exploring teacher identity, and identity in general, one must acknowledge that identity is neither static nor binary, and that sites of language learning are socially constructed based on interaction between teachers and students. (Norton & McKinney, 2011). This section shows that teacher identity within this community can include altruistic roles, cultural roles and spiritual roles. Sometimes, these roles are fluid and compatible, while at other times they are intentionally and rigidly separate. Occasionally, the roles of this community are at odds or held in a precarious balance.

It should be noted that in regard to class roles, only a few participants identified themselves directly beyond a teaching role (Q5). Instructor 13, Instructor 9, Instructor 5 and Instructor 4 identified themselves as friends, and Instructors 4 and 5 both mentioned helping students outside of class with activities that require language skills, such as filling out forms. Instructor 2 referred to herself as both a teacher and student. No teacher identified as a spiritual guide or leader, and no teacher mentioned legal advocacy.

However, when instructors were asked to explain their motivation for participating in church-based ESL, their answers fell into three categories: a) altruism; b) cultural outreach; and c) faith motivation. Some participants, not surprisingly, reported a combination of these motives.

ESL instructor as altruist.

Of the 13 participants who responded, Instructor 14 (female, unspecified denomination), Instructor 6 (male, Catholic church, not religious), Instructor 11 (female, Catholic) and Instructor 4 (female, Presbyterian) reported that their motivations were wholly community service-based,

and did not mention any faith or cultural outreach goals--"helping students" or the community was the only listed motivation.

Instructor 6, who has volunteered through a Catholic church, mentioned that he was not religious at all. However, he feels "that community service is important and rewarding," and is comfortable teaching through a church because "the great majority of our students are Hispanic Catholics and having class at a known and comfortable location is very practical." We see here that the goals and motivations of the instructor cannot always be conflated with the goals of the church. What is particularly noteworthy for this study is that non-religious instructors coexist alongside devoutly religious instructors in a wide spectrum of beliefs. In Instructor 6's response regarding motivation, we see that it is the identity of the students (as Hispanic Catholics), and not the teacher, that influences the location and design of the class.

In contrast, Instructor 13 believes that interaction with students in the context of a church-based ESL class should include incorporation of Christian teachings, which is why she did not feel as though she was fulfilling her role when she did not include Bible teaching in class. However, because she knew that the students' primary concerns included learning daily communicative English, she modified her class—and, in effect, her identity as an ESL instructor.

ESL instructor as spiritual ambassador.

Instructor 13 (female, Baptist), Instructor 9 (female, Southern Baptist), Instructor 7 (female, Southern Baptist) and Instructor 3 (female, Baptist) specifically addressed their religious faith in regard to their motivation. Furthermore, even though the motivations of these instructors can all be categorized under "faith," within this micro-group one can still see distinct differences. Instructor 13 did not mention Christianity per se, but did state that she felt she had a "God-given talent" for teaching languages. Instructor 7 more explicitly stated that "The Gospel

of Jesus” and the call to “make disciples of all nations” motivates her to teach. She also references the Bible directly in her response, quoting Leviticus 19:34: “The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.” This response seems also to allude to cultural outreach, with students perceived as cultural “strangers” and “aliens” and the teacher role as that of “native” required to “love...as yourself.” However, Instructor 7 also stated that the primary goal of her class is English teaching. In Q4, she elaborated, “We don't want students to come to class and feel like they have been deceived into thinking this was English learning, and then actually it was a bible class. We are approaching sharing the Gospel after we have already formed relationships with students and the love of God has already become evident to them.”

The response from Instructor 3 (female, Baptist) consisted of a clear primary and secondary motivation: to “share the love of God and my Christian faith” firstly, and to make friends with people from other cultures secondly. Instructor 9 (female, Southern Baptist) reported that she felt “called by God” to teach ESL, and also reported:

“sharing God's love in this very practical way is the reason for this ministry...If I can help my students feel more at ease in my country through English-language classes where they hear of and see God's love demonstrated, I will have accomplished my purpose and fulfilled my calling.”

Unlike the responses from Instructors 7 and 3, which are also faith-motivated, the concept of directly proselytizing (“make disciples” and “share my faith”) is not addressed in Instructor 13's or Instructor 9's response; however, the idea of sharing the love of God or gifts from God are mentioned.

ESL instructor as cultural liaison.

Instructor 12 (female, Catholic), Instructor 10 (Baptist) and Instructor 2 (non-denominational Christian) gave responses that were both culturally and altruistically motivated, but did not mention faith. Instructor 12 stated “I have a passion for teaching English and helping Hispanic immigrants. For Instructor 2, her own experience abroad motivated her to help her students: “Having someone to help teach and explain the language and the culture makes all the difference in thriving in a foreign country or barely surviving.” Like Instructor 2, Instructor 10 appears to assume the identity of cultural insider, indeed as the aforementioned Leviticus “native”: I want to help internationals fit in through learning the language, customs, lifestyle, making friends, achieving their goals, and so forth. I enjoy helping them become more comfortable living here and making friends with them. I just love them.”

Instructor 8 (male, Baptist) mentioned only “cultural interchange” as motivation, suggesting more of a peer-to-peer relationship rather than an instructor/teacher or insider/outsider relationship.

“Separation of church and state:” religious identity and classroom practice.

Of the 14 participants, four consented to be interviewed, and three responded to interview follow-up: Instructor 13 (Baptist), Instructor 5 (Presbyterian) and Instructor 4 (Presbyterian). Instructors 13 and 5 participated in face-to-face interviews that lasted approximately 35 minutes each. Instructor 4 answered interview questions via email. These three interview responses ran the gamut in regards to faith-based motivation and incorporation in the classroom.

Instructor 5, who is female and an immigrant, was adamant in regard to a lack of proselytizing or indeed any mention of Christianity in the classroom, referring to “essentially, separation of church and state.” When asked if this was a denominational characteristic or a

characteristic that was specific to her church, she indicated that it was her personal view. She also said that each class closes with a prayer, but within the prayer, only God, and not Jesus, is mentioned. The reason for this, she reported, was to avoid alienating students of different faiths, saying “Everyone believes in God.”

Instructor 13 (Baptist), in regard to faith and faith incorporation in the classroom, may exemplify an entirely different perspective within Christian English language teaching. While the primary focus of her class was similar to the other two interviewees—all three reported teaching English for daily communicative purposes as their main goal—Instructor 13 felt that it was important to incorporate faith in the classroom through biblical teaching. However, she also reported that she did not include biblical teaching in class often, focusing instead on explicit grammar teaching, job-related English or other daily communicative English-based topics. Additionally, she reported that she “felt bad” for not incorporating more faith-based lessons. In this case, one can see how the importance of a particular goal may not directly correlate to classroom manifestation. In other words, Instructor 13’s desire to express her identity as a Christian and fulfill the obligations of that identity (as in Instructor 7’s motivation response, to “make disciples of all nations”) is limited by her primary goal within the class, which is to teach daily communicative English. This is an example of how identity can manifest itself in “contradictory ways within a single individual” (Norton & McKinney, 2011). This concern is assuaged, Instructor 13 reported, because the class includes a 30-minute “mini-service” break with music, snacks and Bible teaching.

In Instructor 5’s class, the issue of incorporating faith does not arise because the subject of Christianity does not arise, by careful design. While the practice of refraining from saying “Jesus” in Christian ELT might seem like an extreme and relatively unpracticed measure, it is

shared among some Christian teachers who believe that faith-related topics should not be introduced unless related to the lesson. (Wong, 2013).

The “face of Christ,” but not an evangelist: Contextual interaction and its impact on identify formation

While direct efforts of conversion were not rated overall as important, the intentionally open-for-interpretation “Share the love of God” was a moderately popular response within the survey. The popularity of this goal may indicate that instructors do incorporate their faith in their classes, but that “Share the love of God,” to most instructors, is fundamentally different from leading students to become Christians, teaching students about Christianity or the Bible, or leading students to join their church.

Instructor 4, when asked what “share the love of God” means, indicated that faith played a role in her actions but that she did not believe in direct proselytizing: “I have never been particularly fond of the term “evangelizing”; I prefer to think of myself as trying very hard to be the face of Christ to everyone I meet(failing fairly regularly, I am sure).”

In this quote, one can see that demonstrating “Christ-like” behavior is important to Instructor 4, but that proselytizing or “evangelizing” is not a preferable practice in this context. One can also see that religion is discussed without specifics in order to avoid discomfort, and that inclusivity is an important part of her class, much like Instructor 5’s class. For an instructor who does not believe in proselytizing to students, church-based ESL would not include direct admissions of faith or invitations to join that faith. And indeed, Instructor 4’s belief seems to be prevalent within this community of practice. Varghese and Johnston’s (2007) research on teachers-in-training found that many teachers-in-training did not agree with either direct or covert conversion practices, but did repeat the concept of “planting seeds,” by building relationships with students. Additionally, Baurain (2013) found that establishing friendships and

expressing empathy for students were two common themes among Christian teachers. Pasquale (2013) also found that, among Christian teachers, attempts at covert conversion were considered inappropriate and unprofessional, and that Considering the popularity of “Establish friendships with students,” it could be that this group of teachers overall see building relationships, empathizing with students and loving students as a form of sharing their faith that does not incorporate proselytizing.

Instructors 4 and 5, it should be noted, teach through the same Presbyterian church, but do not collaborate on lessons, and Instructor 5 reported that she actually attends a different Presbyterian church regularly.

On her survey, Instructor 5 reported that sharing the love of God was a moderately important goal (6/10) and that it was accomplished most of the time (8/10) in the classroom. However, when asked twice in the interview regarding what “share the love of God” means to her, she said, “No, we don’t really do that.” It should be noted as well that in terms of both importance and classroom manifestation, she rated leading students to join the church, leading students to her faith and teaching Christianity at 0. Therefore, it appears that while Instructor 5 did perceive sharing the love of God as something other than directly proselytizing, she may have equated them during the interview, perhaps because the interview did focus significantly on her beliefs about not proselytizing in class.

Instructor 13 reported that sharing the love of God meant “showing kindness and generosity, and help outside of class.” As an example, she mentioned a student who was looking for a home and had issues related to unfair business practices with renters, and how, with a family member’s help, she was able to help address the situation.

“I feel like if it was just teaching, you wouldn’t really do this kind of stuff for people. Like helping them find a house and making sure they weren’t being taken advantage of,” she said.

Instructor 13’s interaction with students outside of class will be discussed in greater detail under Interaction Beyond the Classroom within the following section.

Interaction within the community of practice: variation and context

So far we have seen that the religious identity of both teachers and students and beliefs regarding incorporation of faith in the classroom can drastically affect classroom practices. One can also see that, despite acknowledgement of this group as a community of practice with some shared values, wide variation exists regarding which goals should be valued and should manifest themselves in the classroom. This section and subsection will focus on defining the community to which instructors are attempting to provide access for their students. That is, to what community of practice do instructors define themselves as belonging, and how do they attempt to invite students into that community? This section will also explore interaction between students and instructors beyond the classroom.

“Bring them in”: Defining the community and inviting peripheral participation.

All three interviewees mentioned the importance of building relationships and being available for students beyond the classroom, even though they each expressed unique views in regard to faith incorporation in the classroom. This subsection addresses how instructors within this community of practice perceive the “community” itself. In other words, this section addresses the instructors’ sense of their own community of practice. It is at this point, in fact, that one could question whether volunteer church-based ESL instructors are in fact a unified community of practice, or if each church creates its own community of practice, each of which is

largely independent of its contemporaries within the same domain of church English teaching. Additionally, this subsection addresses how student identity is molded by incorporation into a new community, and how teacher identity can facilitate that incorporation.

When reporting motivation in the survey, Instructor 5 (female, Presbyterian) was somewhat singular in that her response was entirely student-centered: “I admire and am inspired by my students. They have very difficult lives, yet they are joyful and try to lift themselves in every way possible.” Student inclusivity was also a core theme of Instructor 5’s interview, and she said that establishing friendships with students and avoiding topics that might alienate students was the primary way to ensure continued class attendance. She referred to her students often as “ostracized” or “alienated” within the larger community, in part due to their lack of English and, for some, lack of legal documentation. Therefore, she said, it was important to “bring them in.” When asked if “bring them in” was a reference to the church, she said unequivocally that it was unrelated to the church community; rather, it was a reference to the English-speaking community in the area, and the benefits that come with being able to effectively communicate in English.

In regard to identity and language learning, it is understood that investment in English learning could reap certain benefits, both tangible and intangible. These benefits, which could include the ability to build social acquaintances, the power of independence that comes from attending a doctor’s appointment and filling out forms without assistance, or simply an increase in pay, all increase an English learner’s cultural capital. (Norton, 2010). Through investment in English, Instructor 5 believes, her students will be “brought in” to a community that offers acceptance and power to proficient English speakers. As an immigrant herself, Instructor 5 may understand her students’ struggles to assimilate. However, by her own admission, Instructor 5

did not learn English in the U.S. and stated that she did not feel the same displacement from the English-speaking community that her students feel.

This understanding of the community to which her students try to belong, in turn, influences Instructor 5's perception of her own community of practice. For Instructor 5, building relationships is central to continued student attendance, which promote English learning and thus incorporation into the larger, English-speaking (but not necessarily Christian) community. By providing this window into the English-speaking community, Instructor 5 is pushing her students toward legitimate peripheral participation within the community—in a nutshell, “bringing them in” to the English-speaking community to which the instructor belongs. (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

It should also be noted that Instructor 5 teaches at a Presbyterian church that she does not attend, and refrains from discussion of Christianity in the classroom, because both are more comfortable and convenient for students.

In her interview, Instructor 4 reported that she discusses religion in class, but takes a “broad” approach so that her students will not feel alienated in classroom practices. In doing so, she invites students into an English-speaking community, and possibly a community that values religion, but not necessarily a Christian community:

“Having a very diverse class has enabled us to speak of religion in broad terms thereby circumventing some of the discomfort that could be felt by the less religious in our class. The 2 sisters from Yemen who attend often break from class for evening prayers and have expressed their desire for world peace on many occasions. I have echoed their feelings in class and have made sure that everyone feels safe and accepted.”

Like Instructor 4 and 5, Instructor 13 felt that establishing relationships was important in the class. However, unlike Instructor 4 and 5, Instructor 13's motivation for establishing friendship with students was related to inviting students to other church functions, and thus incorporating them into a Christian community. Additionally, she said that a relationship must be built with students to avoid wariness or discomfort in students in proselytizing. Instructor 13's desire to establish relationships with students may indicate that she perceives her community of practice as an educational forum, and also as a spiritual forum. She specifically mentioned female Muslim students who did not attend class with their husbands:

“I don't have a Bible study that I go to right now, but a lot of the other ladies do, and they become friends with these [Muslim] ladies, and say ‘oh, do you want to come to Bible study, and at first they say no, but then the more they get to know them and stuff, then they finally say, ‘well, yeah I'd like to come but my husband can't know about it.’”

In a dialogue that has addressed “furtive” evangelical activities and “stealth conversion,” in a “figured world” that favors power to Christian beliefs, one can easily see the problems of introducing Christian faith to students while simultaneously playing party to the students' desires to keep the practice secret (Johnston, 2009; Edge, 2003; Chao, 2014). At the same time, refusing to address student questions due to religion-related restrictions may also limit students' access to self-contained power.

Instructor 13 also explained that her program's class consists of an hour-long lesson followed by a 30-minute session of prayer, bible story, snack and “fellowship,” followed by an additional 30 minutes of lesson. This format, she reported, was indicative of other Baptist programs that she knew of or had learned about in Southern Baptist conferences. For this reason,

she added, she felt it was more efficient and necessary to focus on learning English, rather than biblical teaching, within the lesson. Discussion of denomination-wide organization did not arise in other interviews, nor was it mentioned in any of the 13 open-ended-responses from the surveys. And indeed, based on the reported stance of the Southern Baptist Convention on mission work, ESL and literacy, Instructor 13's practices may be part of a larger Southern Baptist community of practice. Not only are mission activity, ESL and literacy ministries an active part of the SBC, language on the organization's website suggest a strong incorporation of language-teaching and faith-based goals. The North American Mission Board, who partners with the SBC, in regard to promoting literacy, suggests volunteering at a local library and taking a class in teaching English, and also prayer and talking to a pastor or church group. NAMB also states on their site, "Sit in on tutoring classes. It is easier to teach English than you might think." (North American Mission Board, n.d.). The page also provides resources for beginning a literacy ministry and teaching manuals for the Gospel of Mark. This dual focus of language teaching and religious activity seems to echo Instructor 13's assertions regarding the SBC's ESL training agenda, and possibly help explain her desire to incorporate biblical teaching in her class. For Instructor 13, it appears, part of her understanding of the church-based ESL community of practice is rooted in her Baptist beliefs, although she asserted that her own class focuses less on faith-based teaching and more on English teaching.

Interestingly, another difference between Baptist and non-Baptist teachers was the reliance on teaching from a textbook or workbook that is not biblical scripture. The most common texts mentioned in surveys—the Side by Side and the Oxford English Picture Dictionary book series—do not have religious affiliations. The reason for this difference between Baptist and non-Baptist is not clear, although it could be possible that more cooperation

exists within SBC churches regarding ESL ministries, and those textbooks may be common within the ministry on the whole. That possibility, however, is pure speculation.

Interaction beyond the classroom and Christian community of practice

This subsection explores how interaction outside the classroom, including social gatherings with students and providing help to students outside of class, may define the practices of this group of instructors. Previous research has suggested that Christian teachers perceive their practices with their students as different from, and superior to, non-Christian teachers. Indeed, Pasquale (2013) found that this community of practice felt that their work differed from their secular peers in that the Christian teachers developed stronger relationships with students and “loved” their students. Instructor 10’s motivation in this study seems to echo this finding by Pasquale: “I enjoy helping them become more comfortable living here and making friends with them. I just love them.”

Instructor 13 reported that sharing the love of God meant helping students outside the classroom, particularly in regard to issues of mistreatment. When asked why she incorporated helping students outside of class into her role as an English instructor, she said, “because it’s the right thing to do.”

Within the community of practice of church-based ESL instructors, at least for the interviewees in this study, it appears that helping students outside of class may be a prevalent practice. In her survey, Instructor 5 wrote that her role with her students was that of instructor and friend, “in the sense that they know they can come to me for help for whatever they need...translations, pediatrician's or teacher's appointments, etc.” In this sense, Instructor 5 offers a window into a community she feels will provide her students with needed cultural capital—her identity as a teacher is combined with her identity as a cultural insider, and this in turn informs

her concept of her role as an English instructor within this community of practice. Similarly, Instructor 4 wrote that her role as an ESL teachers was that of "...an instructor who is also a friend. I have helped to write letters to their children's teachers, decipher medical bills, and explain idioms they may have heard at work or in the community." While only four instructors identified themselves as friends in addition to instructors, several others mentioned their desire to help students.

Within the survey, participants were also asked how often they met with students. Instructors 14, 11, 10, 9 and 8 reported meeting with students only for ESL class. Instructor 7 attended a weekly "food and fellowship" time with students just before class. Instructor 12 wrote that she sees students sometimes at mass, and advertises her classes through mass. Instructors 7, 6, 4 and 3 reported some outings with students outside of class, and Instructor 5 reported meeting with students as requested by students.

In addressing common student/teacher interactions within this community of practice, one could argue that such interaction begins with advertisement and recruitment into the English classes. In terms of advertising, eight participants (Instructors 10, 9, 8, 6, 5, 4, 3 and 2) reported fliers, signs or some kind of organized advertisement outside the church. The remaining participants reported word of mouth, signs on church property and advertising within church bulletins or in church services. Some researchers have argued that Christian English teachers have engaged in "stealth conversion" techniques through language classes, and at these churches advertising from without could likely be construed an attempt to proselytize—i.e. to bring students into the church, both literally and figuratively. Considering the classes meet within churches, however, it may be difficult to argue the "stealth" of these conversion endeavors, in this particular setting. Of the four who did not report advertising outside the church, the

population of students in their classes will likely be, if not devout, at least open to religious forums, considering their understood presence within a church.

Church-based ESL and politics: A redefinition

Interestingly, all three interviewees mentioned—unsolicited—personal and student concerns regarding the 2016 election and subsequent political administration. Instructor 4 wrote, “With the recent turn in our political environment, I (along with [name removed] and the other teachers), have talked openly about keeping them safe and insuring that they understand their rights.” Instructor 5 (post-interview) reported that her students have expressed fear or desire to leave the country, and said that the current political tone has allowed people to be open about “the ugly side of themselves,” in regard to prejudice and discrimination. Instructor 13 said, “There’s a lot of hostility right now towards internationals...Donald Trump was elected, because he wants to build a wall, and says all Muslims are evil, and that’s just not part of our program at church...it seems like people just want them out. They don’t want to help them stay in.” All three interviewees also referred to discrimination toward immigrants or undocumented immigrants in a condemning way.

In earlier incarnations of the debate regarding the goals of this community of practice, the practices of evangelical Christian English teachers were closely equated with the “compassionate conservatism” of the Bush administration, and the concerns of imperialism and westernization therein (Edge, 2003; Pennycook and Coutand-Marin, 2003). While no conclusions can be drawn as to the political beliefs of these interviewees, it is noteworthy that their concerns about current immigrant policies are similar despite disparate views related to faith incorporation in the classroom. Continued implications of faith, ESL teaching and politics will be addressed in Further Study.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER STUDY

The limitations of this study include human error, and the limitations that arise in self-reported data, including a lack of honesty or self-censorship. According to at least one participant's response (Instructor 7), there appears to be an understanding that faith-based motivations and proselytizing through such programs can be viewed in a very negative light, which may have led some participants to alter their responses, or simply not participate. A further study incorporating numerous classroom observations at multiple churches as well as students' views and perspectives would help to correct this limitation.

In terms of future study, the prospects are numerous. Such a study could be either cross-sectional, in that it incorporates many instructors and students, or longitudinal, in that it follows fewer instructors and students over a longer period of time. And indeed, it would be wise to create a larger study that considers manifested goals from the perspectives of both instructors and students. In fact, one of the driving motivations of this study is to establish rapport with teachers so that, with their cooperation, later research with students may be possible. Such a study could present its own challenges in regard to multiple language barriers and the concerns of working with vulnerable populations (minors, students, undocumented immigrants, etc.). Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, Japanese and Korean are just a few of the most popular languages spoken in ESL classrooms in this area, and to not provide translators for all of these groups would 1) privilege only the opinions of the most advanced students or 2) privilege only a few language speakers for whom translators were more readily available. Since language can be linked to culture and background, including religious background, interviewing only one or two language

groups could give a skewed view of the beliefs of this population as a whole. Therefore, providing multiple translators, additional documentation for minors and signature waivers for undocumented immigrants would be required.

As previously mentioned, the Trump administration arose as a topic of concern for all three interviewees in this study. This topic was not considered during the formation of this study and dissemination and collection of the survey, since both occurred significantly prior to the 2016 election. However, given the political nature of the Christian ELT debate at its inception and the current political climate toward immigration and foreign relations, perhaps a more politically focused view on future studies should be considered. While the discussion of Christian ELT circa 2003 seemed to be, at least at the time and least ostensibly, fairly neatly divided on political lines, one might argue that those political lines have shifted in the past 15 years, so that previous Christian evangelical/Christian service roles wouldn't be equated so closely to conservative Republican/liberal Democrat values (Pennycook & Coutand-Marin, 2003).

An additional unexpected find in this study was the fact that non-religious teachers also participate in faith-based English ministries. While some might disregard such instructors as too-rare outliers and therefore not suitable for analysis in this study, I found that all instructors included in this study represented an important facet of a multifaceted community of practice, and therefore should be included and analyzed. In fact, a study focusing on the cooperation of the outspokenly religious and non-religious may be beneficial for two reasons: firstly, it would further shed light on the complexity of this community; and secondly, it might serve as a potential model for the dialogue that will grow between critical and Christian researchers.

CONCLUSION

This study has sought to provide clear data on the goals and motivations of volunteer ESL teachers in Christian churches, considering the goals and motivations of this community of practice has been subject to scrutiny and speculation. The results of this study suggest a number of patterns that may prove useful in the debate regarding Christianity and English language teaching. While several teachers mention faith or list faith-related goals, teaching goals ranked as more important within the classroom among all participants. Just four out of 14 participants in the open-ended section of the study mentioned Christianity or God as a motivation, and just two referenced proselytizing. However, from the variety of responses throughout this study, we see that even among a relatively small culture, goals and motivations are multifaceted and individualized, and may be different between traditionally evangelical and non-evangelical Christian faiths. Interestingly and perhaps paradoxically, one could imagine scholars on both sides of this debate pointing to this set of data to reaffirm their beliefs—either that Christian English language teachers are more devoted to teaching than proselytizing, or that evangelical Christians have faith-motivated goals (and perhaps are motivated too much by faith). Nevertheless, the data indicate that scholars on both sides of this debate who argue that all church ESL teachers believe certain doctrines, assume certain roles, or possess certain agendas may need to broaden their understanding of this particular community of practice.

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APPENDIX A SURVEY: FAITH BASED ESL

Pre-Q1 This is a consent form. Please read and confirm your consent by choosing from the multiple-choice answers provided at the end. You will also be asked to provide a digital signature.

Study title: Goals and Roles of Volunteer Church-based ESL instructors

Lindsey Sanchez, MA-TESOL, English Department, University of Alabama

Ms. Sanchez is being supervised by Dr. Dilin Liu, who is a professor of English at the University of Alabama.

Is the researcher being paid for this study? No

Does the investigator have any conflict of interest in this study? No

What is the investigator trying to learn? This research study is being done to learn more about the reported goals, motivations and roles of volunteer instructors in church-based ESL programs.

Why is this study important or useful? This knowledge is important because there is relatively little objective research on the large number of volunteer instructors who teach ESL in churches throughout the state and country as a whole. Much of the literature that does exist is based on opinion rather than data, and tends to reflect the beliefs of the researcher rather than the beliefs of the instructors.

Why have I been asked to be in this study? You are a volunteer ESL instructor at a local church.

How many people will be in this study? About 18 to 25 other people will be in this study.

What will I be asked to do in this study? If you meet the criteria and agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do these things: 1. Complete a short survey 2. Participate in a brief interview regarding the survey. How much time will I spend being this study? The survey will likely take 15 to 30 minutes to complete. The interview will likely take 30 minutes to complete. We will

schedule the interview as soon as possible after the survey is completed, and we hope that the interview will take place no later than two weeks after the completion of the survey.

Will being in this study cost me anything? No

Will I be compensated for being in this study? No

What are the risks (dangers or harms) to me if I am in this study? There is no foreseeable risk.

What are the benefits (good things) that may happen if I am in this study? You may not receive any direct benefits, but the survey and interview should give you a chance to reflect on your work as a volunteer instructor.

What are the benefits to science or society? This study will add valuable information to an area of English teaching that hasn't yet been researched thoroughly. This research will also provide direct, objective data to the debate between Christian and critical researchers on this subject.

How will my privacy be protected? Your answers to surveys and interviews will not be shared with anyone other than Lindsey Sanchez and Dr. Liu during the study. The interview will be conducted in a private location at your church. The researcher wishes to audio record the interview to ensure that none of your responses are misrepresented. You can request not to be recorded, in which case the researcher will take written notes. You do not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer.

How will my confidentiality be protected? Your name and the name of your church will not be included in the research. You will be asked to provide a signature at the end of this consent form, and your first name and last initial at the beginning of this survey. The researcher asks for this information so that the survey can be identified for the subsequent interview, even if the signature is illegible. In the written results of the survey, both you and your church will be identified with a number, eg. Instructor 3 from Church 4. The denomination of your church, or your church focus, may also be included in the written research. This information will be included in such a manner that specific church congregations will not be identifiable.

What are the alternatives to being in this study? Do I have other choices? The alternative to being in this study is not to participate.

What are my rights as a participant in this study? Taking part in this study is voluntary. It is your free choice. You can refuse to be in it at all. If you start the study, you can stop at any time. There will be no effect on your relations with the University of Alabama.

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board ("the IRB") is the committee that protects the rights of people in research studies. The IRB may review study records from time to time to be sure that people in research studies are being treated fairly and that the study is being carried out as planned. Who do I call if I have questions or problems? If you have questions about the study right now, please ask them. If you have questions about the study later on, please

contact the investigator Lindsey Sanchez at lerobinson@crimson.ua.edu or 205-260-3906, or the faculty supervisor, Dilin Liu, at dliu@ua.edu.

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a person in a research study, call Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer of the University, at 205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066. You may also ask questions, make suggestions, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach website at http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html or email the Research Compliance office at participantoutreach@bama.ua.edu.

After you participate, you are encouraged to complete the survey for research participants that is online at the outreach website or you may ask the investigator for a copy of it and mail it to the University Office for Research Compliance, Box 870127, 358 Rose Administration Building, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0127.

Do you wish to participate?

- I do not wish to participate in this project.
- I wish to participate in the survey only.
- I wish to participate in both the survey and the interview, but I do not want to be audio-recorded.
- I wish to participate in both the survey and the interview, AND I consent to audio-recording.

Pre Q-2 Please provide a digital signature.

Q1 Please provide your first name and last initial (e.g. John S.). Your name will not be included in the study, and will be used only to identify your survey for the interview. In the study, you will be identified by a number (e.g. Instructor 3.)

Q2 Please write your church denomination or church focus. This information may be reported in the study, e.g. "Instructor 3 from Church 2, a Presbyterian church.

Q1 Q1, Q2 and Q3 pertain to a list of 17 goals that you may have for your ESL class. For this question (Q1) choose the five most important goals you have for your ESL class. The goals are in alphabetical order. Please choose only five goals.

Most Important Goal- Drag and Drop here	2nd Most Important Goal- Drag and Drop here	3rd Most Important Goal- Drag and Drop here	4th Most Important Goal- Drag and Drop here	5th Most Important Goal- Drag and Drop here
_____ Establish friendships with your students	_____ Establish friendships with your students	_____ Establish friendships with your students	_____ Establish friendships with your students	_____ Establish friendships with your students
_____ Help students find gainful employment	_____ Help students find gainful employment	_____ Help students find gainful employment	_____ Help students find gainful employment	_____ Help students find gainful employment
_____ Lead your students to join the church	_____ Lead your students to join the church	_____ Lead your students to join the church	_____ Lead your students to join the church	_____ Lead your students to join the church
_____ Lead your students to your faith	_____ Lead your students to your faith	_____ Lead your students to your faith	_____ Lead your students to your faith	_____ Lead your students to your faith
_____ Prepare students for citizenship tests	_____ Prepare students for citizenship tests	_____ Prepare students for citizenship tests	_____ Prepare students for citizenship tests	_____ Prepare students for citizenship tests
_____ Prepare students for English-based testing (GRE, TOEFL, etc.)	_____ Prepare students for English-based testing (GRE, TOEFL, etc.)	_____ Prepare students for English-based testing (GRE, TOEFL, etc.)	_____ Prepare students for English-based testing (GRE, TOEFL, etc.)	_____ Prepare students for English-based testing (GRE, TOEFL, etc.)
_____ Reach out to the community that your students belong to	_____ Reach out to the community that your students belong to	_____ Reach out to the community that your students belong to	_____ Reach out to the community that your students belong to	_____ Reach out to the community that your students belong to
_____ Share the love of God	_____ Share the love of God	_____ Share the love of God	_____ Share the love of God	_____ Share the love of God

_____ Teach English according to a specific text or workbook	_____ Teach English according to a specific text or workbook	_____ Teach English according to a specific text or workbook	_____ Teach English according to a specific text or workbook	_____ Teach English according to a specific text or workbook
_____ Teach students English for daily communicative purposes (around town, around the house, etc.)	_____ Teach students English for daily communicative purposes (around town, around the house, etc.)	_____ Teach students English for daily communicative purposes (around town, around the house, etc.)	_____ Teach students English for daily communicative purposes (around town, around the house, etc.)	_____ Teach students English for daily communicative purposes (around town, around the house, etc.)
_____ Teach students English from the Bible or using stories or verses from the Bible	_____ Teach students English from the Bible or using stories or verses from the Bible	_____ Teach students English from the Bible or using stories or verses from the Bible	_____ Teach students English from the Bible or using stories or verses from the Bible	_____ Teach students English from the Bible or using stories or verses from the Bible
_____ Teach students grammar	_____ Teach students grammar	_____ Teach students grammar	_____ Teach students grammar	_____ Teach students grammar
_____ Teach students job-specific English	_____ Teach students job-specific English	_____ Teach students job-specific English	_____ Teach students job-specific English	_____ Teach students job-specific English
_____ Teach students reading and writing in English	_____ Teach students reading and writing in English	_____ Teach students reading and writing in English	_____ Teach students reading and writing in English	_____ Teach students reading and writing in English
_____ Teach students speaking and listening in English	_____ Teach students speaking and listening in English	_____ Teach students speaking and listening in English	_____ Teach students speaking and listening in English	_____ Teach students speaking and listening in English

_____ Teach students about Christianity	_____ Teach students about Christianity	_____ Teach students about Christianity	_____ Teach students about Christianity	_____ Teach students about Christianity
_____ Teach students about American culture or your local culture	_____ Teach students about American culture or your local culture	_____ Teach students about American culture or your local culture	_____ Teach students about American culture or your local culture	_____ Teach students about American culture or your local culture

Q2 Q1, Q2 and Q3 pertain to a list of 17 goals that you may have for your ESL class. For this question (Q2), tell us how important each of the goals is in your ESL class, with 0 being not important at all and 10 being extremely important.

- _____ Establish friendships with your students
- _____ Help students find gainful employment
- _____ Lead your students to join the church
- _____ Lead your students to your faith
- _____ Prepare students for citizenship tests
- _____ Prepare students for English-based testing (GRE, TOEFL, etc.)
- _____ Reach out to the community that your students belong to
- _____ Share the love of God
- _____ Teach English according to a specific text or workbook
- _____ Teach students English for daily communicative purposes (around town, around the house, etc.)
- _____ Teach students English from the Bible or using stories or verses from the Bible
- _____ Teach students grammar
- _____ Teach students job-specific English
- _____ Teach students reading and writing in English
- _____ Teach students speaking and listening in English
- _____ Teach students about Christianity
- _____ Teach students about American culture or your local culture

Q3 Q1, Q2 and Q3 pertain to a list of 17 goals that you may have for your ESL class. For this question (Q4), tell us how often you accomplish each of the goals listed below in your ESL class, with 0 being Never and 10 being Always.

- _____ Establish friendships with your students
- _____ Help students find gainful employment
- _____ Lead your students to join the church
- _____ Lead your students to your faith
- _____ Prepare students for citizenship tests
- _____ Prepare students for English-based testing (GRE, TOEFL, etc.)
- _____ Reach out to the community that your students belong to
- _____ Share the love of God
- _____ Teach English according to a specific text or workbook
- _____ Teach students English for daily communicative purposes (around town, around the house, etc.)
- _____ Teach students English from the Bible or using stories or verses from the Bible
- _____ Teach students grammar
- _____ Teach students job-specific English
- _____ Teach students reading and writing in English
- _____ Teach students speaking and listening in English
- _____ Teach students about Christianity
- _____ Teach students about American culture or your local culture

Q4 Do you have any goals for your ESL class or your students that were not listed above? If not, write No. If so, please write those goals here.

Q5 What motivates you to teach ESL at your church? Please write in as much detail as you like.

Q6 What role do you play for your students in your ESL class? Are you primarily an instructor? Do you have other roles? Please write in as much detail as you like.

Q7 How often do you meet with your students? Do you meet with them only for ESL class, or do you lead other activities?

Q8 What materials do you use for your ESL class?

Q9 How do you spread the word about your class?

APPENDIX B IRB APPROVAL



Office of the Vice President for
Research & Economic Development
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

August 11, 2016

Lindsey Sanchez
Dept. of English
College of Arts & Sciences
Box 870244

Re: IRB#: 16-OR-277 "Goals and Roles of Volunteer Church-Based ESL Instructors (Formerly Goals and Roles of Faith-Based ESL Instructors in Alabama)"

Dear Ms. Sanchez:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies

Your application will expire on August 10, 2017. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of the IRB Request for Study Closure Form.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved stamped consent forms to obtain consent from your participants.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,



Stuart Usdan, PhD
Chair, Non-Medical Institutional Review Board

This is a consent form. Please read and confirm your consent by choosing from the multiple-choice answers provided at the end. You will also be asked to provide a digital signature.

Study title: Goals and Roles of Volunteer Church-based ESL instructors

Lindsey Sanchez, MA-TESOL, English Department, University of Alabama

Ms. Sanchez is being supervised by Dr. Dilin Liu, who is a professor of English at the University of Alabama.

Is the researcher being paid for this study? No

Does the investigator have any conflict of interest in this study? No

What is the investigator trying to learn? This research study is being done to learn more about the reported goals, motivations and roles of volunteer instructors in church-based ESL programs.

Why is this study important or useful? This knowledge is important because there is relatively little objective research on the large number of volunteer instructors who teach ESL in churches throughout the state and country as a whole. Much of the literature that does exist is based on opinion rather than data, and tends to reflect the beliefs of the researcher rather than the beliefs of the instructors.

Why have I been asked to be in this study? You are a volunteer ESL instructor at a local church.

How many people will be in this study? About 18 to 25 other people will be in this study.

What will I be asked to do in this study? If you meet the criteria and agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do these things: 1. Complete a short survey 2. Participate in a brief interview regarding the survey. How much time will I spend being this study? The survey will likely take 15 to 30 minutes to complete. The interview will likely take 30 minutes to complete. We will schedule the interview as soon as possible after the survey is completed, and we hope that the interview will take place no later than two weeks after the completion of the survey.

Will being in this study cost me anything? No

Will I be compensated for being in this study? No

What are the risks (dangers or harms) to me if I am in this study? There is no foreseeable risk.

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IRB
CONSENT FORM APPROVED: 8/11/16
EXPIRATION DATE: 8/10/2017

What are the benefits (good things) that may happen if I am in this study? You may not receive any direct benefits, but the survey and interview should give you a chance to reflect on your work as a volunteer instructor.

What are the benefits to science or society? This study will add valuable information to an area of English teaching that hasn't yet been researched thoroughly. This research will also provide direct, objective data to the debate between Christian and critical researchers on this subject.

How will my privacy be protected? Your answers to surveys and interviews will not be shared with anyone other than Lindsey Sanchez and Dr. Liu during the study. The interview will be conducted in a private location at your church. The researcher wishes to audio record the interview to ensure that none of your responses are misrepresented. You can request not to be recorded, in which case the researcher will take written notes. You do not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer.

How will my confidentiality be protected? Your name and the name of your church will not be included in the research. You will be asked to provide a signature at the end of this consent form, and your first name and last initial at the beginning of this survey. The researcher asks for this information so that the survey can be identified for the subsequent interview, even if the signature is illegible. In the written results of the survey, both you and your church will be identified with a number, eg. Instructor 3 from Church 4. The denomination of your church, or your church focus, may also be included in the written research. This information will be included in such a manner that specific church congregations will not be identifiable.

What are the alternatives to being in this study? Do I have other choices? The alternative to being in this study is not to participate.

What are my rights as a participant in this study? Taking part in this study is voluntary. It is your free choice. You can refuse to be in it at all. If you start the study, you can stop at any time. There will be no effect on your relations with the University of Alabama.

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UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IRB
CONSENT FORM APPROVED: 8/11/14
EXPIRATION DATE: 8/10/2017

205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066. You may also ask questions, make suggestions, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach website at http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html or email the Research Compliance office at participantoutreach@bama.ua.edu. After you participate, you are encouraged to complete the survey for research participants that is online at the outreach website or you may ask the investigator for a copy of it and mail it to the University Office for Research Compliance, Box 870127, 358 Rose Administration Building, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0127.

Do you wish to participate?

- I do not wish to participate in this project. (1)
- I wish to participate in the survey only. (2)
- I wish to participate in both the survey and the interview, but I do not want to be audio-recorded. (3)
- I wish to participate in both the survey and the interview, AND I consent to audio-recording. (4)

Pre Q-2 Please provide a digital signature.

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IRB
CONSENT FORM APPROVED: 8/11/16
EXPIRATION DATE: 8/10/2017