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Signed, Sealed, Delivered:
District-Level Adoption of the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy

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Abstract

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Since 2012, over 25 states across the country have established State Seals of Biliteracy (SSB) for graduating high school students fluent in English and at least one other language. Though wording of these policies varies, they officially recognize bilingualism as desirable and beneficial for both the student and greater society. Yet, the Seals' universal feature across the states is that district participation is both voluntary and unfunded. This project investigated what triggers a district to take on this additional administrative responsibility in the context of Washington State.

Using Ruiz's language policy orientations and diffusion of innovations theory, the project began with a statewide survey of districts with high schools to determine which had adopted the

Seal thus far, and to compare Seal adopters and non-adopters on specific characteristics, including key actors in the decision-making process, demographics, and existing language offerings. The response rate was quite high, particularly for a web-based survey, with 114 of the 246 Washington school districts (46%) completing the survey. Quantitative analysis results of these data indicated that adopters were significantly more likely to have higher student enrollments (district size), higher percentages of English Language Learner enrollment, higher linguistic diversity, and were more likely to offer Seal-related language opportunities both in total and for each type of Seal criteria (i.e., world language competency credits (CCs), Advanced Placement world languages, an International Baccalaureate program, a Dual Language program, and four years of world languages).

Based on the quantitative results, I then explored district level decision-making in terms of Seal adoption in-depth in four different districts – two early adopters of the Seal and two non-adopters – to shed light on the factors that led to the decision to adopt the Seal. In all four cases, the Seal was viewed as valuable for recognizing students’ bilingual skills, helping them in their post-high school plans, and supporting language minority students. Of the five factors related to speed of adoption (relative advantage, compatibility, observability, trialability, and complexity), observability, complexity, and compatibility played a role in all four districts. Observability emerged from district communication with other school districts that had adopted the Seal in 2015 to learn from their experiences. Complexity, typically an inverse relationship with adoption, was alleviated by the existence of a world language CC program that already tested language proficiency. In general, there was a blending of the Seal idea with that of the world language CCs. Compatibility of the Seal with districts came primarily in three forms, compatibility with a district’s world language CC program, a general identity as an innovative

district, and to a lesser extent a pre-existing bilingual policy. And finally, all four cases utilized a collective decision-making approach at the district level.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures	xii
List of Tables	xiii
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
1.1 Washington State Context	2
1.2 Competency Credits for World Languages	3
1.3 State Seal of Biliteracy	6
1.3.1 Prevalence of the Seal Nationwide	7
1.3.2 Criteria Guidelines for Earning the Seal	9
1.3.3 Variation in Criteria for Earning the Seal across States	10
1.3.4 Washington State Specific Criteria for the Seal	13
1.4 Problem Statement	14
1.5 Purpose of the Project	16
1.6 Research Questions	18
1.7 Overview of Theoretical Framework	19
1.7.1 Easton’s Systems Model	20
1.7.2 Diffusion of Innovations Theory	20
1.8 Research Design and Methods	21
1.8.1 Quantitative Data Collection	22
1.8.2 Quantitative Data Analysis	23
1.8.3 Qualitative Data Collection	23

1.8.4	Qualitative Data Analysis	24
1.9	Significance and Justification of the Project.....	24
1.10	Organization of the Dissertation	25
Chapter 2.	Current Literature.....	26
2.1	The Orientation: Language as Problem, Right, or Resource	26
2.1.1	Language-as-Resource: Debates and Further Refinement.....	28
2.1.2	Language-as-Resource: The Seal of Biliteracy.....	31
2.2	Easton’s Systems Model.....	33
2.3	Diffusion of Innovations Theory	35
2.3.1	Diffusion of Innovations’ Components	36
2.3.2	Diffusion of Innovations’ Phases of Change	38
2.3.3	Diffusion of Innovations’ Types of Adopters.....	39
2.3.4	Diffusion of Innovations’ Role of Change Agent.....	42
2.3.5	Diffusion of Innovations’ Rate of Adoption.....	43
2.3.6	Other Research Utilizing Diffusion of Innovations Theory	45
Chapter 3.	Quantitative Research Methods	48
3.1	Research Questions.....	48
3.2	Rationale for Mixed Methods Study.....	49
3.3	Survey Design.....	51
3.3.1	Survey Instrument Item Development	51
3.3.2	Survey Format and Content Validation	52
3.3.3	Survey Sample	53

3.3.4	Survey Data Collection	53
3.3.5	Survey Data Analysis Procedures	55
Chapter 4.	Quantitative Results	56
4.1	Survey Response Rate	56
4.1	Comparison of State Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters	59
4.1.1	Breakdown of Responses Based on Responder Title	59
4.1.2	Breakdown of Responses Based on Location	60
4.1.3	Language Opportunities and the Seal	61
4.1.4	Participants Involved in the Seal Decision	62
4.1.5	Seal Adopter-Specific Responses	64
4.1.6	No-Specific Responses	65
4.1.7	No Versus Undecided Responses	66
4.2	Actual Seals Awarded Since Survey	67
4.3	Comparing Actual Results to California’s Results	69
Chapter 5.	Qualitative Research Methods	71
5.1	Retrospective Case Study Method	71
5.2	Case Study Site Selection	72
5.3	Case Study District and Individual Participation.....	75
5.4	Case Study Settings	76
5.4.1	Murrow School District	76
5.4.2	Swift Water School District	77
5.4.3	Woodbury School District	77

5.4.4	Luna School District	78
5.5	Case Study Data Collection	79
5.6	Case Study Data Analysis Procedures	81
5.7	Researcher’s Positionality.....	83
Chapter 6.	Qualitative Findings	85
6.1	Case Studies Overview	85
6.2	Murrow School District	86
6.2.1	Environmental Context	87
6.2.2	Trigger for Seal Consideration.....	89
6.2.3	Stakeholders in Seal Decision Process	91
6.2.4	Decision-Making Process Phases and Variables Affecting Adoption	93
6.3	Swift Water School District.....	96
6.3.1	Environmental Context	96
6.3.2	Triggers for Seal Consideration	100
6.3.3	Stakeholders in the Seal Decision Process.....	101
6.3.4	Decision-Making Process Phases and Variables Affecting Adoption	103
6.4	Woodbury School District	106
6.4.1	Environmental Context	106
6.4.2	Triggers for Seal Consideration	110
6.4.3	Stakeholders in the Seal Decision Process.....	112
6.4.4	Decision-Making Process Phases and Variables Affecting Adoption	114
6.5	Luna School District	121
6.5.1	Environmental Context	122

6.5.2	Trigger for Seal Consideration.....	124
6.5.3	Stakeholders in the Seal Decision Process.....	125
6.5.4	Decision-Making Process Phases and Variables Affecting Adoption.....	127
6.6	Ethical Considerations and Social Validity of Findings.....	132
Chapter 7. Discussion		134
7.1	Linking Survey and Case Study Findings.....	134
7.2	Unique Characteristics.....	137
7.3	Variations and Commonalities.....	138
7.3.1	Seal Adopters versus Seal Non-Adopters.....	139
7.3.2	Large versus Small Districts.....	142
7.3.3	Cross-Category Commonalities: All but Swift Water.....	146
7.3.4	Cross-Category Commonalities: All but Murrow.....	147
7.3.5	Cross-Category Commonalities: Swift Water – Woodbury Similarities.....	148
7.3.6	Cross-Category Commonalities: All Cases.....	149
7.4	Unanticipated Results.....	151
7.5	Discrepancies with the Literature.....	152
7.6	Limitations.....	154
Chapter 8. Conclusion.....		156
8.1	Synthesis of Emerging Themes and Patterns.....	156
8.2	Recommendations.....	158
8.2.1	Involvement of ESDs or Community Colleges.....	158
8.2.2	Improvement of Communication from the State.....	159

8.2.3	Support from Other Organizations.....	162
8.2.4	Recommendations to Districts Considering the Seal.....	163
8.2.5	Recommendations to Other States	165
8.3	Contributions to the Literature.....	165
8.4	Further Research.....	167
8.5	Conclusions.....	168
	Bibliography	170
	Appendix A Washington SSB Legislation	180
	Appendix B Definition of Key Terms	184
	Appendix C Washington Administrative Code Regulations on the SSB	186
	Appendix D IRB Approval Letter.....	187
	Appendix E Email introduction for Survey	189
	Appendix F Seal of Biliteracy Survey	190
	Appendix G Introductory Email for Case Studies	195
	Appendix H Abstract and Bio for Case Studies.....	196
	Appendix I Puget Sound ESD Letter of Support.....	197
	Appendix J Interview Consent Form	198
	Appendix K Research Question/Conceptual Framework/Interview Question Matrix	201
	Appendix L Coding Dictionary	203

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework	34
Figure 2.2. Easton's Systems Frame.....	35
Figure 3.1. Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Model.....	50

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1. Adoption of SSB Nationwide	7
Table 1.2. Required AP and IB Scores to Earn a Seal	10
Table 1.3. Seat Time Criterion to Earn a Seal	11
Table 1.4. Language Proficiency Criterion to Earn a Seal	12
Table 4.5. District Demographics of Responders and Non-Responders	56
Table 4.6. Language Characteristics of Responders and Non-Responders	58
Table 4.7. Geographic Location of Responders and Non-Responders	59
Table 4.8. Survey Respondent Title of Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters	60
Table 4.9. ESD Representation of Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters	60
Table 4.10. District Demographics of Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters.....	61
Table 4.11. Language Characteristics of Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters	62
Table 4.12. Decision-Maker Type of Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters.....	62
Table 4.13. Types of Organizations Reported, with Type of Help Received.....	65
Table 5.14. Matrix of Case Study Selection Criteria	73
Table 5.15. Respondents per Category	73
Table 5.16. Case Study Participants by World Language CCs and Multiple Criteria.....	74
Table 5.17. Matrix of Case Study Selected Districts	79
Table 7.18. Case Study Key Responses to the Survey, Part 1	135
Table 7.19. Case Study Key Responses to the Survey, Part 2	136

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I dedicate this dissertation to my father, a multilingual immigrant whose passion for learning and overcoming great odds has always been an inspiration, and to my two daughters, who teach me every day and keep me motivated to be the best version of myself.

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the popularity of the “English Only” movement in the 1980s-2000s and anti-immigration developments surrounding the 2016 Presidential election, a recent policy trend has emerged in the U.S. that casts bilingualism in a positive light. Over half of the states across the country have begun to create State Seals of Biliteracy (SSB) for graduating high school students fluent in English¹ and at least one other language. Though wording of these policies varies, they officially recognize bilingualism as desirable and beneficial for both the student and greater society.

Washington State’s Senate Bill (SB) 6424 for the SSB (see Appendix A) describes bilingualism as contributing toward “students cognitive development and to the national economy and security...and protecting the...rich heritage of multiple cultures and languages” (SB 6424, 2014, p. 1). While changing state policy orientation to “language-as-resource” (Ruiz, 1984) is a positive step toward valuing students’ linguistic assets, the question remains: does the state’s adoption of the Seal in and of itself go far enough? Across states, the Seal’s universal feature is that district participation is both voluntary and unfunded. Given this, what triggers a district to take on the Seal’s additional administrative responsibility without additional funding or staff to do so?

Using Ruiz’s language policy orientations (1984) and diffusion of innovations theory, this study explored district-level decision-making in terms of Seal adoption in four districts across Washington. This chapter will begin with an overview of the Washington State context and provide a synopsis of the development of the Seal nationwide. Next, it will outline the research questions, framework, and methods for this project. Following, it will walk through implications of the findings and conclude with an overview of subsequent chapters.

¹ The exception to this is Hawaii, which has two official state languages, and therefore allow Seals to be awarded to those fluent in Hawaiian or English and an additional language (which could also be English or Hawaiian).

1.1 WASHINGTON STATE CONTEXT

The past 10 years have witnessed a 57% increase in Washington’s English Language Learner² (ELL) student enrollment, while the overall student population grew by only 3% (OSPI Report Card, 2016). Now totaling nearly 120,000 students, ELL enrollees make up 10% of the state’s student population and continue to increase in number each year (Moore & Came, 2016). In 2013-14, new ELL students made up nearly 24% of the total figure and only 17% of ELL-designated students had exited services by the end of the 2014-15 school year (Moore & Came, 2016).

While diversity within a school district can enrich student experiences, the ELL population performance lags behind non-ELL students in Washington at every grade level and in every subject (Moore & Came, 2016). Even ELL students scoring at Level 4 of the state’s English language proficiency test (Level 4 is termed “transitional,” and is the highest level on a scale of 1-4) fall significantly behind statewide averages in all content areas. In 2015, only 34% of ELL students across all grades met academic standards in math (11% lower than the state average), and 35% met academic standards in English language arts (16% lower than the state average) (Moore & Came, 2016). Those percentages fall to only 13% and 8%, respectively, when considering ELL students in the lower three English proficiency levels, Levels 1-3 (Moore & Came, 2016). Using the 2014-15 cohort (those starting high school in 2011), the adjusted four-year cohort graduation rate for ELL students was only 56%, and increased to just a 63% five-

² ELL students are sometimes called Limited English Proficient (LEP), English as a Second Language (ESL), English Learners (EL) or the least deficit model term, emergent bilingual, which reflects their status more holistically as learning two (or sometimes more) languages rather than focusing solely on their lack of English (García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008). For the purpose of this project, ELL is used when referring to students officially classified by their districts as those receiving ELL services. Language minority (LM) student is utilized as the more umbrella term to include current and former ELL students as well as those who speak another language in the home, but may not ever have received ELL support services.

year graduation rate (Came & Ireland, 2016). In contrast, across the state the mean graduation rates for the same periods were 78% and 81%, respectively (Came & Ireland, 2016).

The Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) acknowledges, “Students perform better when provided more intensive instruction in their primary language,” using their home language as a resource (Moore & Came, 2015, p. 4). In fact, OSPI has “actively promoted dual language³ programs and attempted to eliminate [English as a Second Language] ESL pull-out models” (Contreras & Stritikus, 2008, p. 33-4). Despite OSPI’s efforts to move away from an English only approach, only 11% of the state’s ELL classified students receive some level of primary language instruction (Moore & Came, 2016). Despite the rapid growth in the number of ELL students, this percentage has remained fairly consistent between 10% and 14% over the past eight years (Contreras & Stritikus, 2008; Malagon, McCold, et al., 2011, 2013; Moore & Came, 2015, 2016). With a growing ELL population and lackluster ELL performance on state assessments, OSPI administrators have sought other ways to promote *language-as-resource* policies and bilingualism in school districts across the state.

1.2 COMPETENCY CREDITS FOR WORLD LANGUAGES

One such initiative that promoted a *language-as-resource* orientation (see Chapter 2), viewing bilingualism as something to be valued and promoted (Ruiz, 1984), was the creation of competency credits (CCs) for world languages. Piloted in spring 2011, school districts can opt to award students up to four high school elective credits, depending on students’ proficiency level, for knowledge of another language (OSPI Press Release, 2013). While the CC option is not limited to ELL students, it was designed to acknowledge this linguistic resource by giving high school credit for the knowledge of languages students often speak in the home and/or learn in the

³ Dual language programs are those in which students are taught from a young age in two languages to become bilingual and biliterate through content-based instruction (e.g., Carrera-Carrillo, 2006; Cloud et al., 2000; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Steele, Slater, Zamarro & Miller, 2017).

community (AssessmentDays webpage, n.d.). Many who fall into that category were at one time or continue to be ELL students.

With district adoption of CCs voluntary, determining who should shoulder the burden of the cost for these language proficiency exams is up to the district (AssessmentDays webpage, n.d.). Some districts pay for any student who wishes to take these exams. Other districts pay for testing only for “priority” categories, such as:

- Only 11th and 12th graders;
- Those with financial need; and/or
- Those taking the exam for the first time (students may take the exam multiple times).

Meanwhile, other districts require students to pay for all exams. Some districts collaborate to offer language assessment days at local colleges and universities to reduce costs and to allow for a broader range of languages to be tested. Some districts allow students to participate in other districts’ language assessment days at students’ expense, but do not offer testing directly (M. Anciaux-Aoki, personal communication, November 24, 2015). Students may also take an approved language proficiency exam on their own and submit the results to their district, which can then determine whether or not they will be accepted (M. Anciaux-Aoki, personal communication, November 24, 2015). As the CC option is voluntary, districts are not required to award credit for language proficiency at this time. As of 2013-14 (the latest available data), over 25 districts have tested at least 4,220 students⁴ in 60 plus languages to award world language CCs (Anciaux-Aoki, 2014).

⁴ Statewide data is available through 2012-13, only Road Map District data is available for 2013-14. Due to a problem with coding in OSPI’s Comprehensive Education Data And Research System (CEDARS) database, the data about world language CCs is incomplete for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years. They are reportedly working on correcting this issue, but it was not fixed by the time of the writing of this project. Survey responses and CEDARS data show that 54 districts are currently awarding world language CCs.

In 2013, the Gates Foundation awarded OSPI a two-year, \$525,000 grant to implement the world language CC program in all seven “Road Map” districts⁵ (OSPI Road Map Project webpage, n.d.), which are home to 22% of the state’s students who speak another language in the home. These funds covered the purchase and administration of language proficiency exams in these seven districts (Greenberg Motamedi & Jaffery, 2014). According to the project’s press release, the Gates Foundation grant was intended to address the following needs:

- “To honor and validate students’ first language and the languages of their families;
- To open up opportunities for students to access core subject credits required for graduation [This is a significant opportunity for ELL students who enter the U.S. high school system mid-year or with limited core subject credits];
- To prepare bilingual students for future career opportunities in private industry and to meet government needs for skilled bilingual speakers; [and]
- To motivate students to take advanced courses in their heritage languages at their schools, in college or at ethnic community centers” (OSPI Press Release, 2013, p. 1).

Over the course of those two years, 2,364 Road Map district students participated in the world language CC program (Greenberg Motamedi & Jaffery, 2015, p. 3). They tested in 47 languages and “on average, students qualified for 3.1 credits, and almost three-quarters of the students (72%) qualified for three or four out of a total of four possible credits” (Greenberg Motamedi & Jaffery, 2015, p. 3). All combined, these students earned 7,271 credits toward graduation. In one evaluation of the project that used a representative sample of 38% of involved students, Greenberg Motamedi and Jaffery showed that 21% of students had needed these credits

⁵ Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle, and Tukwila School Districts were awarded a U.S. Department of Education “Race to the Top” grant entitled The Road Map Project.

to graduate on time, and another 10% had needed these credits to be four-year college eligible (2015).

In a second report on the project, the same evaluation team conducted focus groups with a representative sample of 108 students (5% of the original sample) (Greenberg Motamedi & Jaffery, 2014). Their findings revealed that students reported feeling proud of being bilingual and gaining confidence in their skills based on their proficiency test results (Greenberg Motamedi & Jaffery, 2014). Now that grant funding is over, The Road Map project districts have had to take on additional responsibilities and expenses in order to continue offering world language CCs to their students (Greenberg Motamedi & Jaffery, 2015).

While OSPI and various districts worked to implement the world languages CC policy to show the value of home languages in Washington, the SSB emerged in California with a similar intent. To counter the English Only/Anti-bilingual Education movement, the immigrant rights group, Californians Together, conceptualized the Seal with the intention of changing public perception about the value (or “resource”) of bilingualism (S. Spiegel-Coleman, personal communication, February 1, 2013). In its third attempt, the SSB legislation finally became law in 2011.

1.3 STATE SEAL OF BILITERACY

Originated in California, a SSB bestows upon graduating high school students, who are proficient in English and another language, a golden insignia on their diploma in recognition of this accomplishment. Started originally as a school district initiative and then implemented in 2012 at the state level, this policy seeks to encourage bilingualism both for language minority students, by maintaining their home language while learning English, as well as for native English speakers learning another language in school (Olsen, 2011). In its first five years as a

statewide offering, more than 125,000 students have received the California Seal (Torlakson, 2016).

1.3.1 *Prevalence of the Seal Nationwide*

California and Washington are not the only states in the U.S. to pursue this state-level recognition of the value of students’ bilingualism. To determine the prevalence of Seal adoption policies across all states in the U.S., I performed an online search of each state’s legislature and board of education for any sign of a Seal in progress or adoption (gathering both formal and informal indication). I also checked the Sealofbilitery.org website, as it posts updates about any movement toward a Seal in districts and states across the country. Any evidence of a Seal found was then cross-checked with online searches for articles, school board announcements, and any other related details about emerging Seals. Finally, since 2014, I personally monitored any press coverage of the Seal using a Google alert anytime the Seal was mentioned. These data were then entered into a database and are summarized below (see Table 1.1.), which reflects the status of the Seal across states in the U.S. as of spring 2017.

Table 1.1. Adoption of SSB Nationwide

Type of Adoption	Number of States
Statewide Adoption	26
District-level Adoption	10
Under Consideration	3
No Adoption	11

The Seal has been approved at the state level in 26 states, either through the legislature or the state’s board of education, depending on the process required by those states. Of those, only five⁶ states had made the Seal available to districts statewide by 2015. That number jumped to 13⁷ in 2016. Further, 11 more states⁸ have adopted the Seal, with an anticipated spring 2017

⁶ California, Illinois, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington.

⁷ In addition to the above, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

implementation. The remaining two states, Colorado and Missouri, are slated to rollout the Seal in 2018.

In terms of policy adoption process, several of the 26 states began with a pilot implementation in a handful of districts to help determine the final criteria required for someone to earn a Seal. New York, the second state to pass the Seal in 2012, piloted it in 2014-15 in a handful of districts to help determine the final criteria for the Seal that was then offered across all districts in spring 2016 (New York State Education Department, 2016). New Jersey, Oregon, and Wisconsin also tested the Seal in certain districts before statewide implementation. In Arizona, Colorado, and Florida, individual districts adopted a local level Seal, which was soon followed by a state adoption of the Seal.

Interestingly, 10 states⁹, in addition to the aforementioned 26, have districts that have chosen to offer a Seal despite the lack of a state policy to do so (Sealofbiliteracy.org, n.d.). Dearborn School District in Michigan offered its first Seals in 2014 (as did the District of Columbia in 2015). Districts in the nine remaining states launched their local Seals in 2016 (Scotto, 2015, Sealofbiliteracy.org, n.d.) or planned to pilot a Seal in spring 2017. In other developments, the language association in Kentucky has begun an initiative to consider a state Seal, which happened in several other states as a precursor to adoption (Sealofbiliteracy.org, n.d.). Finally, the legislatures of Delaware and Iowa each have Seal legislation under consideration as of spring 2017 (Sealofbiliteracy.org, n.d.). In summary, the spread of the Seal has happened rather quickly. Since California's landmark adoption of the Seal, 39 states have had some level of dialogue about the Seal policy.

⁸ Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, and Utah.

⁹ Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee.

1.3.2 *Criteria Guidelines for Earning the Seal*

In March 2015, the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL), and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Association published a set of “guidelines for implementing the Seal of Biliteracy” (Guidelines, 2015). With the swift expansion of the Seal, these four organizations sought to provide recommendations “to ensure consistency in the meaning of this recognition” (Guidelines, 2015, p. 2). On the English side, meeting language arts requirements for high school graduation and, when applicable, passing a state-level assessment of English proficiency to exit ELL services would establish the English proficiency. As recommended, all states have utilized their existing requirements to demonstrate English proficiency.

For the second language, the guidelines recommended a minimum ACTFL proficiency level of “intermediate mid” and special allowances in testing for those languages that might not be testable across all four skills (reading comprehension, writing, speaking, and listening). For example, some languages do not have a writing system, and others, such as Latin, are not used for interpersonal communication (speaking and listening). Instead, the argument is that languages should focus on the “assessment of the modalities that characterize communication in that language” (Guidelines, 2015, p. 3). The guidelines also encouraged equitable access to the Seal regardless of home language and special accommodations that might be needed, “such as those already in place for state-required assessments of language” (Guidelines, 2015, p. 5). Finally, the guidelines also promote the idea of state-level data collection on the Seal to include at least student names, languages of biliteracy, and potentially the evidence upon which the Seal was earned (e.g., Advanced Placement (AP) score or ACTFL proficiency level).

1.3.3 *Variation in Criteria for Earning the Seal across States*

Unfortunately, the guideline recommendations from 2015 came a bit late. Despite its rapid adoption as a policy across the U.S., there are almost as many variations in the criteria for earning a Seal as there are states that have adopted it. They have different names, different requirements, and different levels of administration. While most are called a State Seal of Biliteracy, five states call it by other designations that align with other distinctions available to students in those states.¹⁰

There is also a tremendous range in what level of proficiency students must have to earn a Seal. Most states that have finalized their criteria to allow an AP score and an International Baccalaureate (IB) score to earn a Seal, but states require different scores on those tests to earn the Seal (see Table 1.2). For districts that offer those tracks, these options provide an already established way to test students in those particular languages and to determine their eligibility for the Seal. While initially many states used a 3+ on an AP exam and a 4+ on an IB exam, some more recent Seal adopters have opted for a higher standard of 4+ and 5+, respectively.¹¹

Table 1.2. Required AP and IB Scores to Earn a Seal

AP & IB Score	Number of States	AP & IB Score	Number of States
3+ AP, 4+ IB	11	3+ AP (no IB)	1
4+ AP, 4+ IB	2	4+ AP (no IB)	1
4+ AP, 5+ IB	3	To Be Determined	4
Neither Officially Mentioned as Seal Criteria			4

¹⁰ It is called a Bilingual and Multilingual Seal in Minnesota, a Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency in Indiana, a Global Languages Endorsement in North Carolina, a Performance Endorsement for Bilingualism and Biliteracy in Texas, and a State Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy in New Mexico.

¹¹ Arizona, California, Hawaii, Kansas, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina (AP only), Rhode Island, Texas, Virginia, and Washington require a 3+ on AP and a 4+ in IB. Georgia, Maryland and New York require a 4+ and a 5+, respectively. Illinois (AP only), New Jersey and Oregon require a 4+ on each. Colorado, Florida, Missouri, and Ohio are still in the process of determining their criteria, so they are “to be determined” at this time. Indiana, Minnesota, Utah, and Wisconsin make no mention of AP or IB as criteria.

Interestingly, some states (see Table 1.3) employ a “seat-time” criterion,¹² which allows a Seal to be awarded to students who have taken three or usually four years of a language while maintaining a minimum GPA (2.5 to 3.0). Unlike the other means where a student must attain a particular proficiency level on an exam, this latter option has the potential to water down the qualifications of Seal recipients. It creates the illusion of a state standard (i.e., the point of a *state* Seal), but does not actually test whether the student meets a uniform standard. In fact, a student could fail one of the exams (meaning s/he had not achieved requisite proficiency) and still earn a Seal based on seat time and GPA. This method is also the cheapest way for a district to grant a Seal– no testing is required and therefore there are no concerns about subsidizing student exams for those who cannot afford to take a test. Additionally, this method limits the Seal to only those who have studied a world language formally in school rather than learned their language in the home, tutoring, or through a community program.

Table 1.3. Seat Time Criterion to Earn a Seal

Seat Time Status	Number of States
Allowed	8
Allowed When Paired with a Proficiency Level	1
Do Not Allow	14
To Be Determined	3

Almost all Seal states allow the use of a nationally recognized, standardized language assessment to determine proficiency levels in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Using the ACTFL proficiency scale (ranging from novice to intermediate to advanced levels with low, mid, and high steps within each level and ending with a superior level, representing a college-level mastery of the language), there is a wide range of language levels required. North Carolina is the lowest with only an “intermediate low” score necessary to earn a Seal, which can typically be

¹² California, Florida, Indiana (six credits plus intermediate high proficiency level), Louisiana, New Mexico, North Carolina, Rhode Island (for the dual language students), Texas, and Virginia allow this. Colorado, Missouri, and Ohio are still in the process of determining their criteria, so they are “to be determined” at this time. The remaining 14 states do not allow it.

achieved with three to four years of high school language instruction.¹³ New Jersey, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Washington require an “intermediate mid,” while Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, and Texas require “intermediate high.” At the higher end, Louisiana and Oregon require an “advanced low.” Florida, Kansas, Minnesota, Utah, and Wisconsin have decided to offer multiple levels of Seals to give recognition for those with lower levels as well as extremely high levels of proficiency. Utah and Kansas set the Gold Seal at “intermediate mid” and the Platinum Seal at “advanced low,” while Minnesota has set the Gold Seal level at “intermediate high” and a Platinum Seal for “advanced low.” Florida is using Gold as the highest with Silver as a secondary level, but has not determined yet what level those will be. And finally, Wisconsin has set “intermediate high” for the Seal, but is offering a Distinguished Seal for those at the “advanced mid” level.¹⁴ Their version also requires a socio-cultural competence as well, which can be met through active participation in community events, volunteer service, or independent reading (Sanabria, 2015).

Table 1.4. Language Proficiency Criterion to Earn a Seal

ACTFL Level of Proficiency	Number of States
Intermediate Low	1
Intermediate Mid	4
Intermediate High	5
Advanced Low	2
2 Levels of Seals – Intermediate Mid & Advanced Low	2
2 Levels of Seals – Intermediate High & Advanced Low	1
2 Levels of Seals – Intermediate High & Advanced Mid	1
2 Levels of Seals – To Be Determined	1
To Be Determined	9

¹³ For level one and two difficulty languages: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Ohios-Learning-Standards/Foreign-Language/World-Languages-Model-Curriculum/World-Languages-Model-Curriculum-Framework/Introduction-to-Learning-Standards/Proficiency-and-Research-Based-Proficiency-Targets#1>.

¹⁴ Wisconsin will also award a Seal participation certificate to those who tried to earn the Seal, but did not reach the required level. And districts can decide to offer a district Seal at a lower level, but to qualify for a State Seal they must attain this higher level.

In addition to concerns noted above about limited language testing offerings and it being easier to earn a Seal through seat time, another area of possible challenge to a Seal of Biliteracy is the potential exclusion of non-standard varieties of world languages. Language proficiency exams are designed to test the standard, academic form of a language, not a rural or country-specific variety of, for example, Spanish (Valdes, 2005). Without taking into consideration these non-standard varieties, some students fluent in their version of a language could be excluded from earning a Seal.

Another notable difference in Seal policies is the level of coordination. While districts universally determine who will earn an SSB, most states require districts to request the Seals from the state or submit documentation about those students who earn the Seal. North Carolina, Rhode Island, Texas, and Wisconsin have left administration of Seals to districts, and are not involved in the distribution of Seals or the collection of data about the Seal (e.g., how many are awarded, in what languages, and in what districts?). As such, tracking statewide implementation in these states will be difficult, if not impossible.

1.3.4 *Washington State Specific Criteria for the Seal*

Unique to Washington State is the specific inclusion of world language CCs as a criterion for earning the Seal. When the legislature passed the SSB in spring 2014, it left the details of determining the Seal's criteria to OSPI except in the case of CCs. According to OSPI:

The criteria must permit a student to demonstrate proficiency in another world language through multiple methods including nationally or internationally recognized language proficiency tests *and competency-based world language credits awarded under the model policy* adopted by the Washington state school directors' association (emphasis added) (SB 6424, 2014).

In this way, Washington’s Seal builds on existing language proficiency testing infrastructure and procedures already in place in the more 50 school districts already offering world language CCs. This pathway to the Seal is quite notable in that very few states¹⁵ with the Seal have policies in place to allow districts to award high school credit for world language proficiency gained outside of the school system (NSCSSFL, 2012). More importantly, proficiency exams in dozens of languages have already been identified and utilized in Road Map districts as a result of the Gates Foundation grant discussed previously. This means that OSPI has already developed and/or identified (sometimes multiple) testing options for over 70 languages (AssessmentDays webpage, n.d.), alleviating much of the test identification/development burden from districts. This availability of tests in Washington, especially for lower frequency languages, is much higher than it is in other states. In Chapter 4, I provide more in-depth information about Seal implementation specifics in Washington State.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

While their details may differ, the Seal represents a symbolic acknowledgement by states of the value of mastery of two (or more) languages by students. This implies that adoption of the Seal can be identified as a *language-as-resource* policy (Ruiz, 1984) (see also Chapter 2 for in-depth review of this heuristic tool and Appendix B for definition of terms). Across all SSBs, there are two commonalities: individual school district participation is voluntary and unfunded. This begs the question: “What conditions prompt district leaders to consider adoption of the SSB?” given that SSB policies offer little incentive or support for districts to participate. Implementing the Seal takes staff time and other resources to manage the process, which includes everything from notifying students about the existence of the opportunity, ensuring testing opportunities are

¹⁵ Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, North Carolina, and Washington.

available, processing and verifying students' language proficiencies, and acknowledging the SSB with certificates, medallions, and/or ceremonies.

Since the Seal is still a relatively new concept, little research has been conducted on the Seal and its implementation. In an era of promoting evidence-based practices, it is remarkable for a policy to spread so rapidly without any evidence of its benefits. Proponents of the Seal claim, for example, that it will help students to get into college and find employment, but yet there is little empirical research on the Seal to date to support these and similar claims. A comprehensive library search revealed no journal articles written on the SSB; in fact, only two dissertations on the Seal and a smattering of press clippings of local Seal awards exist to date.

One dissertation, written by Alma Castro Santana (2012), focused on "Validating the linguistic strengths of English language learners via the LAUSD [Los Angeles Unified School District] Seal of Biliteracy awards program." Castro Santana's research documented the student and staff perceptions of the implementation of the Seal and how it related to the way they view their bilingual skills. Her project was limited to one school in one school district, but she did find the district-level Seal had a positive association with the school's climate, moving to a more asset-based perception of native languages and more parental involvement in school functions (2012).

Tanya DeLeon's 2014 dissertation titled, "The New Ecology of Biliteracy in California: An Exploratory Study of the Early Implementation of the State Seal of Biliteracy," investigated the first two years of district-level implementation of California's SSB. Her research considered what led to the implementation of the Seal in districts, what pathways were in place in districts to lead to earning the Seal, and the extent to which current and former ELL students participated in those pathways leading to the Seal. She began with a statewide survey and then conducted

interviews in three districts with the Seal that were near her home rather than selecting them based on different or similar responses in the survey.

In an answer to what led to the implementation of the Seal, DeLeon found districts that chose to implement the Seal were interested in the “intentional creation of an ecology of biliteracy” (DeLeon, 2014, p. 159). Using the work of Ricento (2000) and Hornberger (2003), this phrase refers to an environment that supports bilingualism. Whether that is pursued because of valuing language as a resource (Ruiz, 1984), evidence of bilingualism as potentially helpful in closing the achievement gap for ELL students (Rolstad, Mahoney, and Glass, 2005), an advantage for college entry and employers, or a combination thereof, districts that pursued the Seal wanted to show they supported and valued bilingualism (DeLeon, 2014). Yet, using Hornberger’s Continuum of Biliteracy (2003), DeLeon found that districts were not providing enough pathways (such as dual language or heritage language programs) for ELL students to achieve the level of proficiency across reading, writing, listening, and speaking to earn the Seal. Instead, districts preferred sequential bilingualism (learning a second language in high school) over simultaneous bilingual language acquisition (teaching children two or more languages from birth or early in childhood).

As the Seal of Biliteracy continues to spread rapidly across the country, it is important to investigate what makes a district adopt a Seal and what barriers prevent its adoption. This research addresses this gap as will be described below.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

Building on DeLeon’s research by also considering the district level of the SSB, this mixed methods project focused on districts within Washington State and with a slightly different set of research questions and framework. Due to the lack of research on the Seal and the relative

newness of the innovation, this project was exploratory in nature. The focus was on triggers, actors, and processes in the policy decision-making period and not the implementation (i.e., output/outcome) period. There were several reasons for choosing the decision-making period rather than the implementation period.

First, and most importantly, it was logical for the Washington state context, while DeLeon's focus made sense for the California context. In California, the Seal implementation varied greatly in terms of equity due to the lack of identified language proficiency tests for less common languages, the four-year seat time option for world language students (to whom some districts limited the Seal), and the permissibility of a district to offer Seals in some languages and not others. These particular implementation issues were not likely to plague Washington's school districts for the following reasons. In conjunction with Washington Association for Language Teachers (WAFLT), OSPI had already identified language proficiency testing options for over 70 languages. When a district or student has requested testing in a previously untested language, WAFLT leaders worked through their national language proficiency partners to determine a way to test that language (M. Anciaux-Aoki, personal communication, November 24, 2015). Washington also did not include the seat time option as criteria for earning the Seal nor did it allow the exclusion of less commonly spoken languages. With Washington's CCs for world languages program already in place, districts already have an established path to creating the policies, testing the languages, and awarding credit for students' language skills beyond what they learn in an AP or IB course of study. As such, I hypothesized that, in Washington, a district's decision of whether or not to offer the Seal is where the issue of exclusion (inequity) may surface; further, this issue would also be relevant across all states that have adopted some form of the Seal, since all states allow districts the freedom of choice in implementing the Seal.

Secondly, there is limited research on district-level adoption of innovations in the realm of ELL policy (see Chapter 2 for literature review). It is important to understand why and how district administrators make the decisions they do that relate to emergent bilingual and language minority students, as districts are the frontline of the Seal policy. As with any policy, there will be implementation issues and unintended consequences with the Seal, but it is also important to understand what combination of conditions are associated with policies that at least attempt to recognize and to promote bilingualism as a resource.

Finally, as explained in the theoretical framework, the rapid spread of Seal adoption across the country fits well within the diffusion of innovations theory framework. Therefore, studying the Seal in Washington provides a unique opportunity to test whether this theory applies across districts within a Seal state.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Utilizing the research on language orientations as a foundation (see Chapter 2), this project was designed to uncover the role that orientations have in district-level decision-making in terms of acknowledging and/or encouraging bilingualism in students. In other words, the major aim was to understand the combination of conditions that might lead to the district adoption (or non-adoption) of a SSB policy. An exploratory, mixed methods research design made most sense for investigating this recent, understudied phenomenon. The specific research questions that guided this project are as follows.

- 1) What are the “triggers” (e.g., grassroots encouragement, use of other additive language policies), stakeholders (e.g., parents, school staff, district staff, and other supporters, as well as opponents, of the Seal), and environmental context variables (e.g., shortage of

funds, size of ELL population, and potential anti-immigrant sentiment) that appear to prompt Washington State's school district leaders to consider offering a Seal?

- 2) How do these district leaders navigate the process in arriving at the decision to adopt (or not adopt) the SSB for their district?
 - a) Does this adoption process vary in different district contexts? If so, how?
- 3) What conditions facilitate and/or impede district-level adoption of the Seal?
 - a) Is there a correlation between the decision to adopt the Seal and the districts' student demographic characteristics (e.g., size of the ELL population and total enrollment size of the district), and/or the type of language programs already be in place in districts?
 - b) Are districts with particular criteria for awarding the Seal more likely to adopt the Seal?
- 4) Do commonalities exist across specific district case studies? If so, how and why?

Case study methodology was used to explore research questions 1, 2, and 4; a survey instrument was developed and used to collect data to evaluate research questions 3 as well as to contribute in part to evaluating research questions 1 and 2. To frame the investigation of these questions, a *diffusion of innovations* (DOI) theoretical lens was used at the intersection point of the framework to investigate what happens at the *black box* point of Easton's systems model (see next section as well as Chapter 2 and Figure 2.1 for further details).

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Again, the major aim of this project was to understand the combination of conditions that led to the district adoption (or non-adoption) of a SSB policy. It was hypothesized that there was a combination of 1) triggers that engendered interest, 2) change agents that guided the Seal

through the approval phase, and 3) organizational structures that enabled this sort of a program to get approved for implementation (see Figure 2.1). Without this combination, it was predicted that a district would not take on an additional, unfunded, voluntary, administrative burden to make the Seal possible.

1.7.1 *Easton's Systems Model*

David Easton's *systems model*, upon which Jenkins elaborated (see Figure 2.2 for a picture of this model), attempts to explain the policy-making process (Jenkins, 1978). While perhaps overly simplistic, it provided a good initial point for understanding the steps that might be involved. Within a dynamic environment (social, political, historical, and economic contexts), the process begins with *inputs*: the combination of demands, supports, and resources that provide the catalyst for a policy to be developed (Kirst & Wirt, 2009). Throughout this project, inputs were called *triggers of the policy formation*. They interacted with the *stakeholders*, who in turn try to influence the decision-making process (Jenkins, 1978). Influenced by environmental context and stakeholders, those inputs then fed into a *black box* political system where the organizational leadership comes to a policy decision (Sabatier, 1991). While this model applies also to implementation processes, recall that this project is focused on policy-making decision processes: the influences, actors, and processes in the policy adoption period and not during the output/outcome period. To reiterate, the DOI lens was applied to the intersection point of Easton's framework (again, see Figure 2.2).

1.7.2 *Diffusion of Innovations Theory*

DOI theory, frequently used in education research (Roger, 2003), has offered an explanation for the way innovations spread and eventually become institutionalized (or replaced) (Perry, 2010).

More than simply change, Hall (1991) differentiated *innovation* as purposeful and directed change with the intention of improving quality and/or expanding service to additional people. In this project, the innovation was the State Seal of Biliteracy. District level adoption of the Seal embodied a purposeful change by acknowledging and awarding recognition for a student's high level of bilingual skills. Whereas students in world language courses may have been praised for their high score on an AP or IB test in the past, the Seal extends this honor to language minority students (i.e., additional people). The decision to adopt the Seal could represent a potential innovation in orientation toward languages (see Chapter 2) and the way districts view students' emerging bilingualism. By mapping and understanding how a district navigates that process, this project has helped build the limited literature around district-level ELL decision-making in general as well as in terms of State Seal adoption more specifically (Sabatier, 1991).

In the forthcoming literature review (Chapter 2), a comprehensive presentation of DOI theory is provided. Briefly, Rogers (2003), the father of diffusion theory, described the theory as having four essential components: the innovation itself, time, communication channels, and the social system (i.e., organizational structures, culture, key actors, and type of decision-making). This final element links to Jenkins' (1993) organizational structures mentioned above. While this project considered all four components, the communication channels and the social system received primary attention as most directly related to the research questions.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The type of research questions proposed about district's experiences with the State Seal lends itself to a mixed methods research design. First, the quantitative data was collected through a statewide survey of superintendents and ELL coordinators in all Washington State school districts that have high schools. These responses provided comprehensive, aggregate

information, such as which districts had adopted the Seal, who was involved in the decision-making to adopt the Seal, and what were some of the reasons for the decision. Responses also allowed for statistically testing linkages among demographic characteristics and Seal adoption decision-making, as well as providing a pool of districts for use in purposive sampling of case studies. Following these results, a qualitative study was conducted utilizing a multiple-case study approach in order to delve more deeply into the experiences of four different district contexts.

This project's design is also retrospective, considering districts that have already completed the Seal adoption (or lack of adoption) process by 2016 (Kleinbok & Vidergor, 2009). This choice enabled analysis of the complete process (see research questions) for two districts that were successful in getting approval for this initiative as well as in two districts who had decided, at the time, against pursuing the Seal. This comparison provided insight into understanding the critical conditions in districts' contexts for pursuing the Seal (as a policy innovation) or not (see Chapter 2 for further details).

1.8.1 *Quantitative Data Collection*

After receiving Institutional Review Board approval, the online Seal survey was sent to respondents via *Qualtrics* software from April through June 2016. There were $N = 114$ responses (representing nearly half of school districts with high schools in the state, or 46%), 44 of which had adopted the Seal, 35 of which had not adopted the Seal, and 35 of which were undecided (for analytic purposes, both of the latter categories were combined as non-adopters). Data about districts' orientations, language offerings, and experiences with the Seal were then linked with district-level demographic data from OSPI. Data were then statistically analyzed using *SPSS* software (see Chapter 3 for further details).

1.8.2 *Quantitative Data Analysis*

First, a comparison was made of districts who responded to the survey compared with non-responders (based on district demographics) to understand the representativeness of the survey data. Next, characteristics of districts that adopted the Seal were compared to those that did not (this included “undecided” and “no” categories). Both sets of analyses included descriptive and inferential statistics; specifically, chi-square tests were used to test for significant associations between categorical district characteristics, such as whether the district offered world language CCs, and Seal adoption status (yes or otherwise), and *t*-tests were used to test for significant associations between continuous district characteristics (such as percentage of ELL students enrolled) and Seal adoption status. These findings were then used to aid in the selection of case studies (i.e., as will be seen in Chapter 4, offering world language CC was significantly correlated to adopting the Seal).

1.8.3 *Qualitative Data Collection*

After analysis of the survey responses in connection with district-level data from OSPI (e.g., demographics, graduation rates, socio-economic status), four case studies were selected: two that had decided to implement the Seal and two that had actively decided against it (Chapter 5 details the district selection process). The selection of typical, or illustrative, cases from districts offering the Seal and those that did not, shed light on how this process compared across contexts to show what overarching patterns emerged to explain district-level decision-making processes based on the theoretical framework (Patton, 2002).

For each of the four case studies, semi-structured interviews were conducted for about an hour each with the three to five key actors indicated in the Seal survey or identified in the interviews (Bassey, 1999). After the case study interviews and email analyses, I determined that

there was sufficient triangulated information available for qualitative analysis. Although variations existed across the contexts as to who within the district would be considered “key actors,” everyone identified was interviewed (i.e., each was considered as playing a role in the Seal decision-making process). Chapter 5 further details this process.

1.8.4 *Qualitative Data Analysis*

With the case studies, DOI theory helped explain the catalysts for the Seal policy consideration, the leaders of that change, and finally the process of policy formation. All interviews (with permission of participants) were audio-recorded and transcribed. Interviewees provided emails, memos, and other relevant documents. A coding strategy was employed for both interviews and documents with consideration of phases of change, kinds of decision-making, and the roles of the change agent (see Chapter 2). I also kept a journal to record thoughts following interviews and document analysis that reflected impressions and possible areas for further inquiry or analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Using *NVivo* software, a case study database was used to compile all the components of data in a sortable fashion (Yin, 2008). Both individual case analyses and then analyses across the cases were conducted “to attempt to build a general explanation that fits the individual cases” (Merriam, 2009, p. 204). See Chapter 6 for these results.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROJECT

With the majority of states rapidly adopting a voluntary and unfunded Seal, the experiences of Washington could provide insight into considerations for other states implementing a SSB. Understanding the first phase of adoption can inform OSPI, district administrators, the legislature, and outside organizations that have been involved with advocating for the Seal, as to what might determine whether a district will offer the SSB or not. It also helps shed light on considerations about what stakeholders can do to incentivize the Seal, if they choose to do so. As

a voluntary policy with no additional funding for districts, this project demonstrates how widely this policy has been adopted in its first two years and some insight into what informed that decision.

Perhaps most importantly, the fruits of this project could benefit the language minority students who would be able to earn this Seal should their district choose to adopt it. While the Seal's *language-as-resource* orientation may benefit language minority students, understanding what influences district-level adoption could provide insight into whether that orientation filters down to districts, schools, students, and their families.

1.10 ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

With the introduction of the Washington context, the Seal of Biliteracy, and the project itself, what follows is a brief overview of subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive review of the literature on language orientations and DOI theory, both of which frame this work. In Chapter 3, the mixed method research design and methods, focusing on the quantitative elements, are described in detail. I then report the findings from the district-level surveys in Chapter 4. Chapters 5 and 6 present the qualitative case study methods and results, with the discussion of results from both sets of data provided in Chapter 7. Finally, Chapter 8 explores limitations, future research directions, and conclusions from this project.

Chapter 2. CURRENT LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the existing literature on the *language-as-resource* (LAR) orientation, Easton's *systems frame*, and *diffusion of innovations* (DOI) theory, all of which provide the theoretical framework for the present study. The orientation literature sheds light on potential reasons for districts choosing to adopt or not adopt the Seal of Biliteracy, whereas the *systems frame* and DOI theory guided the investigation of the process of decision-making about the Seal. As noted in the introduction, the Seal is a recent innovation with little research conducted on it to date.

2.1 THE ORIENTATION: LANGUAGE AS PROBLEM, RIGHT, OR RESOURCE

In order to understand the decision process leaders navigate in pursuing a Seal for their districts, it is important to explore the worldview its administrators may have in regards to students who speak another language at home. Ruiz's foundational piece (1984) about the underlying orientation of language planning provides a heuristic to help frame understanding about how administrators view their language minority students, whether enrolled in English Language Learner (ELL) services or not. He defines language orientation as "a complex of dispositions toward language and its role, and toward languages and their role in society" and with three possible forms (Ruiz, 1984, p. 16). First, and perhaps the longest standing, is the attitude of *language-as-problem* (Ruiz, 1984, p. 19). Those "disadvantaged" students not fluent in English must overcome this "problem" and learn English. In this orientation, there really is no debate about bilingual education options. Instead, "the question has already been decided: if the [bilingual] programs are acceptable at all, they are only to the extent that they are effective as transitions" (Ruiz, 1984, p. 20). Fluency in English is the primary goal. Home languages are

either ignored or discouraged, which places ELL programs under this orientation into subtractive model approaches that seek to transition children to the majority language at the expense of the home language (Cummins, 1979).

The *language-as-right* orientation emerged with the introduction of the Bilingual Education Act in 1968 and a myriad of court cases that established the right of protection and services for ELL students. Not to diminish these critical steps, it is important to be aware of potential challenges with this view. While this orientation does entail rights for ELL students, it “creates confrontation” (Ruiz, 1984, p. 24). Rather than inspiring a desire to help these students, it can become about compliance and entitlements: “where the rights of the few are affirmed over those of the many” (Ruiz, 1984, p. 24). This view can breed resentment and minimal compliance. With this orientation, ELL programs can remain subtractive or may tinker with additive programming with some level of native language support, depending on the level of interest/compliance of the district. There has been debate about the *language-as-right* orientation (e.g. Petrovic, 2005; Ricento, 2005), which I will share after the overview of the orientations themselves.

Finally, Ruiz suggests an alternative orientation, *language-as-resource* (LAR), which places value on all languages and encourages both home (and world) language development alongside English fluency. Those who consider “language is a resource to be managed, developed and conserved would tend to regard language-minority communities as important sources of expertise” (Ruiz, 1984, p. 28). While the *language-as-problem* orientation offers “no hope” and the rights orientation has had “mixed results,” a commitment to language as a resource can “contribute to a greater social cohesion and cooperation” (Ruiz, 1984, p. 28). With this orientation, bilingualism is either actively taught or at least encouraged to continue at home and

in the community. Additive bilingualism poses no threat to the initial language (L1) and students learn their second language (L2) in “a supportive cultural context” (Winsler, Diaz, Espinosa, & Rodríguez, 1999, p. 349). Why is this important? Study after study asserts the importance of building on native language skills to improve the acquisition of English and to improve long-term ELL student performance (e.g., August & Shanahan, 2006; Collier, 1992; Francis, Lesaux, & August, 2006; Greene, 1997; Johnson & Swain, 1997; Lopez & Tashakkori, 2004; Riches & Genesee, 2006; Slavin & Cheung, 2005; Steele et al., 2017; Thomas & Collier, 1997; Umansky & Reardon, 2014; Willig, 1985). Rolstad, Mahoney, and Glass (2005) in a meta-analysis of 17 studies found that developmental bilingual education programs have better student results than transitional bilingual education programs and tend to be more additive in nature.

2.1.1 *Language-as-Resource: Debates and Further Refinement*

Ruiz’s seminal work “continues to be generative and representative of current thinking,” but is not without criticism (Petrovic, 2005, p. 398). Ricento (2005) and Petrovic (2005) warn of this LAR metaphor, asserting that it couches language as a resource for the state, which is more focused on advancing “military and economic interests of powerful (including state) interests than with the promotion of linguistic diversity” (Ricento, 2005, p. 350). Bourdieu (1991) explored the symbolic power of language, describing language as more than just a communication means, but also a symbolic medium of power that translates into economic power. This power limits access to those who do not have the symbolic capital of particular languages (Bourdieu, 1991). Petrovic goes further to claim “language pluralists who try to ‘sell’ language diversity and bilingual education by this language-as-resource strategy ultimately help to preserve the inequitable linguistic status quo” (Petrovic, 2005, p. 395). While Ruiz viewed the LAR orientation as a win-win, a resource for both the economy and the linguistic/cultural

identities of language minority communities, Petrovic claimed “language-as-resource orientation ignores the fact that power remains with the dominant group...language minorities are still answerable to the whims and fears of those in power” (Petrovic, 2005, p. 405). This approach could result in “short-term governmental support” for languages with national security priorities, but fails to address the underlying societal value about the status of languages other than English (Ricento, 2005, p. 1). In fact, they argue that this economic and military construct “inhibits, if not precludes, the promotion of language rights” (Ruiz, 2010, p. 158).

In 2010, Ruiz revisited the LAR orientation and responded to this “argument amongst friends” (p. 156) with, “I take it as a call for vigilance and further elaboration by those of us who see language-as-resource as a way to affirm heritage and other minoritized languages, rather than as an invitation to abandon the discourse completely” (Ruiz, 2010, p. 159). Ruiz (2010) stressed that a purely economic argument is too narrow a basis for language planning and instead a more comprehensive view of the meaning of language resource should be considered. In McGroarty’s (2006) policy analysis using Kingdon’s policy streams to consider bilingual language policy, she encouraged advocates to have multiple rationales in the articulation of their policy and use varied contemporary examples to appeal more broadly in public discussion and policy development. By keeping these solutions “alive...in the policy streams” (Kingdon quoted in McGroarty, 2006, p. 4), they are ready for consideration when a policy window opens and policies are then adopted.

Lo Bianco (2001) explained that there are different facets that make language a resource: citizenship, cultural, economic, intellectual, rights, and social resources. As Lo Bianco notes, “A wider and deeper capability of public language mastery is a pre-condition of substantive citizenship” and therefore, language is a critical piece in participating in civil society (Lo Bianco, 2001, p. 22). Language as a cultural resource links language to “cultural vitality” and greater

understanding (Lo Bianco, 2001, p. 21). The economic value of language helps build human capital in a globalized economy, as Heller (2010) described. While the economic resource can tend to dominate policy discussions, “the issue is how we can accommodate it without having it define the entire effort” (Ruiz, 2010, p. 162). Intellectual resource refers to the cognitive advantages of bilingualism that enhances both language and non-language aspects of thinking. In a meta-analysis of 63 studies on the subject, Adesope et al. (2010) found, “Results indicate that bilingualism is reliably associated with several cognitive outcomes, including increased attentional control, working memory, metalinguistic awareness, and abstract and symbolic representation skills” (p. 207). The social resource component of language describes how language is a critical component of communication and therefore a central feature of our social lives (Lo Bianco, 2001).

And the final facet, language as a rights resource, can be used to help or hinder people. Lo Bianco notes, it “is important therefore that the ways in which language serves to locate and position individuals and groups, to deny or limit their social role (or to effect some kind of exclusion) be analysed and understood” (Lo Bianco, 2001, p. 22). Ruiz (2010) expanded upon the concept of rights resource in his reconsideration of his earlier dismissal or subordination of *language-as-right* in Ruiz’s orientations, which was the other primary issue of debate by Ricento (2005) and Petrovic (2005). Ruiz (2010) conceded that his 1984 piece did create an unnecessary antagonism between the right and resource and that original model was incomplete. Yet, he asserted that LAR is “conceptually prior” (Ruiz, 2010, p. 166). “Unless one sees a language as a good thing in itself, it is impossible to affirm anyone’s right to it...rights are only rights if they are resources (goods in themselves) first...viewing language as a problem (not a resource) is to see it as something that should be eliminated” (Ruiz, 2010, p. 166). Rather than abandon

language-as-resource or let this approach be misused to reinforce the status quo, he urged that advocates argue against undesirable uses of LAR and further refine the discourse so that good outweighs the evil. “In the case of LAR, to abandon it to those interests would be foolish and politically reckless. Too much good has come from the application of even the simple version of this metaphor to reorient societies toward cultural democracy” (Ruiz, 2010, p. 169).

The debate of these concepts continues despite Dr. Ruiz’s untimely death in 2015. The Bilingual Research Journal released a memorial issue in November 2016 (Volume 39, Issues 3-4) to honor his passing and published articles that continue to utilize this “paradigm-shifting” framework (Hornberger, 2016, p. 355). Letters from several leaders in the field of bilingual education and language policy mourned his loss and one noted that over 800 articles had cited his 1984 article, including 275 in the past five years (Wright, 2016). In this issue, numerous researchers further explored the use of a LAR framework both in the U.S. and around the world (e.g., Catalano & Hamann, 2016; de Jong, Li, Zafar & Wu, 2016).

2.1.2 *Language-as-Resource: The Seal of Biliteracy*

Though the Seal is not a policy that institutes bilingual education, it does acknowledge that there is value in becoming bilingual. In many states, the Seal is a break from earlier referenda or legislation that portrayed language as a problem and required an English Only approach. In terms of the LAR debate noted above (Ricento, 2005; Petrovic, 2005; and Ruiz, 2010), the Seal provides an interesting testing ground. The legislation on State Seals of Biliteracy do usually include some reference to economic and strategic value of languages as well as its importance, for example, “to strengthen intergroup relationships, affirm the value of diversity, and honor the multiple cultures and languages of a community” (Illinois SB 1221, Section 2-3.157.c.7). They convey language as a win for language minority communities and a win for the state’s economy.

In many states, that win-win may explain why there was bipartisan support for the Seal.¹⁶

When it comes to the criteria for the Seal (see Chapter 1 Seal Overview), there is a wide range of ways to earn a Seal that will likely be correlated with whom benefits. States like Texas and Louisiana do make it easier for (presumably language majority) students to earn the Seal through “seat time” credits (3 credits with 80/100 grading and “successful completion” of 4 credits, respectively) as opposed to scores on language proficiency assessments (“intermediate high” and “advance low,” respectively) at much higher levels than typically are reached after three to four years of language study (Texas TAC 19, §74.14, b.1.B.i & iv.III and Louisiana HB 1016, 2014, §273.4, D.1.c.ii-iii). This tension between affirming students’ home languages and further benefiting native English speakers makes understanding the decision-making and implementation of the Seal all the more important.

Washington State legislation (see Chapter 1 Washington Context for more details) attempted to mitigate this potential imbalance by not including a seat time option, requiring competency credits (CC) for world languages (typically earned by language minority students) to be a means of earning the Seal, and requiring a report by December 1, 2017 about Seal awards (the number of Seals, the languages for which Seals are awarded, how they were tested, and how many were previously enrolled in ELL services). These conditions were recommended by the state’s Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee to determine how equitably the Seal is being awarded in this state (Washington SB 6424, 2014, Section 4 lines 10-23). Most other states do not have any sort of report required on the equitable awarding of the Seal.

As the demographics continue to change in this country, district adoption of a Seal of

¹⁶ There was unanimous support in both chambers in states such as Illinois, New Mexico, New York, and Virginia. In Washington, the Senate was unanimous, but the house vote was 69-27.

Biliteracy could be an important step toward reconsidering orientations toward this student population and the way school districts meet the needs of their language minority students. The Seal could help to educate people about the intrinsic as well as extrinsic value of languages, moving beyond the traditional language-as-problem orientation in educating language minority students. Not only a reflection of a district's orientation, the Seal also represents an innovative approach to acknowledging this skill and, therefore, DOI theory provides an apt framework.

2.2 EASTON'S SYSTEMS MODEL

The language orientations conceptual framework provides one potential rationale as to why some districts might adopt the Seal policy when it is voluntary and unfunded (i.e., those that have a specific language orientation). However, this rationale likely provides an incomplete picture. Specifically, I hypothesized that a combination of triggers, drivers (change agents) to shepherd the Seal through the approval phase, and organizational structures underlie districts' decision vis-à-vis Seal adoption (or non-adoption) (see Figure 2.1). Without this combination, Easton's *system model* would posit that a district would not take on additional unfunded and voluntary administrative burdens to make the Seal possible in their district.

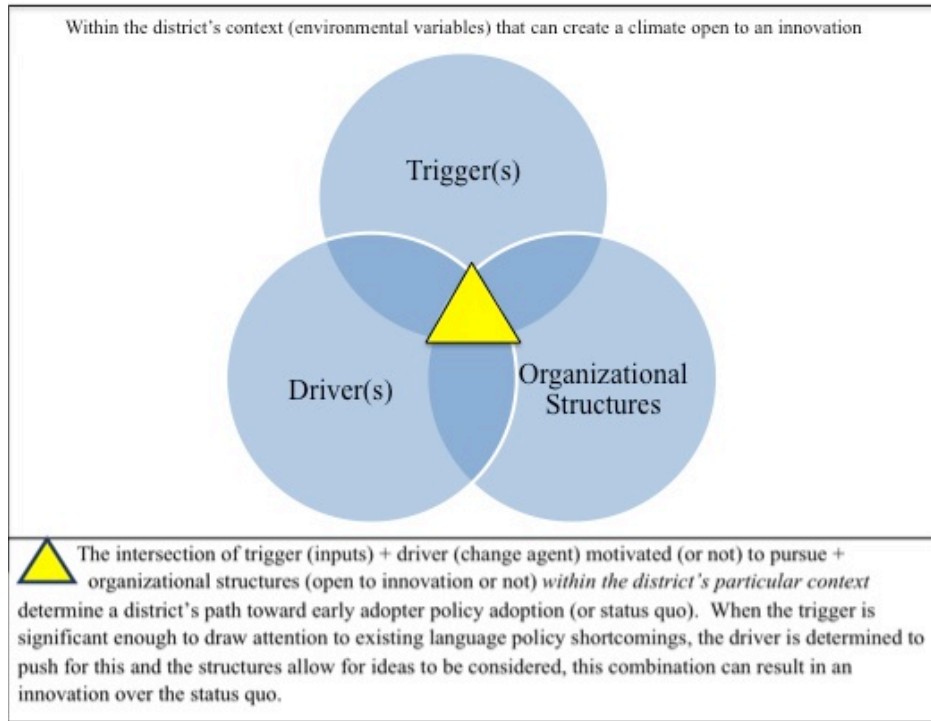


Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework

David Easton's *systems model*, upon which Jenkins elaborated (see Figure 2.2 for a picture of this model), attempts to explain the policy-making process (Jenkins, 1978). While perhaps overly simplistic, it provided a good initial point for understanding the steps that might be involved. Within a dynamic environment (social, political, historical, and economic contexts), the process begins with *inputs*: the combination of demands, supports, and resources that provide the catalyst for a policy to be developed (Kirst & Wirt, 2009). Throughout this project, inputs were called *triggers of the policy formation*. They interacted with the *stakeholders*, who in turn try to influence the decision-making process (Jenkins, 1978). Influenced by environmental context and stakeholders, those inputs then fed into a *black box* political system where the organizational leadership comes to a policy decision (Sabatier, 1991). While this model applies also to implementation processes, recall that this project is focused on policy-making decision processes: the influences, actors, and processes in the policy adoption period and not during the

output/outcome period. To reiterate, the DOI lens was applied to the intersection point of Easton's framework (again, see Figure 2.2).

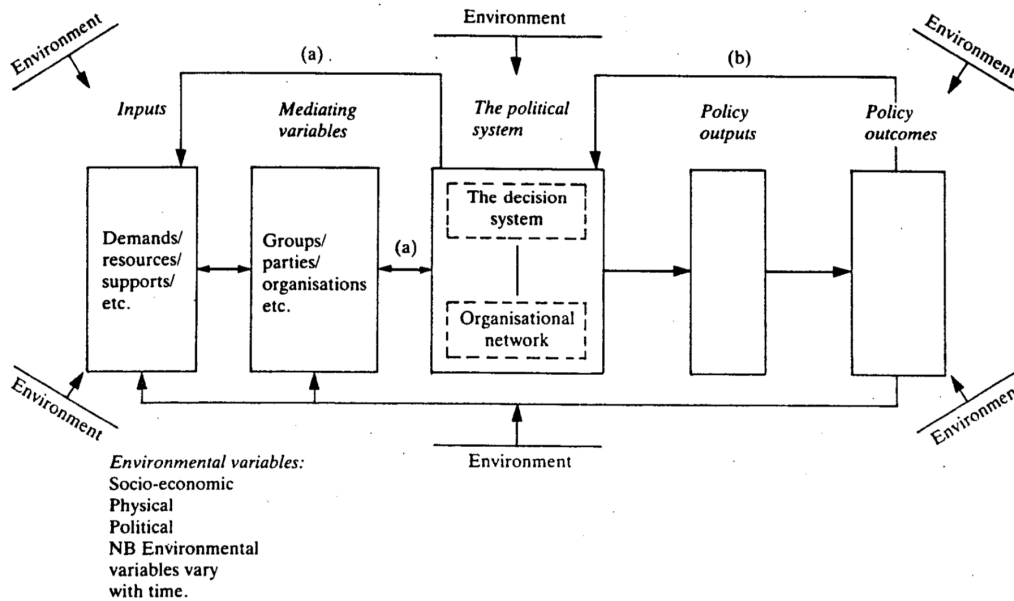


Figure 3 Amended systems model of the policy process

Figure 2.2. Easton's Systems Frame

2.3 DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS THEORY

Widely employed as an educational change framework, *diffusion of innovations* theory provides an explanation for the way innovations spread and eventually become institutionalized (or replaced) (Perry, 2010). Hall (1991) differentiated innovation as:

Not synonymous with change. Change is merely a shift from one practice to another. By contrast, innovation is purposeful change, directed change, which self-consciously attempts to improve, reform, make new. Innovation is an attempt to improve quality and service; the quality of a project must be better than before; a service must be improved for the same consumers or must serve more and different people (p.7).

In this project, the innovation is viewed as the policy decision to adopt the Seal within a school district. The Seal represents a purposeful change by the district in acknowledging and awarding recognition for a student's high level of bilingual skills. Whereas world language students may have previously been praised for their high scores on an Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) test, this honor is now extended to language minority students (i.e., "more and different people").

A focus on the Seal as a policy innovation is important because, although it has rapidly spread across the country (see Chapter 1), there is no empirical evidence of its benefits or even equitable implementation. In an era of evidence-based decision-making, this policy is truly an anomaly. It also represents a notable break from an official English-only orientation to one that supports bilingualism. The decision to adopt the Seal could represent a potential innovation in language orientation (i.e., districts viewing students' emerging bilingualism as a resource rather than deficit). Mapping and understanding how a district navigates the Seal adoption process builds on the limited literature around district-level decision-making in general to shed light on the *black box* as well as in terms of the Seal adoption more specifically (Sabatier, 1991).

2.3.1 *Diffusion of Innovations' Components*

DOI is a communication process whereby individuals share information about an innovation with the goal of altering the structure or function of a social system (Rogers, 2003). The four essential components of Rogers' model (2003) include the innovation itself, time (the rate of adoption), communication channels (means of communicating the innovation), and social system. As described above, the Seal is the innovation.

The time element includes several facets. There is the time of the innovation decision process itself, the rate of adoption compared to other adopters, and then the general rate of

adoption for the innovation overall (Włodarczyk Hickey et al., 2011). In this project, the focus was primarily on the innovation decision process and the comparison of adoption across districts, since the Seal was still in the early stages of adoption.

Communication channels are the ways the innovation is communicated. It begins with *heterophilous communication* between different groups, defined as where one has the information and conveys it to another (Barrett et al., 2007). Then, as adopters become more knowledgeable about the innovation, they engage in *homophilic communication*, which describes communication amongst individuals in a same group with similar interests and a shared “subcultural language” (Barrett et al., 2007, p. 26). Rogers noted that the latter communication had more of a relationship to changing behaviors and attitudes as well as gaining knowledge (2003). The Seal survey asked about the role of outside organizations in sharing about the Seal and supporting its adoption as well as who was involved in the decision, touching on both *heterophilous* and *homophilic* communication types. Questions in the interviews explored communication means further to learn about their possible role.

Communication happens both through *mass media channels* as well as *interpersonal channels*. In the case of school districts, *mass media* would include one-way, statewide Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) communications to districts, while *interpersonal channels* would be one-on-one or small group interactions. Both methods are important. Mass media is useful for spreading awareness of an innovation, whereas interpersonal channels tend to be more effective in forming and changing attitudes (Vanderslice, 2000). Rogers (2003) has found, “Most individuals evaluate an innovation not on the basis of scientific research by experts but through the subjective evaluations of near peers who have adopted the

innovation” (p. 36). Interview questions delved deeper into the channels utilized and interviewees’ perception of their importance.

The final element, *social systems*, perhaps needs the most explanation. It refers to organizational structures such as the interrelated units involved in joint problem-solving, its culture, norms, important players in the process as well as the type of decision-making within an organization (Perry, 2010; Bowes et al., 2007). This system includes *opinion leaders*, who tend to influence others attitudes and beliefs informally. It also includes *change agents*, who try to persuade others and direct the adoption of an innovation. This element links to Jenkins’ (1978) organizational structures mentioned above (see Figure 2.2).

While the inquiry considers all four components, questions about communication and the social system received the most attention (see Appendix K Research Questions – Interview Questions Matrix) as they relate most directly to the research questions. Questions about the specifics of the innovation or the timing of adoption are secondary to understanding the process itself.

2.3.2 *Diffusion of Innovations’ Phases of Change*

The diffusion *phases of change* occur in the following sequence: there is a triggering event; the dominant group feels the need for change; this need leads to the creation of a vision (*knowledge phase*); the commitment to change is mobilized (*persuasion phase*); and envisioned change is adopted (*decision phase*), implemented (*implementation phase*), and institutionalized (*confirmation phase*) (Witherspoon, 1996, p. 130-1; Hovanetz Lassila & Berry, 2005). The trigger can come from internal dysfunction and/or from external pressures, such as government regulation, public opinion, or similar forces. The knowledge phase starts with the exposure to an innovation through the period of gaining understanding about the innovation. During the

persuasion phase, individuals develop a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward an innovation. This is when communication is critical. The decision and implementation phases are when the innovation is adopted and implemented, while the confirmation phase is where the adopter evaluates the decision either to reinforce or to reverse the innovation adoption (Bowes et al., 2007). Rogers (2003) notes that in this final phase, reinvention of the innovation, whether slight or significant, is at the heart of a successful diffusion of innovation. The trigger and the phases of change (in this case the decision process surrounding Seal policy adoption) form the backbone of this project. Comparing the experiences of the different district contexts was critical to drawing conclusions (see Chapters 7 and 8).

2.3.3 *Diffusion of Innovations' Types of Adopters*

Rogers (2003) cites six categories of adopters in terms of the time of the adoption relative to other districts: the *rare innovators* (those who create the innovation, such as those initial districts that implemented the Seal in California), *early adopters* (those who adopt relatively early, champion the innovation, and are typically well-respected by peers), *early majority adopters* (those who are more deliberative about the decision to adopt, but do not want to be viewed as late to adopt), *late majority adopters* (those who eventually adopt, but are more uncertain than earlier waves and/or have very limited resources), and *laggards* (the last to adopt, are highly skeptical, and tend to adopt minimally) (Rogers, 2003). An organization can choose to become an early adopter to address this new condition or to wait to see what others do, becoming a late adopter (Bell-O'Leary, Turpin & D'Angelo, 2014).

DOI theory suggests conditions that will determine whether an organization will be an early adopter and the results this decision will likely have. As described by Tolbert (1983), the decision to become an early adopter “will depend on the degree to which the change improves

internal process” (p. 26). When, for example, government regulations call for a change, the organizations most sensitive to the legal environment because of “proximity to public sphere” (a spectrum from governmental body to private sector); “level of visibility” (e.g., high profile school district, not a remote one); and previous experience with government scrutiny (e.g., audits, lawsuits, sanctions) will likely become early adopters (Edelman, 1992, p. 48-9). Rogers (2003) also points to size of organization, as well as internal and external characteristics of organizational structures including degree of centralized power and control, formalized regulations, staff knowledge specialization, unit interconnectedness or availability of resources, and openness to outside influences. The four case studies provide a range of sizes, geographic locations, concentrations of language minority students, and offering of language opportunities to investigate what these characteristics had to do with the decision to adopt the Seal or not.

The advantage of being an early adopter is that one has the opportunity to define compliance and those changes can result in increased efficiency (Honig, 2011). Late adopters are more likely to be constrained as the options have been established and their adoption tends to be more about legitimacy than efficiency, so it can be a more superficial change (Tolbert, 1983). The disadvantage of early adoption is the adoption tends to be more complex and potentially expensive as well as risks that the innovation will fail. Late adopters have the chance to see what works and can adopt the minimally required change (Tolbert, 1983). Still in the early stage of diffusion, early Seal adopters have had to develop certificates and medallions and to figure out OSPI’s Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) coding for the Seal from which later adopters could benefit.

Since Washington State’s Seal was just launched in 2015, the focus of the present study is only on the first two years of Seal adoption. This decision is partially due to the timing of the

research, but also because the earlier waves of adopters tend to embrace an innovation more completely than later waves who tend to be more concerned with legitimacy (Tolbert, 1983). As will be seen in forthcoming chapters, survey results showed that 39% of responding districts¹⁷ adopted the Seal by 2016, and case study results demonstrated that the two district cases that adopted the Seal appeared to be early majority adopters (see Chapters 4 and 6); the two non-adopter cases, on the other hand were likely to be late majority or laggard adopters.

When considering whether to pursue innovation, one should consider how important the innovation is for the organization. If it is important, one must select a decision-making approach to implement an innovation. Perry (2010) describes two kinds¹⁸ of organizational “innovation-decisions,” each with advantages and disadvantages (p. 70). *Authoritative decision-making* employs a top-down approach with little input from lower levels. This type often results in the fastest adoption of an innovation, but does not ensure implementation or institutionalization of it (Barrett et al., 2007). Rogers (2003) noted that this approach is common in school districts. A second approach is *collective decision-making*, whereby many constituents participate in the decision. This option may be the slowest route to innovation adoption, but potentially has more staying power than authoritative (Perry, 2010). As part of the investigation of the social system, each case was asked questions about how the Seal decision was made. This line of inquiry helped shed light on the *black box* of decision-making (Sabatier, 1991). As will be shown in Chapter 6, the decision-making about the Seal tended to be more collective than authoritative in all four cases.

¹⁷ On the survey, three indicated a pre-2015 district Seal, 16 began the Seal in 2015 and 25 started in 2016.

¹⁸ Two other decision-making approaches, *contingent* (individual decides after the organization does) and *optional* (individual decides whether or not to implement), seemed less relevant in this case (Perry, 2010).

2.3.4 *Diffusion of Innovations' Role of Change Agent*

According to Barth (2006), undertaking innovation “takes moral outrage at ineffective practices, confidence that there is a better way, and the courage and invention to find it and put it into the place of what needs to be scrapped” (p. 165). Frequently, a *change agent* guides this process of innovation through “influencing the decisions of others to understand and adopt the innovation” (Perry, 2010, p. 35). For a change agent to succeed, s/he must understand the organization and its members. “Change agents must be aware of their own social position, of the compatibility of the innovation to the client’s¹⁹ needs, and must possess empathy for the client’s situation” (Perry, 2010, p. 71). The specific role of a change agent will depend on the organizational structure in which s/he operates. Regardless, change agents should bridge the “social and technical chasms” of the innovation (Rogers, 2003, p. 368). DeLeon’s research indicated that counselors and world language teachers often filled this role at the school level and ELL coordinators did so at the district level (2014). According to the Seal survey, Superintendents, Teaching & Learning Directors, and Principals were most frequently involved in the decision. Yet, the case studies revealed that the primary driver of the Seal was the ELL Coordinator in three of the four cases (see Chapters 4 and 7).

Many articles have explored the role of change agent and have identified seven important responsibilities of the *change agent* (Hall & Hord, 1987; Fullan, 2001; Zaltman & Duncan, 1977). First, the change agent must raise awareness for the need for the policy change/adoption. Second, s/he must facilitate an information-exchange relationship with clients to establish rapport. The next four steps include analyzing problems and eliminating alternative solutions; generating interest in the innovation; motivating clients to adopt innovation; and maintaining use

¹⁹ Client is the term used in many articles to describe those who will be involved in adopting innovation. In this case, principals, teachers, and other administrators.

of innovation and preventing discontinuance during implementation. Finally, the change agent should enable clients to manage the innovation on their own so as to increase the likelihood of institutionalization. Attention to change agents, or drivers, of the process as a unit of analysis ensured that the roles that individuals played in the policy formation or rejection were considered. Again, understanding the role of key players within the social system shed light on what happened in the *black box* (Sabatier, 1991).

2.3.5 *Diffusion of Innovations' Rate of Adoption*

In terms of the rate of adoption of an innovation, Stoller (1994) prioritizes five variables based on 1,500 studies that explain what affects the speed. Relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability explained 49% to 87% of the variance of the rate of adoption (Stoller, 1994). Below I define these variables.

Relative advantage describes the perceived level of improvement of the innovation over existing or competing options (Surry and Gustafson, 1994). The Seal represents an acknowledgement by the district and state of the value of students' bilingual language skills. There really had not been consistent, public recognition of these skills heretofore.

Compatibility explains the degree to which an innovation is perceived to be "consistent with existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters" (Martins et al., 2004, p. 358). For districts already pursuing LAR policies like dual language programs or CCs for world languages, there are already pathways in place for offering a Seal (i.e., district-administrated language proficiency testing). For districts without such policies that promote bilingualism, the project investigated how compatible district administrators view the Seal to be. Having or lacking a culture of innovation within the district was similarly highlighted in case studies in terms of compatibility of the Seal.

The level of *complexity* of an innovation is also related to adoption in an inverse relationship (Holcombe, 2000; Wilson, Pruitt & Goodson, 2008). Offering the Seal is not particularly complex for districts experienced with language proficiency testing. For those without that language assessment experience, this unfunded responsibility could mean not only the added work of awarding Seals, but also in determining how to go about testing students to earn the Seal.

The more opportunity potential adopters have to experiment with an innovation, *trialability*, prior to adoption, the more likely an adoption will take root (Rogers, 2003; Surry and Gustafson, 1994). This condition was more prevalent in districts that offer world language CCs, with which the survey analysis demonstrated there was a positive correlation to offering the Seal (see Chapter 4 Survey Findings).

And finally, the degree of *observability* of the innovation elsewhere also influences the rate of adoption (Rogers, 2003; Surry & Gustafson, 1994; Martins et al., 2004). Seattle and Highline districts presented at area conferences in fall 2015 and winter 2016 about their experiences with the Seal. The OSPI World Languages Coordinator during last year's implementation is now the world languages coordinator with Bellevue School District, a 2016 Seal adopter. Her observations of district level implementation last spring shaped the process in Bellevue moving forward (P. Granville, personal communication, January 23, 2016). Three case study districts mentioned consultation with other adopters as key in their decision process (see Chapter 6).

The nature of the innovation determines which of these variables will take a primary role in the innovation process (Rogers, 2003). While these attributes are interrelated, they each have a distinct role (Martins et al., 2004). Change agents, who address these concerns whether knowingly or unknowingly with clients, facilitate the adoption process. Interview questions

sought to uncover the role these variables may have played in district decision-making.

2.3.6 *Other Research Utilizing Diffusion of Innovations Theory*

Numerous studies have employed diffusion theory to investigate the spread of innovations in education, but they have focused primarily on curriculum, use of technology, and instructional techniques. Several studies are included here to provide some examples of use. These studies have often been mixed methods, utilizing both surveys and interviews.

Barrett et al. (2007) utilized DOI to consider teacher-level implementation of district adoption of a new language arts curriculum. They found resistance to changing teachers' belief systems due to lack of change agent leadership and the lack of an effective communication system to share best practices. The complexity of the innovation, as demonstrated by the overload of new trainings and materials, also hindered adoption. Finally, they stressed the importance of developing leadership at school sites to facilitate adoption of the innovation through homophilic communication to encourage change of beliefs and to sustain adoption.

Bowes et al. (2007) also utilized diffusion to look at implementation of a language arts curriculum in Los Angeles. Through a mixed methods study, they found that the district attempted to adopt too many innovations at once, resulting in highly variable implementation across all innovations. They found that the district was more concerned about the rate of adoption rather than the depth and sustainability of the innovations. The district's "top-down culture" also hindered implementation, as they did not engage teachers early in the initiation phase to encourage adoption (Bowes et al., 2007, p. 123).

Bell-O'Leary et al. (2014) conducted a cross-sectional survey and found there was a relationship between teacher technology integration and their attitudes toward and experience with technology. Utilizing DOI theory, they found that that it is important to consider the

backgrounds and experiences of teachers when devising plans to train teachers in effective technology integration in student learning.

Bussey et al. (2000) utilized a questionnaire sent to randomly selected secondary technology education and industrial arts teachers in New Mexico to assess factors that might predict the adoption of technology education using stepwise multiple regression. The most frequently cited “promoters” for technology adoption (personal interest, workshops, visits to other programs, funding) corresponded to compatibility, change agents efforts, observability, and relative advantage. The biggest barriers (inadequate funding, facilities, and training as well as fear of change) corresponded to relative advantage, compatibility, and change agent efforts. Teacher perception of the attributes of technology education was the strongest predictor of the level of adoption. They therefore recommended, “change agents should focus their efforts on increasing teacher perceptions of the compatibility, relative advantage, trialability, and observability of technology education and decreasing perceptions of its complexity” (Bussey et al., 2000, p. 9).

Gomes et al. (2015) conducted a mixed methods case study to understand what contributed to teachers’ lack of use of digital technology with students. Through a survey and interviews, they identified lack of adoption stemmed from lack of available technology, training, support from the district, and understanding of the importance of these skills. These aligned with diffusion variables that are related to the rate of innovations and, they recommend, should be addressed in order to increase teacher adoption of technology.

Considering three school districts, Mortensen et al. (2011) utilized diffusion theory to investigate the adoption of health policies to promote wellness. This study found compatibility to be important for successful implementation, which only was present in two of the three districts

studied. The importance of effective use of multiple communication channels was also critical. They found it is not enough to use different channels, but “it is crucial to target the appropriate stakeholders and to have ongoing communication to ensure implementation occurs” (Mortensen, et al., 2011, p. 100). Other studies on health program adoptions in schools similarly found compatibility to be critical (Dearing et al., 1996; Pankratz, Hallfors, & Cho, 2002).

Wlodarczyk et al. (2011) utilized a survey study to examine public school district authoritative innovators (i.e., Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, principals, teachers) on their experiences with the educational innovation of instructional rounds. Using diffusion of innovations as a conceptual framework, authoritative innovators found instructional rounds to meet the relative advantage and compatibility criteria, but they found it to be complex and had limited trialability which perhaps hindered implementation from happening elsewhere (Wlodarczyk et al., 2011).

Using diffusion theory and an event history analysis, Kellogg et al. (2015) considered multicultural education policy adoption at the state level between 1978-94. They found adoption had taken place in 10 states and that states with less education funding were more likely to adopt a policy. Additionally, states were significantly more likely to adopt a policy if neighboring states had already done so. This finding corresponds with Roger’s observability variable. Having significant minority populations or large urban populations did not demonstrate a significant relationship (Kellogg et al., 2015).

In an extensive library search, no DOI studies on ELL program or bilingual education innovations were located. The rapid spread of the Seal of Biliteracy across the country suggested that this case could be an interesting area for investigation. This project helps fill this gap and demonstrates that diffusion theory is applicable to this type of innovation.

Chapter 3. QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter presents the overview of the mixed methods approach used for this project, with a focus on the quantitative elements of the research. In particular, the development of the research instruments, data collection, and data analysis approach are described below (see Chapter 4 for quantitative results).

3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The core aim of this project is to understand the decision-making process around districts choice to adopt or not adopt the State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB, termed as “the Seal”), a voluntary and unfunded – yet innovative – policy. As already noted in the introduction, the specific research questions were as follows.

- 1) What are the “triggers” (e.g., grassroots encouragement, use of other additive language policies), stakeholders (e.g., parents, school staff, district staff, and other supporters as well as opponents, of the Seal), and environmental context variables (e.g., shortage of funds, size of ELL population, and potential anti-immigrant sentiment) that appear to prompt Washington state’s school district leaders to consider offering a Seal?
- 2) How do these district leaders navigate the process to arriving at the decision to adopt (or not adopt) the SSB for their district?
 - a) Does this adoption process vary in different district contexts? If so, how?
- 3) What conditions facilitate and/or impede district-level adoption of the Seal?
 - a) Is there a correlation between the decision to adopt the Seal and the districts’ student demographics characteristics (e.g., size of the English Language Learner (ELL) population and total enrollment size of the district), and/or the type of language programs already in place in the districts?

b) Are districts with particular criteria for awarding the Seal more likely to adopt the Seal?

4) Do commonalities exist across specific district case studies? If so, how and why?

The *diffusion of innovations* (DOI) lens was utilized to investigate these questions at the intersection point of the framework to investigate what happens at the *black box* point of Easton's *systems model* (see Figure 2.2). The quantitative portion of the project addresses research question 3 and contributes in part to research questions 1-2; the qualitative portion of the project addresses research questions 1, 2, and 4.

3.2 RATIONALE FOR MIXED METHODS STUDY

The types of research questions posed about districts' experiences with the state's adoption of the Seal lent themselves to a mixed methods research design, which utilizes both quantitative and qualitative research methods with the assumption that it "provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone" (Creswell, 2014, p. 4). This design approach emerged in the late 1980s, but Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) popularized it in their handbook on the method. Since then, it has grown in use across the health, behavioral, and social sciences (Creswell, 2014).

In the present study, this design was useful in generating multiple forms of data, beginning with a broad survey with closed-form questions that could provide tabulation information as well as inform the selection of cases for open-ended interviews. As illustrated in Figure 3.1, this kind of mixed-methods research design is specifically called an *explanatory sequential mixed methods* approach "in which the researcher first conducts quantitative research, analyzes the results and then builds on the results to explain them in more detail with qualitative research" (Creswell, 2014, p. 15). *Explanatory* refers to the idea that the qualitative data further

explains the quantitative data findings, and *sequential* denotes that one phase of research is followed by the next rather than occurring at the same time. While this design requires extensive data collection, familiarity with both forms of research, and more time involved in data analysis, it was most appropriate for evaluating the set of research questions posed.

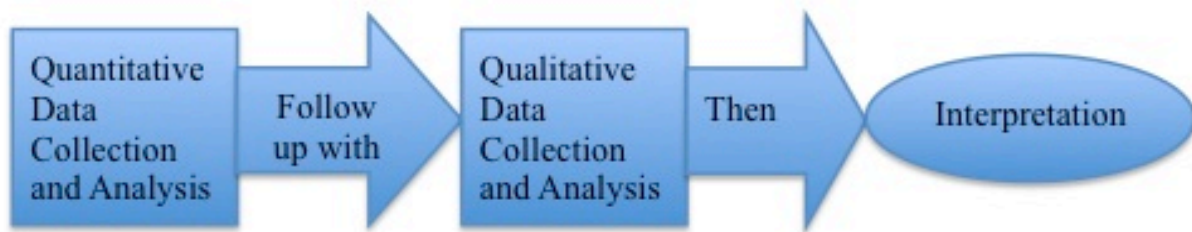


Figure 3.1. Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Model²⁰

In the first stage of this two-phase project, a statewide online survey of all Washington State school districts with high schools was conducted to determine whether or not they would offer a Seal in their district in spring 2016. Depending on the response (Yes/No/Undecided), the survey then led them to follow-up questions about the triggers and conditions that played a role in the district-level decision-making to adopt the Seal or not (Fowler, 2008). The results of these responses then informed the purposive sample selection of district cases and the development of questions for the interviews for the next phase of the project (Creswell, 2014). Next, interviews were conducted for each of the four selected district cases in order to understand “how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). Note that, within the qualitative arm of research methods, a multiple case study approach better allows for rich data in different contexts (Merriam, 2009). In the present study, four different district contexts – each its own bounded system that is described in Chapter 6 – were investigated and then compared for similarities and differences (results provided in Chapter 7). Since the conceptual framework (see Chapter 2)

²⁰ Adapted from Creswell, 2014, Figure 10.1, p. 220.

focuses on explaining the processes, structures, and individuals within a district, the multiple case approach made the most sense given the research questions.

3.3 SURVEY DESIGN

In utilizing explanatory sequential mixed methods, there are two phases of data collection: first quantitative, followed by qualitative. In the present project, a web-based survey provided the means of gathering the quantitative data from which the case studies were derived for the qualitative phase.

3.3.1 *Survey Instrument Item Development*

Using two other statewide, district-level surveys that had previously been developed for other projects (Burnet, 2014) as a template, a survey instrument was developed for collecting data across all Washington State school districts with high schools (some districts do not have high schools; recall that the Seal pertains to high school students only). After recording their name, title, school district, and email, the first content item asked respondents to indicate whether the district already offered or planned to offer a Seal to students by 2016; or if they did not plan to offer a Seal or were undecided (see Appendix F for survey instrument questions). The survey instrument was designed in *Qualtrics* and respondents' response to that initial question led to different question paths that asked about decision-maker roles involved in the decision (a list with "check all that apply"), as well as potential reasons for the district's decision (again, a list with "check all that apply"). The survey also established what other language learning opportunities the district offered students at the high school level to provide some context about the district's breadth of language learning opportunities (e.g., Advanced Placement (AP) and/or International Baccalaureate (IB) language courses, dual language programs, world languages

through the fourth year). Finally, the survey asked questions about any outside organizations that districts had contacted for information about the Seal and/or support for implementing it.

3.3.2 *Survey Format and Content Validation*

After an initial review of a paper-pencil version by two colleagues for basic flow and proofing, the instrument was reviewed by a university faculty member who teaches survey research design for final edits. Additionally, four cognitive interviews with district administrators from school districts – two that implemented the Seal in 2015 and two that had not – were conducted on the paper-pencil version of the instrument. Two of those interviewees were also former World Languages Directors from the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) who had been involved with the creation and launch of the Seal. During these interviews, the administrators read through the survey and provided comments on how they interpreted the questions. They were asked for suggestions about question stems needing clarity, additional possible response options, and their thoughts on other relevant questions to consider. These conversations resulted in the addition and deletion of item stems and response options, reordering of items, the provision of examples and links regarding terminology, and the overall structure of the survey. The final survey instrument was 10-20 items in length, depending on the response pathways (see Appendix F for final item set). (Participants also shared their own thoughts and challenges with the Seal, which helped inform the development of subsequent qualitative interview questions.)

After this step, OSPI's World Languages Program Supervisor was also asked for feedback and approval of the content of the survey. This feedback not only aided in helping to promote district participation (i.e., with OSPI seen as a collaborative partner), it also resulted in

the addition of a final question drilling deeper into the languages and levels taught in each language learning area (e.g., dual language, AP, and IB).

Finally, a web-based version of the survey was developed using the University of Washington (UW), College of Education's *Qualtrics* software. Two institutional researchers experienced with *Qualtrics* tested the online version of the survey and provided structural feedback, as did one faculty member, two OSPI staff members, and Dr. DeLeon. (Recall that Dr. DeLeon had used a statewide district survey for her dissertation on California's Seal.)

3.3.3 *Survey Sample*

Upon receiving approval the UW's Institutional Research Board (IRB) for the final survey format and content, a link to the survey was emailed to all 246 Washington districts with a high school (see Appendix E). For districts with no ELL students enrolled ($n = 66$) and districts that had ELL students but less than 2,500 total enrolled students ($n = 86$), the survey email was sent to district superintendents. For the remaining 94 districts that had ELL students as well as larger enrollments, the survey was emailed to the ELL coordinator or most likely staff member who might have led consideration of the Seal (district websites were reviewed to identify these individuals). The introductory email to the survey and the survey itself (see Appendices E and F) requested that participants forward the survey or provide contact information if there was someone else involved in Seal consideration that should complete the survey instead. Four contacts that were initially sent the survey provided contact information to someone better suited to complete the survey; in all four cases, the second contact person completed the survey.

3.3.4 *Survey Data Collection*

The survey was available April 25, 2016 through June 15, 2016, and a \$20 gift card was raffled to encourage participation. Respondents were asked to provide contact information and district

name to ensure that district-level demographic information from the state could be linked with survey responses. An initial notice and two reminders were sent to the 152 smaller districts (those with and without ELL enrollments). For the 94 larger districts with ELL enrollments, three notices were sent. Additionally, the identified staff member was also contacted by phone to remind them about the survey and/or to determine if there was someone else better suited to complete the survey. Districts have a wide range of paths to implement the Seal – it can be the responsibility of the point person for ELLs, the assessment/accountability office, the world languages office, or curriculum and instruction/teaching and learning departments. This range made it difficult to identify the proper person to take the survey, but follow-on phone calls helped to pinpoint the correct contact; as mentioned above, four of the initial contacts at the district provided a better respondent to complete the survey.

Prior to launching the survey, a database of district information was developed in order to link up those data with responses on the survey. Specifically, district-level information on which districts offered four years of world language instruction, world language AP courses, IB programs, dual language programs was collected. Additionally, a semi-complete list of districts awarding world language competency credits (CC) was also collected, along with district-level demographic information from the state OSPI Comprehensive Education Data And Research System (CEDARS) database.²¹ Specifically, the 2014-15 school year was used (the most recent available data at the time). This allowed for more reliable district-level information than respondents' self-reports, and it also helped to keep the survey shorter to maximize the response rate.

²¹ Competency-based credit information is incomplete due to OSPI staff turnover and confusion as to how to code CCs in OSPI's CEDARS database. They are working on addressing this.

3.3.5 *Survey Data Analysis Procedures*

Survey response data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in *SPSS*. Those findings were then used to pinpoint two specific cases for districts that had adopted the Seal and those that had not for qualitative data collection. The unit of analysis was school districts (with high schools).

Once survey and district demographic data were merged into one file, categorical variable responses were dummy coded (i.e., using 1 = Yes and 0 = No). To obtain a picture of the sample responses, as representations of statewide norms, frequencies were tabulated (i.e., count data) and descriptive statistics were conducted (i.e., frequencies, means and standard deviations). Next, to answer research question 3a and 3b, cross-tabulations were used to test for significant associations between Seal adoption responses and district demographics, types of language programs available, and Seal criteria. Although these findings are all correlational, they were useful in identifying patterns in keeping with the research questions, and were also useful in the subsequent case study selection process.

Chapter 4. QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

4.1 SURVEY RESPONSE RATE

As noted in Chapter 3, district leaders completed a 10-20 item web-based survey (length depended on initial response to whether or not the district was offering the Seal; see again Appendix F for a list of final survey items) in spring 2016.

Of the 246 districts surveyed, $N = 114$ completed the survey, yielding a very high response rate for web-based surveys: 46%. Even with a pre-survey notice, incentive (such as raffle), short survey length, and high social validity (i.e., partnership with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)), the typical response rate for online surveys is 10-15% response rate (see for example van Veen, Gortiz, & Sattler, 2015). To determine whether the districts that responded represented the total district population well, chi-square tests and t -tests were conducted to compare districts that responded versus those that did not on the district-level demographics identified from the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) database on the OSPI website (see Tables 4.5 for breakdown of those demographics).

Table 4.5. District Demographics of Responders and Non-Responders

District Demographics	Resp ($n = 114$)		Non-Resp ($n = 132$)		R vs. NR			
	M	(SD)	M	(SD)	t	(df)	p	d
Total Enrollment	7035.99	(8478.69)	1969.41	(3709.49)	5.91	(150)	<.001	0.79
Graduation %	80.02	(14.39)	72.90	(28.30)	2.54	(200)	.012	0.31
ELL %	8.58	(9.44)	7.21	(12.08)	0.98	(244)	.327	0.13
ELL Graduation %	51.63	(32.85)	28.51	(36.91)	5.20	(244)	<.001	0.66
FRL %	46.84	(18.16)	51.75	(18.80)	-2.08	(244)	.039	-0.27
SEAL Factors (max: 5)	1.90	(1.49)	0.21	(0.57)	11.45	(141)	<.001	1.55

Note. Observed p -values shown for t -tests. Cohen's d computed as the mean differences divided by the square root of the pooled variance. Significant heterogeneity of variances was found for some tests; for those, t -tests reported are based on adjusted df and unequal variances.

Two-group *t*-tests showed that respondents were more likely to have larger enrollment (5000+ mean enrollment difference), a slightly better adjusted four-year graduation rate (7% mean graduation difference), a much better English Language Learner (ELL) adjusted four-year graduation rate (23% mean ELL graduation difference), and a slightly lower free and reduced-price lunches (FRL) rate (5% mean FRL difference).

In order to receive a Seal, recall that a student must pass all English language arts requirements and show a high level of fluency in a second language through achieving a particular score on an Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or language proficiency test (see Chapter 1 for details). Therefore, students must have a lot of exposure to a second language either at home or in school. With the hypothesis that not all districts are equally likely to adopt the Seal, I developed a list of five possible offerings that might be related to the Seal decision: AP world language courses, four years of world language courses, competency credits (CCs) for world languages, an IB program and/or offering a dual language program. Using OSPI demographic and CEDARS course data, each potential criterion counted as one point, with a maximum of five points possible (i.e., a district with all five criteria) and was tallied in *SPSS* in a cross-tabulation with total enrollment. No district with less than 1,000 students has more than two criteria; meanwhile no district with 10,000+ students has less than two. As illustrated in Table 4.5, the total number of Seal factors was also significant in that non-responders had a mean total factors that was less than one compared to responders who averaged close to two factors. The large “*d*” effect sizes for total enrollment and total Seal factors indicate that these are the two areas that most differentiate responders and non-responders. Finally, I note that there was no significant difference among those that responded and those that did not in terms of overall ELL enrollment percentages.

As demonstrated in Table 4.6, the language characteristics of responders and non-responders were also significantly different in all tested categories except having 95% of ELL students who were Spanish-speaking. Chi-square tests showed that responders were more likely than non-responders to have more than 20 languages represented and more likely to offer AP world languages, four years of world languages, world language CCs, an IB program, and a dual language (DL) program.

Table 4.6. Language Characteristics of Responders and Non-Responders

District Language Characteristics	Responders (<i>n</i> = 114)		Non-Resp (<i>n</i> = 132)		R vs. NR	
	<i>Count</i>	(%)	<i>Count</i>	(%)	$\chi^2(1)$	<i>p</i>
<i>Linguistic Diversity</i>						
More 20 Languages	31	(27%)	11	(8%)	15.37	<.001
95% of ELLs Spanish Speaking	23	(20%)	33	(25%)	0.81	.368
<i>Language Offerings</i>						
AP World Languages	44	(39%)	15	(11%)	24.88	<.001
4 Years of World Languages	76	(67%)	4	(3%)	112.88	<.001
World Languages CCs	56	(49%)	6	(5%)	64.48	<.001
IB Program	14	(12%)	0	(0%)	17.19	<.001
DL Program	27	(24%)	3	(2%)	26.19	<.001

In terms of geographic distribution of school districts, the state is divided into nine educational service districts (ESDs). Every ESD is represented to some extent among the respondents (see Table 4.7). The number of districts with high schools served by these ESDs varies widely from 13 to 47, as did the percentage of districts that responded to the survey. Chi-square tests demonstrated only two significant differences between responders and non-responders: ESD 101, located in the northeastern corner of the state, had fewer respondents than non-respondents, and Puget Sound ESD, located in the most urban area of the state, had more respondents than non-respondents. Indeed, ESD 101 had the lowest response rate with just 26% that responded, whereas the Puget Sound ESD had a response rate of 73%.

The same comparisons among responders and non-responders shown in Tables 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7 were conducted after filtering out districts with no ELL students ($n = 66$). These findings were substantively the same (all prior differences were the same).

Table 4.7. Geographic Location of Responders and Non-Responders

Educational Service District	Responders ($n = 114$)		Non-Resp ($n = 132$)		R vs. NR	
	Count	(%)	Count	(%)	$\chi^2(1)$	p
ESD 101 (Northeast)	12	(11%)	34	(26%)	9.34	.002
ESD 105 (South Central)	7	(6%)	16	(12%)	2.58	.108
ESD 112 (Southwest)	13	(11%)	11	(8%)	0.66	.418
ESD 113 (Capital Region)	12	(11%)	21	(16%)	1.53	.217
ESD 114 (Olympic)	9	(8%)	4	(3%)	2.89	.089
ESD 121 (Puget Sound)	24	(21%)	9	(8%)	10.67	.001
ESD 123 (Southeast)	7	(6%)	11	(8%)	0.43	.510
ESD 171 (North Central)	13	(11%)	11	(11%)	0.66	.418
ESD 189 (Northwest)	17	(15%)	15	(11%)	0.68	.409

4.1 COMPARISON OF STATE SEAL ADOPTERS AND NON-ADOPTERS

Based on data from districts that responded to the survey, I next compared districts that chose to adopt the Seal with those that have not yet adopted it. An initial comparison of those responding “No” ($n = 35$) and “Undecided” ($n = 35$) revealed no significant differences in terms of geographic location, demographics, or language characteristics, so they were combined into one “Non-Adopter” category ($n = 70$, 61% of respondents) for comparison with those who responded “Yes” ($n = 44$, 39% of respondents).

4.1.1 Breakdown of Responses Based on Responder Title

Table 4.8 displays the job categories of respondents. As described in Chapter 3, the survey was sent primarily to Superintendents and then ELL Coordinators in the larger districts. That is likely why the two largest responding groups fall into these job categories. (Recall that respondents

were asked to complete the survey or forward it to the person responsible for consideration of the Seal.) A wide range of job titles were noted, from assessment to instruction to support services, illustrating the range of different departments that have been involved with Seal decision-making and implementation.

Table 4.8. Survey Respondent Title of Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters

Survey Respondent Category (Level of Authority)	Seal Adopters (n = 44)		Non-Adopters (n = 70)		Seal vs. Non-Adopters	
	Count	(%)	Count	(%)	$\chi^2(1)$	p
Superintendent	5	(11%)	25	(36%)	8.26	.004
Assistant Superintendent	3	(7%)	11	(16%)	1.99	.159
District Executive / Director Level	15	(34%)	15	(21%)	2.23	.135
District Managerial / Lower Level	15	(34%)	15	(21%)	2.23	.135
School Level	6	(14%)	4	(6%)	2.12	.145

4.1.2 Breakdown of Responses Based on Location

Table 4.9 provides a breakdown of Seal adopters and non-adopters based on ESD location to provide a geographic distribution of responses.

Table 4.9. ESD Representation of Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters

Educational Service District	Seal Adopters (n = 44)		Non-Adopters (n = 70)		Seal vs. Non-Adopters	
	Count	(%)	Count	(%)	$\chi^2(1)$	p
ESD 101 (Northeast)	4	(9%)	8	(11%)	0.16	.692
ESD 105 (South Central)	1	(2%)	6	(9%)	1.86	.173
ESD 112 (Southwest)	4	(9%)	9	(13%)	0.38	.538
ESD 113 (Capital Region)	5	(11%)	7	(10%)	0.05	.818
ESD 114 (Olympic)	4	(9%)	5	(7%)	0.14	.707
ESD 121 (Puget Sound)	13	(30%)	11	(16%)	3.11	.078
ESD 123 (Southeast)	3	(7%)	4	(6%)	0.06	.811
ESD 171 (North Central)	3	(7%)	10	(14%)	1.49	.222
ESD 189 (Northwest)	7	(16%)	10	(14%)	0.06	.813

Chi-square tests showed no significant differences between adopters and non-adopters within ESDs except for the Puget Sound ESD (where there were significantly greater proportions of adopters than non-adopters). Responses per ESD ranged from 1 to 13 per response category.

Puget Sound ESD 121 made up 30% of districts that adopted the Seal, which could indicate some adoption influenced by the adoption of neighboring districts or perhaps could have to do with district size or the concentration of ELL students in this region.

In terms of the demographics of Seal adopters and non-adopters, chi-square tests revealed significant differences in total enrollment, ELL enrollment percentage, and number of total Seal factors (see Table 4.10). Seal adopter districts tended to be larger, have a higher concentration of ELL students, and a mean of one more factor than non-adopters. Overall and ELL four-year adjusted graduation rates and FRL percentages did not result in significant differences between adopters and non-adopters.

Table 4.10. District Demographics of Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters

District Demographics	Adopters (n = 44)		Non-Adopters (n = 70)		Seal vs. Non-Adopters			
	M	(SD)	M	(SD)	t	(df)	p	d
Total Enrollment	10897.89	(10926.38)	4608.51	(5276.49)	3.57	(56)	.001	0.79
Graduation %	81.01	(6.90)	80.56	(14.79)	0.19	(111)	.850	0.04
ELL %	11.19	(10.32)	6.94	(8.51)	2.39	(112)	.019	0.46
ELL Graduation %	56.04	(24.51)	48.86	(37.06)	1.24	(112)	.216	0.22
FRL %	47.83	(17.22)	46.21	(18.83)	0.46	(112)	.645	0.09
SEAL Factors (max: 5)	2.68	(1.43)	1.41	(1.31)	4.85	(112)	<.001	0.93

4.1.3 Language Opportunities and the Seal

Table 4.11 reports chi-square tests on linguistic diversity and types of language learning opportunities available within a district. There were significant differences on all but one variable, showing that Seal adopters were more likely to have students speaking one of 20+ languages, and offering AP languages, four years of world languages, CCs, the IB and/or a dual language program.

Table 4.11. Language Characteristics of Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters

District's Language Characteristics	Seal Adopters (<i>n</i> = 44)		Non-Adopters (<i>n</i> = 70)		Seal vs. Non-Adopters	
	<i>Count</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>(%)</i>	$\chi^2(1)$	<i>p</i>
<i>Linguistic Diversity</i>						
More 20 Languages	17	(39%)	14	(20%)	4.74	.029
95% of ELLs Spanish Speaking	6	(14%)	17	(24%)	1.90	.168
<i>Language Offerings</i>						
AP World Languages	24	(55%)	20	(29%)	7.69	.006
4 Years of World Languages	35	(80%)	41	(59%)	5.35	.021
World Languages CCs	34	(77%)	22	(31%)	22.72	<.001
IB Program	10	(23%)	4	(6%)	7.26	.007
DL Program	15	(34%)	12	(17%)	4.29	.038

4.1.4 *Participants Involved in the Seal Decision*

Comparison of adopters and non-adopters by type of decision-makers was also examined (see Table 4.12). Results showed that Seal adopters had significantly higher proportions of every type of decision-maker than non-adopters.

Table 4.12. Decision-Maker Type of Seal Adopters and Non-Adopters

Decision Maker Type	Seal Adopters (<i>n</i> = 44)		Non-Adopters (<i>n</i> = 70)		Seal vs. Non-Adopters	
	<i>Count</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>(%)</i>	$\chi^2(1)$	<i>p</i>
Superintendent	26	(59%)	20	(29%)	10.46	.001
School Board	21	(48%)	8	(11%)	18.77	<.001
Teaching & Learning Director	30	(68%)	14	(20%)	26.47	<.001
Career & College Readiness Director	10	(23%)	3	(4%)	9.10	.003
Assessment Director	14	(32%)	8	(11%)	7.21	.007
World Languages Director	12	(27%)	1	(1%)	17.86	<.001
ELL Director	19	(43%)	16	(23%)	5.25	.022
Principal(s)	22	(50%)	16	(23%)	8.96	.003
Teacher(s)	16	(36%)	9	(13%)	8.72	.003
Counselor(s)	14	(32%)	9	(13%)	6.03	.014
Parents/Community	9	(20%)	0	(0%)	15.55	<.001

Although not shown in the table, the total number of people involved in the decision making process was computed and compared. Results showed that there was a significant difference in the total number of decision-makers involved, with Seal adopter districts having far more total people involved ($M = 4.50, SD = 2.68$) than non-adopters ($M = 1.64, SD = 1.91$), $t(70)$

= 6.16, $p < .001$, $d = 1.28$ (large effect). This of course does not necessarily mean involving more people makes a district more likely to adopt a Seal. It could indicate that districts typically abandon the idea of the Seal at earlier stages and with fewer involved in consideration of the Seal. If it gets to the level of having multiple participants considering the decision, it may mean it had the support of those who initially learned of it and decided to pursue it (see Case Studies for exploration of this). Alternatively, this could be a confounding of the size of the district in that smaller districts, for which the Seal may be less relevant, may have fewer staff needed to participate in making a decision about the Seal. Further investigation would be needed to understand this finding.

Perhaps unsurprising, the Superintendent was the most frequently involved in the decision. However, it is noteworthy that the Superintendent was only tagged as being involved in 46 (40% of respondents) districts overall. It is also important to note that 40 districts (35%) did not answer this set of questions, but 30% of those non-respondents ($n = 12$ of 40) had not yet heard of the Seal so they had not had discussions. While this question does provide interesting information those involved, I was hesitant to draw any conclusions from the “Undecided” or “No” categories, which are missing data for 60% and 32% of respondents, respectively. It did help to narrow the non-adopter district selection, as any district that left the question about those involved in the decision blank was not considered for a case study since I could not confirm any discussion had actually taken place.

Based on these results, families and community members seemed to play the least frequent role in the Seal decision with just nine districts including them. Particularly notable is that families only participated in districts that adopted the Seal. In the districts that they did play a role, they were one of six to 11 participant categories, with a mean of nine participants,

involved in the decision-making. That indicates they only were involved in districts with more comprehensive participation in the process.

4.1.5 *Seal Adopter-Specific Responses*

For Seal adopters, I asked additional questions about when the districts had begun to offer the Seal; what organizations helped districts to establish the Seal; and what type of help they offered. Below are those results.

Half of the adopter districts ($n = 22$) had first implemented the Seal in 2016. Only about a third ($n = 16$) had launched the Seal in its initial year as a state offering and just 7% ($n = 3$) had a Seal in place before the state Seal became available. The results of the survey also showed at least another five districts are planning to implement the Seal in 2017 (see discussion below under No-Specific Responses).

I combined the questions about what organizations provided assistance and what type of assistance was provided. Seven of those adopting Seals did not respond to these questions and three more selected “No one” outside the organization had helped them, so the responses in Table 4.13 below are from the 34 respondents who indicated they had received outside help. Respondents could and often did select multiple sources of assistance. This question sought to get at what supports those who did adopt the Seal utilized and could potentially be utilized by others facing barriers to Seal adoption, who may not be aware of these resources.

OSPI was most frequently mentioned as a support, but this is complicated by the fact that the former OSPI World Languages Director, who spearheaded the original push for the Seal, left during the roll out of the Seal. She is now with Seattle Public Schools and continues to offer support to districts across the state as emerged from the case study interviews, so she might be included under OSPI or “Other.” As will be demonstrated in the case studies, OSPI was the first

stop for information, but staff turnover meant that satisfaction with this assistance was not particularly high (see Chapter 7 for more information). It also demonstrates the reliance many districts have on OSPI for support with Seal adoption and the importance of this assistance in Seal adoption. In the “Other” category, there were several examples of districts turning to early Seal adopter districts for advice and assistance.²²

Table 4.13. Types of Organizations Reported, with Type of Help Received

Organization Listed	Advice	Medallions	Training	Templates	Other ²³
OSPI	23	6	1	7	7
ESD	0	0	0	1	1
Sealofbiliteracy.org	4	2	0	4	1
One America	1	0	0	0	1
World Languages Conference	6	1	1	0	2
Bilingual Education Conference	3	1	0	1	0
Other	7	3	1	4	4
Total	44	13	3	17	16

4.1.6 *No-Specific Responses*

Within the “No” category of Seal respondents, I then calculated the multiple response proportion of the specific reasons for not adopting the Seal. Respondents could select multiple reasons and 10 (29%) did not respond to this question. The most common response, about 76% ($n = 19$ of 25), was that respondents were unfamiliar with the Seal. This response likely reflects the lack of information disseminated from OSPI about the Seal at the time, as was reported by several of those interviewed (see Chapter 6). Lack of staff time was the second most common response with nine selections. The next most common response ($n = 5$ of 25) was a tie between “not relevant for our students” and those working toward offering the Seal in 2017. Not a district

²² Other organizations included Highline (2) and Edmonds School Districts, specification of OSPI (world languages coordinator, CEDARS data warehouse training), La Cosecha Dual Language Training, Road Map Project, networking with those who implemented it in 2015 (2), WSSDA, WSIPC, WAFLT, and Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC).

²³ Other support included: direct scheduling support for small districts, encouragement, examples of medallions, website information (3), transcribing information, and CEDARS information.

priority ($n = 3$), lack of funds ($n = 2$), new staff ($n = 1$), and too many languages to test ($n = 1$) were the remaining reasons provided.

The planning-to-adopt in 2017 response, which fell under “Other, please describe,” reflects a problem with the initial survey design. In an attempt to identify early adopter districts that had already gone through the process, I had decided to focus on those districts that had adopted the Seal by 2016 as the Yes/Undecided/No question, but that resulted in five false negative responses (i.e., “No” when they would be “Yes” in 2017) to whether they were adopting the Seal or not. A future survey should consider this while determining questions, perhaps adding a “Planning To” to the Yes/No/Undecided Seal question or start with asking about Seal adoption with a follow-on question as to when they began/will begin.

4.1.7 *No Versus Undecided Responses*

Another interesting issue with this question was how people decided between “No” and “Undecided.” My assumption was that any district that had discussed the Seal, but did not decide to adopt it, would be a “No” and the “Undecided” would be those that had not really considered it or did not know about it. In fact, more than half ($n = 19$ of 34) of the “No” respondents were those unfamiliar with the Seal.

The third shortcoming of the survey, as a result of the assumption that “Undecided” would not be familiar with the Seal, the “Undecided” were not asked why they were undecided, so their reasoning for non-adoption is unknown. Instead, they were asked if they had had discussions about the Seal and who was involved with those discussions. Only one “Undecided” said there had been no discussion and six did not know if there had been. Twenty-six (74%) indicated there had been discussions, but no final decision reached. There may be political

reasoning behind the selection of a No/Undecided response, but that would require additional investigation.

Since there was no significant difference between “Undecided” and “No” respondents as described above, I grouped these together for case study selection for the non-adopters. In particular, I limited non-adopter consideration to the “No” respondents, who were familiar with the Seal, and the 16 “Undecided” respondents that had discussions as these seemed more likely to meet the requirement of actually having considered the Seal. As will be presented in the Chapter 6, the case studies indicate criteria such as innovative culture, size of district, and staff time/experience played a role in the speed of adoption.

4.2 ACTUAL SEALS AWARDED SINCE SURVEY

Since the time of the survey, actual results about what districts have awarded students the Seal of Biliteracy have been released. These have been included here to provide further insight into the characteristics of Seal adopters. In September 2016, OSPI issued a report on the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy to show the results of implementation so far. In 2015-16, 2,256 Seals were awarded in 53 languages in 41 districts (17% of districts with high schools). It reported, “Over half of the tests taken to earn the mandatory minimum 4 World Language credits are in Spanish” (Seal of Biliteracy Proviso Report, 2016, p. 2), but did not clarify if that carried over to Seals awarded. As will be discussed in Chapter 7, this indicates a blending of world language CCs and the Seal. It also stated that in 2014-15, only about 660 Seals were awarded, so there had been a one-year increase of 241% (Seal of Biliteracy Proviso Report, 2016). While the report did not have information about former ELL student representation, it did note:

Only 11% of the students awarded the Seal of Biliteracy are migrant students. Migrant students represent 1.8% of all Washington’s students. Most migrant students are bilingual

(heritage speaking students). Reaching more migrant students for the Seal of Biliteracy is a focus for improvement in 2016-2017. (Seal of Biliteracy Proviso Report, 2016, p. 2)

In a follow-up request to OSPI in summer 2017, I was told that former ELL (called “ever ELL” in Washington) information was not yet available. It was curious that this was not noted in the report, nor was there any mention of increasing attention more generally to those who are language minority students (see Chapter 8 Recommendations for further discussion).

Thirty-three²⁴ survey respondents did award Seals according to the OSPI report. What is particularly interesting is how those 33 answered the question about their decision to adopt the Seal. The survey was distributed in late April with reminders through mid-June 2016, so during the same timeframe Seals would need to have been awarded. Two of those districts that responded “No” did in fact award Seals in 2016. Four “Undecided” respondents gave Seals as well. Of the $n = 44$ “Yes” respondents, only 27 (61%) actually awarded Seals. Seventeen districts, that said “Yes,” did not actually submit Seal awards to CEDARS.

As was learned from the Murrow case study, the “Yes” respondents not awarding Seals could be because these districts had no students who met the criteria to earn the Seal. It could also be a coding error with CEDARS as demonstrated by OSPI’s report double counting one district and missing another. Similar challenges have plagued OSPI in the administration of world language CCs. Or it could be that some districts responded “Yes,” but did not actually follow through for whatever reason. All three of these possible reasons, likely which are all partially true, provide fertile ground for improving the process and future research (see Recommendations in Chapter 8).

²⁴ It should be noted that OSPI reported 41 districts awarded Seals, but two districts listed as “Stanwood” and “Stanwood-Camano” are actually one district. They also missed Federal Way, which provides the number of Seals it awarded in 2016 on their website. Both Stanwood-Camano and Federal Way did respond to the survey and so they are included in the survey data, but Federal Way’s languages and numbers are not likely included in the overall information from the report.

4.3 COMPARING ACTUAL RESULTS TO CALIFORNIA'S RESULTS

As noted above, 41 districts had adopted the Washington State Seal within its first two years. In California, 217 districts had participated in their first two years (Californians Together data, 2014). In terms of percentages, those numbers of districts represent 17% of WA school districts with high schools and 52% of Californian districts with high schools. This difference likely has to do with the number of Californian districts that offered a district Seal before the state-level one. Whereas only three did so in Washington, 57 (14%) offered a district Seal in California prior to statewide adoption according to information provided by Dr. Spiegel-Coleman, Executive Director of Californians Together, who spearheaded the California Seal initiative. As the originator of the Seal, a handful of districts in California piloted the Seal before taking it to the legislature. It then took five years, overcoming two gubernatorial vetos (AB 2445 in 2006 and AB 280 in 2007) and the election of a new governor for California to adopt a Seal in fall 2011. Several more districts decided not to wait on the state decision (S. Spiegel-Colman, personal communication, February 2013). In Washington, the initial conversations about the Seal emerged in fall 2012 – winter 2013 and the Seal was adopted on its first attempt in 2014.

While many more districts in California began offering the Seal within the first two years, other statistics show a more comprehensive picture of the two states. In year two of the Seal, Washington awarded 2,256 Seals to about 4% of graduating students (Seal of Biliteracy Proviso Report, 2016, OSPI graduation data, 2016) whereas California awarded 24,151 to 6% of Californian graduates (Californians Together data, 2014, California Department of Education Fingertip Facts, 2013). As noted in Chapter 1, California does not require districts to award Seals in all requested languages. Seals were awarded in 40 languages in California's first two years as compared to 53 languages in the State of Washington (Seal of Biliteracy Proviso Report, 2016).

Considering staffing challenges at OSPI (see Chapter 6), the first two years of Washington's Seal have been a positive early step to broader adoption moving forward.

Chapter 5. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

With district participation in Seal initiatives voluntary and unfunded in Washington and around the country, this research provides insight into what might determine whether a district will participate. As dictated by the *explanatory sequential mixed methods* model (see Chapter 3), this project began with the quantitative component of the project and will now delve into the qualitative research segment with four case studies of district decision-making processes surrounding the State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB, termed “the Seal”). This method was selected to provide a “more complete understanding” of this emerging topic (Creswell, 2014, p. 19). The case studies provide an in-depth look at two small and two large districts, both adopters and not-yet adopters. In these cases, a picture is painted of the environmental criteria, stakeholders, and triggers (see research question (RQ) 1) in each district, followed by an overview of the process (see RQ 2), and criteria that played into the decision-making (see RQ 3). Quotes from the 16 interviewees across the four districts and the documents they shared helped to triangulate data.

5.1 RETROSPECTIVE CASE STUDY METHOD

This project is *retrospective* in that it considers districts that have already completed the Seal adoption (or lack of adoption) process (Kleinbok & Vidergor, 2009). As Rogers (2004) noted, retrospective interviews are the “customary research methodology” used by diffusion researchers (p. 15). This choice enabled the analysis of the complete process (see research questions) for two districts that were successful in getting approval for this initiative as well as in two districts that had decided against pursuing the Seal at the time of the survey.²⁵ This comparison was important because it helped shed light on characteristics of early adopters and those slower to complete

²⁵ By the time of the interviews, both of the non-adopter districts were moving toward adoption of the Seal, but had not finalized the details.

consideration of the Seal, to build understanding about what are the critical conditions in the districts' contexts for considering this policy innovation or not (see Chapter 2). While this required participants to recall past events and issues as well as eliminated the possibility for observations of the process, the timing of approval for this research and survey launch required interviews to take place in the 6-12 months following the initial decision to adopt the Seal. Since I wanted to focus on the earlier adopter categories of innovators, I preferred not to delay until the third year of implementation of the Washington State Seal. The sampling criteria below will show how potential limitations of a retrospective approach will be addressed.

5.2 CASE STUDY SITE SELECTION

The purposeful sample (Marshall, 1996) was formulated by selecting four case studies from the 114 respondents to the survey: two that had decided to implement the Seal and two that had actively considered it, but had decided against implementing it at the time of the survey (spring 2016). Due to turnover at the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI), there was little coordinated effort to disseminate information about the Seal option or to gather information about which districts planned to offer the Seal in 2015 or 2016 (M. Anciaux-Aoki, personal communication, August 15, 2016). This survey confirmed which districts had actually gone through a decision-making process to pursue or not pursue the Seal. I wanted to be able to select a district that had actually decided against the Seal rather than simply was “unfamiliar with the Seal at this time,” which included 17% (19) of the responding districts.

Since offering world language competency credits (CC) had a direct correlation to offering the Seal (see Chapter 4 Survey Analysis for details), I decided to focus on two districts that had a CC policy, one that had adopted the Seal and one that had not. In addition, I considered two that had no CC policy, again one that had adopted the Seal and one that had not

(see Table 5.14 for matrix). Since the CC policy is one of the established pathways to earn a Seal and the only pathway for languages beyond those typically taught in schools, it had seemed a likely trigger point for the Seal decision-making process. The survey results confirmed there was a correlation (see Table 4.11).

Table 5.14. Matrix of Case Study Selection Criteria

Case Studies	Adopter of World Language CCs	Non-Adopters of World Language CC
Adopter of the Seal	One Case	One Case
Not an Adopter of the Seal	One Case	One Case

Utilizing the results of the survey, Table 5.15 demonstrates the amount of respondents that fit into each category of the matrix. For the sake of case study selection, “No” and “Undecided” responses were combined into the non-adopter category. As will be explained below, I was interested in adopter and non-adopter districts that had gone through the process of discussing Seal adoption, so that was more important than whether they had responded “No” or “Undecided.”

Table 5.15. Respondents per Category

Case Studies	Adopter of World Language CCs	Non-Adopters of World Language CC	Total
Adopters of the Seal	33	11	44
Non-Adopters of the Seal ²⁶	22	48	70
TOTAL	55	59	114

To further narrow the selection, I used the five criteria (Advanced Placement (AP) world languages, International Baccalaureate (IB), World Language CCs, dual language programs, and four years of a world language) to further divide the respondents within each category to those that had three or more criteria and those that had two or less (see Table 5.16). I wanted to have

²⁶ Since the survey asked about Seal adoption by 2016, five districts that were planning to implement the Seal in 2017 were categorized as No, but really fall more into the Yes category for the purpose of case study selection. Four are non-adopters of world language CCs and only one is a world language CC adopter.

an adopter and non-adopter with several pathways available to students to earn the Seal and an adopter and non-adopter with very few pathways to see what the decision processes looked like under these different conditions. The shaded portions of Table 5.16 highlight the sub-groups from which cases were selected.

Table 5.16. Case Study Participants by World Language CCs and Multiple Criteria

Case Studies	Adopter of World Language CCs		Non-Adopters of World Language CC		Total
	3+ Criteria	<3 Criteria	3+ Criteria	<3 Criteria	
Seal Adopter	3+ Criteria	22	3+ Criteria	1	44
	<3 Criteria	11	<3 Criteria	10	
Seal Non-Adopter	3+ Criteria	11	3+ Criteria	1	70
	<3 Criteria	11	<3 Criteria	47	
TOTAL	55		59		114

As illustrated by the above table, only one non-adopters of world language CC policies had more than three criteria. For simplicity sake, the two main buckets of criteria will be referred to as *multi-criteria* (i.e., ≥ 3) and *few-criteria* (i.e., < 3) districts. To further narrow the pool of districts, a few additional districts were eliminated from the multi-criteria districts: the district my children attend; Seattle as it is so much larger than other districts; and outlier districts with less than 5% English Language Learner (ELL) students and with under 7,500 students because they have less than half the average number of enrolled students in multi-criteria districts. That left four potential multi-criteria “Seal non-adopter” districts and 10 multi-criteria “Seal adopter” districts. Since the “Seal non-adopter” were fewer, I selected one from the Seattle area. In order to ensure geographical distribution, I decided to select a “Seal adopter” district from outside of the Seattle area of which there were only two. As noted above, both of these districts offer world language CCs as one of their criteria, have over 10,000 students, and have more than 20 languages spoken by their students.

For the few-criteria districts, the pool was similarly reduced to those with more than 5% ELL students, those that did not select “unfamiliar with the Seal,” those that did not say they

planned to adopt in 2017, and those that indicated at least three people were involved in the Seal discussion. Since the Seattle-area and southwestern Washington were already represented, the focus was placed on districts in Eastern Washington or the northern part of the state. That left four few-criteria Seal adopters and five few-criteria non-adopters from which to choose. In the end, the two few-criteria districts that were selected were similar in size (less than 1,000 students), ELL make-up (95% Spanish-speakers and above the state average as percentage of enrolled students), and location (Eastern Washington).

This narrowing of districts helped me to select cases that seem to represent several of the most common district characteristics in terms of questions asked on the survey and OSPI data about these districts (Moore & Came, 2016; Merriam, 2009). The selection of typical, or *illustrative*, cases from those that offered the Seal and those that had not decided to adopt the Seal provided insight into how this process compared across contexts to see if overarching patterns emerged to explain district-level decision-making processes based on the suggested framework (Patton, 2002).

5.3 CASE STUDY DISTRICT AND INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION

To secure district participation, I contacted the survey respondent via email with a request for consideration and a follow-up phone call. This request included a cover letter (see Appendix G), a research bio and dissertation abstract (see Appendix H), the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval letter (see Appendix D), and two letters of support for the research, one from the Puget Sound Educational Service District (see Appendix I) and one from One America, a non-profit immigrant rights organization that had spearheaded advocacy for the Seal legislation. These letters were provided as an effort to establish my credibility. The initially asked multi-criteria

districts both agreed, though the non-adopter district required me to complete their committee research review process. The adopter district simply requested to see the questions in advance.

The few-criteria districts were harder to secure, with three to four requests made to different districts before I was able to find districts to participate. Neither of these districts had any sort of formal research review process. The district staff member provided a list of those involved with the Seal discussions to be interviewed. In three of the four cases, I contacted the individuals directly to set up meetings. In the multi-criteria adopter district, the district staff member scheduled the interviews on my behalf.

5.4 CASE STUDY SETTINGS

This next section will provide basic information about the four districts that participated in the project. To protect confidentiality, the names of the districts have been replaced with pseudonyms and the staff will be referred to solely by their job title. The data, however, and general descriptors are accurate based on the most recently available data from OSPI to provide some context for the data collected.

5.4.1 *Murrow School District*

Located in north-central Washington, Murrow School District is a rural district with less than 1,000 students. It has a high concentration of ELL students – almost 35%. When including those who speak another language in the home (over 99% of whom speak Spanish), the percentage increases to 56%. In Murrow, 77% qualify for free and reduced-price lunches (FRL). While it also has an 88% four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, its ELL graduation rate is 71%. The mission of Murrow School District is continuous student learning (district website). It does not offer advanced levels of languages at the high school, but does provide Spanish instruction through 3rd grade through an Early Exit ELL model. It had a dual language program about a

decade ago, but lack of qualified teachers resulted in its elimination. The district did adopt the Seal for last year, though did not have any students who qualified. This district is the few-criteria, non-CC adopter, Seal adopter district, though it was discovered in the interviews that, in conjunction with the Seal, it was in the process of adopting world language CCs as well. I interviewed the Superintendent, the 6-12 Principal, the Registrar, ELL Coordinator, and Spanish instructor.²⁷

5.4.2 *Swift Water School District*

This school district is similar in size and location to Murrow. Its mission is to foster productive and responsible citizens (district website). About 13% of the students are ELL students and 26% speak another language in the home, 100% of which speak Spanish. Sixty-four percent qualify for FRL. It has an overall adjusted 4-year cohort graduation rate of 88%, but for ELL students it is only 33%. Since Swift Water is so small, it does not offer any advanced language learning opportunities unless students attend courses at the nearby community college through the dual credit Running Start program. At the time of the survey and interviews, the district had not adopted the Seal, but it did hope to do so in the future as staff time allows. Therefore, it serves as this project's few-criteria, non-CC adopter, Seal non-adopter. Interviews were conducted with the Superintendent, the K-12 Principal, the Dean of Students, and the ELL/Spanish instructor.

5.4.3 *Woodbury School District*

In Southwest Washington, Woodbury School District is among the larger districts in the state serving over 15,000 students. Core beliefs include “no child is expendable” and to help students be world-competitive when they graduate (district website). It has about 12% ELL students, but overall about 20% of students speak one of over 70 languages other than English in the home. This represents a significant growth in the past 10 years. Similar to the state average, 47% of

²⁷ The Spanish teacher covers any world language administrative responsibilities.

students qualify for FRL. The four-year adjusted cohort graduation for all students and ELL students is 83% and 65%, respectively. Students can participate in an elementary dual language program, AP world language courses, and four years of world languages in addition to earning WL CCs for language skills developed outside of school. Woodbury first offered the Seal in spring 2016 to about 150 students in over 20 languages (WL Coordinator email #14). In this project, it serves as the multi-criteria CC and Seal adopter. I interviewed the Superintendent, the Data Manager, and the ELL Coordinator in person, and the World Languages Coordinator by phone.

5.4.4 *Luna School District*

With just over 15,000 students, Luna district is located in the greater Seattle area. The district vision focuses on lifelong learning and ethical decision-making (district website). Recent suburbanization of poverty and growth in the resettlement of refugees in the area have resulted in changing demographics for this district in the past decade (ELL Coordinator Interview). With 16% ELL students and 28% speaking one of 50 languages other than English in the home, Luna has had to try to keep up with these changes. About 64% qualify for FRL. Of the case studies, Luna has the lowest overall four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate with just 76% completing high school on time. The ELL rate is less than half that at 36%. As with Woodbury, Luna district offers world language AP, four years of language instruction, and CCs for world languages. It does not have a dual language program. At the time of the survey, it was undecided about the Seal. In the interviews, they stated that they do plan to launch the Seal in spring 2017. It had not finalized this as of fall 2016, so it served as this project's multi-criteria CC adopter, but not (yet) adopter of the Seal. Interviews were conducted with the Executive Director of Student Learning and High School Programs, the Data Manager, and the ELL Coordinator.

In summary, Table 5.17 demonstrates where each of the four districts falls in the selection criteria. Specifics about those interviewed and the results of the investigation will be provided in Chapter 6.

Table 5.17. Matrix of Case Study Selected Districts

Case Studies	Adopter of World Language CCs	Non-Adopters of World Language CC
Adopter of the Seal	Woodbury School District	Murrow School District
Not (yet) Adopter of the Seal	Luna School District	Swift Water School District

5.5 CASE STUDY DATA COLLECTION

Through the Seal survey, information was gathered about districts’ backgrounds and experiences with the Seal. I then linked demographic and course offering data from OSPI, such as number of ELL students and overall size of district, with responding districts to enhance the analysis (see Chapter 4). These results then determined which districts were selected for the case studies.

Following the Seal survey, I developed an interview protocol (see Appendix L) using the diffusion of innovations (DOI) framework to help determine its applicability to the cases. Sixteen staff members (three to five in each) from four districts (two early adopters and two non-adopters) signed consent forms (see Appendix J) and were interviewed to provide more in-depth information about the decision-making process. I also collected documents and transcribed participant interviews with district administrators involved in the Seal to collect more in-depth data on the Seal policy adoption process.

Initial document analysis of school board minutes/recordings, press releases, and news articles was attempted, but in all four cases, no mention of the Seal was found in board documents, press releases, or website notices. Therefore, I was not able to establish a general timeline of the process and to identify drivers and/or potential opponents to the Seal program

before the interviews. Once the interviews commenced, I received emails and relevant district documents from participants, though less from the non-adopters (see Chapter 6 for more details). These sources shed light on the mechanisms for considering the program innovation and reasons given for pursuing it as outlined in the conceptual framework.

In terms of participants within a district, I held three to five interviews with the key actors indicated in the Seal survey. These were semi-structured interviews, with some formulated questions but flexibility in order and wording (Bassegy, 1999). Interview questions focused on the topics outlined in the research question/conceptual framework/interview matrix in Appendix K. The interviews lasted from 30 minutes to an hour and were recorded on an iPhone using the Voice Record Pro app and a lavalier microphone, which provided high quality recordings. They were then uploaded into YouTube and auto-transcribed. The transcriptions were then corrected manually and confirmed with an additional review. Each interviewee was then sent the transcription and given two weeks to review it for verification. Only one very minor correction was requested, otherwise the transcriptions were approved as provided.

In conversations with the initial district contact and in the interviews, a snowball method was utilized where I asked interviewees to identify other people involved with the decision-making process (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). An initial data review was conducted after the first round of interviews to determine whether there was enough triangulated information. Additional requests for documents were made to strengthen the case data, with Woodbury and Swift Water more forthcoming than Murrow or Luna. Although variations existed across the contexts as to who were key actors, I spoke with at least three individuals per case. With each interview, I asked if there were opponents to the Seal and the answer was unanimously no. I had intended to speak with those against it, but in the selected districts, there was no vocal opposition to the Seal.

I did ask questions about challenges and opponents to try to find out what association that had. Only issues like logistics (e.g., time, workload, figuring out the logistics) slowed the process, but did not halt it completely in these four cases.

The questions asked in interviews tried to explore the key aspects of the conceptual framework (the combination of triggers, drivers, and structures that lead to Seal policy adoption – see Chapter 2) to see what resonated with interviewees and how well their experiences mapped to the framework. While it was not assumed that administrators were aware of diffusion or policy theories and their intricacies, I investigated how, if at all, their experiences with Seal policy adoption reflected some of these concepts (e.g., phases of change, change agent's role, kinds of decision-making, rate of adoption variables), or may have been couched in these ideas to convince others. The semi-structured nature of the interviews also enabled me to ask questions about other themes that emerged from the conversations.

5.6 CASE STUDY DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

In the second-phase of analysis using case studies, I applied DOI theory to attempt to explain the catalysts for the Seal policy consideration, the leaders of that change, and finally the process of policy formation. Data came from interviews and documents provided by participants on the Seal decision-making process. As recommended by Creswell (2014), data analysis proceeded in several steps. Data was first prepared for analysis. All interviews (with permission of participants) were audio-recorded, transcribed and then verified by interviewees. Secondly, I reviewed printed copies of transcripts and documents to note general impressions. And third, these documents and transcripts were manually coded in *NVivo* to determine themes and descriptions of relevance.

These transcripts were reviewed with a combination of predetermined codes, based on categories identified in Chapter 2, and emerging codes that stemmed from information collected from the participants (Creswell, 2014). A preliminary qualitative codebook (see Appendix M) was developed initially with predetermined categories, such as the variables that tend to be related to the rate of adoption (i.e., relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability), change agent roles, phases of change (trigger through mobilizing commitment to innovation adoption), kinds of decision-making (authoritative or collective), and the roles of the change agent (from raising awareness to motivating adoption). During each transcript review, open coding was developed as needed when other characteristics naturally emerged about the social system, time, communication channels, and the innovation itself (see explanation of variables in Chapter 2) (Merriam, 2009). The emergent codes were then incorporated into the codebook for use with subsequent interview analysis (Creswell, 2014). Some initial codes that did not prove relevant were consolidated or noted as such in the codebook.

I then employed the same coding strategy for the documents provided and for my journal of impressions following interviews that reflected impressions and possible areas for further inquiry or analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This analysis triangulated data from the survey and interviews to confirm and strengthen findings. Then, I created a case study database to compile all the components of coded data in a sortable fashion (Yin, 2008) in *NVivo*. Emerging themes were then identified and described (see Chapter 7).

Finally, both individual case analyses and then analyses across the cases were conducted “to attempt to build a general explanation that fits the individual cases” (Merriam, 2009, p. 204). As discussed in Chapter 7, this second analysis strengthened initial findings, presented unique characteristics, and helped me to synthesize findings (Yin, 2008).

5.7 RESEARCHER'S POSITIONALITY

My father immigrated to the U.S. in the 1950s during the Red Scare. He had been born in pre-World War II Poland and escaped Nazi Occupation in 1942, so he learned early to hide his Jewish and Slavic roots. He assimilated first in the Danish school system, starting with no Danish, and then again when he moved to the U.S. as an adult. In his career, he purported to be a good Dane, never discussing his Jewish or even his Polish heritage. He feared that people might view him negatively. Once he had children, he did not teach us any of the many languages he knew. We were to be “good Americans,” who spoke English. But from a young age, I was interested in learning about other languages and cultures rather than assimilation. I valued our family heritage; I even worked in Eastern Europe and explored the Jewish religion that he had hidden. Witnessing his experiences fostered a keen interest in understanding the immigrant experience and how U.S. society might better integrate those individuals, valuing what they contribute rather than encouraging them to reject their heritage. These experiences led me to pursue this PhD to learn more about language and education policies that are related to immigrant students.

Through my work at the University of Washington in international studies, I met Michele Anciaux Aoki, the Program Supervisor of World Languages and International Education at OSPI. She introduced me to the State Seal concept back in 2012. For a policy implementation course project, I conducted the initial research in 2013 for the SSB, as OSPI considered whether it would be useful in Washington State. Once the legislation passed in Washington, I then assisted Michele as an intern to develop the criteria the state would use. Over the course of the internship, I found my interest in the SSB growing as I reached out to staffers in State Boards of Education around the country who were at various stages of designing, passing, or implementing

a SSB. I became a bridge, linking people together to learn from their experiences, and a source of information about the different pathways for a Seal. In August 2014, I gave a webinar presentation called “The State of the States”

(<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/117530944>) for the committee of experts selected to make recommendations for establishing the criteria for the Washington SSB. And then at their convening in September 2014, I gave a presentation on the purpose of the Seal and lessons learned from other states’ experiences.

So I was involved in the state-level adoption process of the Seal, but have not played any role in the district level decision-making on the SSB. Now that the policy and criteria are in place, I was very interested to see how the Seal adoption developed.

Chapter 6. QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

While the survey was intended to provide a macro-level view of statewide Seal adoption, the questions were primarily closed case, multiple-choice, and did not provide deeper insight into the how and why questions central to this project. Four case studies were selected to delve deeper into the intricacies of the decision-making process in different types of districts. As described in-depth in Chapter 5, I selected two small districts with few world language offerings and two larger districts with a wide range of offerings. Within the two sizes, I identified a district adopting the Seal and not adopting the Seal to investigate further. Geographic distribution was also considered, so two districts were selected in eastern Washington and two in the western half of the state.

6.1 CASE STUDIES OVERVIEW

Interviews took place in Murrow School District on October 25, 2016 with the five relevant staff members. The following day, I spent in Swift Water School District speaking with the four staff involved in Seal discussions. My visit to Woodbury School District occurred on November 2nd, where I interviewed three staff members in person. On November 21st, I interviewed the final Woodbury staff member by phone and then conducted three interviews at Luna School District. I used an iPhone and lavalier microphone to record the interviews, which lasted up to an hour in length. I then transcribed the interviews and sent them to participants to confirm content. Participants also provided emails, memos, and other written documents related to the Seal adoption.

Using *NVivo*, I coded interviews and documents with pre-determined codes based on key terms identified in the literature review in Chapter 2 and on emergent codes that were discovered through the coding process (see Appendix M). I created memos throughout this process in *NVivo*

to make note of questions and ideas about coding the interviews. Annotations were also added within the *NVivo* coded interviews where there were contradictions or questions emerging for further consideration. Once the interviews and documents were all coded, I went back through the *NVivo* coding nodes to ensure that they were consistent across codes. A few nodes were consolidated (e.g., the less distinct *language-as-resource* (LAR) values) and others were further divided (e.g., recognition for students vs. recognition for others to see). Other codings were recharacterized (e.g., barriers to adoption vs. challenges with implementation).

Keeping the research questions in mind, this section will provide a narrative description of each case study based on interviews and documents to establish the triggers, stakeholders, and environmental variables, such as the social, political, and historical contexts (Sabatier, 1991), that appeared to prompt district leaders to consider offering a Seal (see research question (RQ) 1). Then, an overview of the process they undertook to get to the decision to adopt (or not adopt) will be described (see RQ 2). And finally, a summary of criteria that facilitated and/or impeded adoption will be discussed (see RQ 3). Once the particulars of each case are provided, a cross-case analysis will demonstrate how the processes varied (see RQ 2A) and overlapped (RQ 4) in Chapter 7.

6.2 MURROW SCHOOL DISTRICT

In applying Easton's *systems model* (see Figure 2.2), this case study will start with describing the environment in which the decision-making process took place. To provide some context for the decision-making process, as noted in Chapter 5, Murrow School District is a small, rural district in eastern Washington. It prides itself on being innovative and "thinking outside the box,"²⁸ a specific phrase mentioned by three of the five individuals interviewed from the district. Another

²⁸ Transcription conventions: dash (–) is used for pauses in speech, brackets ([]) used for clarification by the researcher, ellipses (...) used for intentional omission of irrelevant speech.

responded the district was “very innovative” (Registrar Interview). As the Principal said, “I am guessing it [district size] makes it [innovation] easier just because – our red tape is 30 feet long instead of 300 feet long.”

6.2.1 *Environmental Context*

The past thirty years have resulted in a tremendous demographic swing for the district. The district’s Hispanic population grew from five students in the early 1980s (AP, 2001) to 418 by 2000, an 8,360% increase in 20 years. Today, they represent 68% of the student population (Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) Report Card, 2016). About 77% of total enrollment qualify for free and reduced-price lunches (FRL). The English Language Learner (ELL) population also grew exponentially, going from negligible to 36% of enrolled students by 2000 and 42% by 2016 (OSPI Report Card, 2016). This growth triggered experimentation with bilingual education. In 2000, Murrow was the second district in the state to adopt a dual language program (AP, 2001). According to the current ELL Coordinator, this program ended a few years later due to a shortage of qualified Spanish-speaking teachers and complaints from community members about instruction quality:

What happened when we had a dual language program here, long before I came, and the fallout from that is still in some people's minds that have been here a while. And I know exactly why the program failed [lack of qualified instructors] and people felt like their kids didn’t get a very good education through that. After they had tried to implement that program, there were a lot of people that left. (ELL Coordinator Interview)

This experience coincided with, if not caused, a 16% decrease in enrollment from 2003-4 to 2004-5 and then a 16% increase from 2004-5 to 2005-6 (OSPI Report Cards, 2003-2006). Despite challenges, there had been a transition from a *language-as-problem* perspective to

language-as-resource by the former Superintendent, quoted in 2003 as saying, "We had viewed our ESL [English as a Second Language] learners as a real challenge. We then started rethinking that and realized that our 'challenge' was actually one of our greatest assets" (Solomon, 2003). Since then, Spanish has remained in K – 2nd grade for ELL students in some form. Now they are officially utilizing an early-exit model (ELL Coordinator Interview). While there is interest in expanding Spanish language support to higher grades, lack of qualified teachers remains a primary stumbling block according to the ELL Coordinator (Interview).

The Superintendent also wanted to increase language opportunities, highlighting that the school district has as a Global Ends Policy, "Gain knowledge of other cultures and learn to communicate, read and write in a second language." But as a small school district, there are challenges:

We have been trying to figure out how to resource more language instruction in the elementary and middle schools, knowing that language development is best at that upper elementary age, but it is a resource issue. Staffing is an issue – with a small district there is prioritization issue. (Superintendent Interview)

In reviewing enrollment numbers for the district, there have been periods of great fluctuation for the district. As noted above, one period of flux coincided with the elimination of the dual language program. Another occurred from 2009-10 through 2011-12 where there was a 7% drop in enrollment. As noted by the Principal, "About 5 years ago we really started thinking outside of the box" (Interview). That coincides with a 13% increase in enrollments in 2011-12, a 3% increase in 2012-13, and steady enrollment for the past three years. Falling enrollments make a small school budget even smaller, so the district seems to be focused on highlighting itself as innovative and flexible for students as demonstrated by promotional videos on the district's

website. While not the government scrutiny noted in Chapter 2 as a trigger for earlier adoption, previous experience with public dissatisfaction (i.e., unenrolling their children) may have created a similar sensitivity to keeping up with innovations related to student success.

6.2.2 *Trigger for Seal Consideration*

Now with some environmental context – changing demographics, moving toward a LAR perspective, developing an innovative culture – in place, what triggered the consideration of the Seal of Biliteracy? In the diffusion phases of change, it starts with a triggering event. The specific trigger for its adoption, as noted in the interviews, started with the arrival of a student from a neighboring district who had earned competency credits (CC) for her knowledge of Spanish: “We actually had a student who transferred three years ago from another school who had it [world language CCs] on her transcript was the first time. We asked her about it and she said, ‘Oh, yeah it worked well’” (Principal Interview). The World Languages Coordinator mentioned the student’s STAMP²⁹ test results as well: “...so that's how we kind of decided, ‘Okay, this is something that we probably should do’” (Interview). Then the Superintendent learned of the Seal in the 2014-15 school year and encouraged the Principal to look into these linked opportunities further. “The timing was really right with our competency credit kind of push we were doing as a building anyway” (Principal Interview).

Following the trigger, the dominant group feels the need for change. At that point, Spanish-speaking students had to take Spanish I and II to have their transcript show any world language credits. “We needed something else that would help them get their credit for the skills that they actually have and so – that's where it came from” (Spanish Teacher Interview). “Before the STAMP, I mean the best that we could do was if they passed the class. We didn't have

²⁹ The STAMP test (STAndards-based Measurement of Proficiency) was designed by Avant Assessment to test language proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It is one of the OSPI-approved methods of testing language proficiency and is the most affordable of the tests at about \$25 per test.

anything set up” (Spanish Teacher Interview). The Principal also said he was “a little dubious about our process” in allowing students to place out of Spanish, indicating some concern with the legitimacy of the district’s process. He was happy to replace it with the STAMP test as approved by OSPI for world language CCs:

We had a policy since before I came that allowed students to test out of Spanish I, but we were moving toward our whole building moving toward competency-based credits, so we wanted to get something a bit more official. Our teacher had created a locally designed assessment, and so we were looking for something that would give us the opportunity to test for Spanish I and Spanish II that we felt confident about. That we could attach a grade³⁰ to. In the past, it was just that they could test out, but they weren’t getting a grade for it. (Principal Interview)

This quote also notes the district was moving as a whole to allow CCs for a range of courses, so having CCs as one of the ways to earn the Seal further supported this effort.

Another challenge with the former practice was having heritage speakers of Spanish in Spanish I. “It’s silly to have students going to Spanish I. They’re already bilingual and they’re completely bored, so it’s becoming more of a classroom management problem and we just knew that the students weren’t being challenged” (Spanish Teacher Interview). “It really gave an opportunity for our Spanish I to become what it needs to be which is a non-Spanish speaking Spanish class – it can be really intimidating for them [monolingual English speakers]. It’s hard” (Principal Interview). This reasoning also demonstrates the world language CCs as a way to help native English speaking students as well.

And finally, as noted at the start of the interview with the Superintendent:

³⁰ While the competency credits do not actually have a grade attached to it, it does provide up to four elective credits and is accepted by colleges and universities in Washington in lieu of world language courses.

So one of our goals is called Personal Skills Development and...one of their goals is to gain knowledge of other cultures and to communicate in a second language. And it has been stated there as a goal for the last ten years that we have been trying to move forward and so I saw a natural relationship between the Seal of Biliteracy and that goal.

(Superintendent Interview)

The Seal, therefore, had the potential to address “a long standing board policy that they wanted us to move toward” (Superintendent Interview).

6.2.3 *Stakeholders in Seal Decision Process*

In terms of involved stakeholders (“mediating variables” in Figure 2.2), interviews took place with the Superintendent, High School Principal, Spanish Teacher, Registrar, and ELL Coordinator. Since the district is small, that group includes both district administrators and the relevant instructors. Based on the interviews, they were really the only participants in the Seal decision-making process. The school board was informed, but did not have any formal role. As noted by the Superintendent, “The board basically sets out ends goals and then gives a great deal of autonomy and the means to the professionals to reach those goals” (Interview). The Superintendent had a similar delegated authority approach:

I pulled the team together to let them move forward because the diploma is really in [the Principal’s] wheelhouse. I think he took it and ran with it – My involvement has been somewhat limited – They knew they had my support and that I wanted to move forward with it. (Superintendent Interview)

Other than those stakeholders, all interviewees agreed that there was no family or community involvement in the Seal discussions beyond the limited role of the School Board.

In terms of interviewees' views on the Seal, they all were in favor of it. Four of the five highlighted the post-high school benefits for college and career and recognition for their bilingual skills. Both the Superintendent and the Spanish Teacher also highlighted motivational aspects. For example, "It really upped their engagement in class and their acquisition of language" (Spanish Teacher Interview). The Registrar was under the impression that it was mandated. She believed she had first heard about it at a WSIPC (Washington School Information Processing Co-op) meeting for districts using the Skyward³¹ system, which is where the registrar from Woodbury first heard about it. She also thought the Seal was mandated (see Chapter 7 for discussion on this).

Throughout the process, there was no voiced opposition to the Seal from district staff or the community. The Principal noted:

The teacher was the – she wasn't sure. That was where we had to really – because she had already put together this test and students were being successful with it, so she was dubious about this other thing [STAMP test], we were going to use instead of her test. Once she used it and saw the results, she was really happy with those. (Principal Interview)

However, this was an additional responsibility for the Spanish Teacher, who also "teaches other subjects now, so she is kind of pulled in a few directions" (Superintendent Interview). Her response may have come across as resistance, but more as a consideration of time and not to the concept of the Seal. The Spanish Teacher shared: "I thought it was just another thing that would be good for students to be recognized for – I don't think they get enough recognition for being bilingual. It's a pretty big gift, so that made me excited."

³¹ Skyward is the online student management and business process management system used by all four case studies.

6.2.4 *Decision-Making Process Phases and Variables Affecting Adoption*

With RQ1 now answered for Murrow School District, the actual process the district went through (RQ2) will be described. This encompasses the knowledge gathering, persuasion, and decision phases³² as outlined in Chapter 2. Both the ELL Coordinator and the Superintendent acknowledged minimal involvement in the knowledge or persuasion phases. According to both the Registrar and the Principal, the Registrar began gathering information in fall 2015 from OSPI's website and from Wenatchee School District. "She got a copy of what they did and then we used that to compare with what we might want to do. And then we came up with a proposal about how we were going to do that" (Principal Interview). The registrar's participation focused mostly on the policy side. The Spanish Teacher was also on the email chain with Wenatchee to learn about how it was implemented and what proficiency test they were using (Spanish Teacher Interview).

In the knowledge phase, information was gathered that helped build the case for convincing decision-makers in the persuasion phase. As noted in Chapter 2, diffusion theorists have identified five variables that are related to the rate of adoption: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. These variables can facilitate and/or impede the district-level adoption of the Seal (see RQ 3). In the interviews from Murrow district, relative advantage, compatibility, and observability seemed to play the largest role as described below.

Comments about the relative advantage of the Seal seemed to blend consideration of world language CCs and the Seal. As described in recognizing the need for change, interviewees focused on the credit students would receive as a result, the resolution of Spanish classroom

³² Since this study focuses on decision-making, analysis will end with the decision phase.

management, and the legitimacy of the approach. “The research the Registrar brought back that I looked at proved to me that this was something that was well-thought out” (Principal Interview).

Compatibility of the Seal with the district fell into three categories. It aligned with its efforts to adopt CCs for a range of subjects: “There had been a lot of discussion around that [CCs] and this was just a logical extension of that” (Superintendent Interview). It also linked to the existing district bilingual goal: “I know the school board sees it as a goal. It's important to them” (ELL Coordinator). And finally, it fit with its innovative identity: “We do some different things that – aren’t regular in public schools...when it comes to learning and...it [the Seal] fits well with that. Yeah, it really does” (Principal Interview).

The issue of complexity and trialability did not emerge as particularly notable in the interviews as far as decision-making. These seem to have come up in terms of the implementation phase and the challenges of purchasing proficiency tests, coordinating testing logistics, and helping students prepare for the tests. “I know how we're going to do it differently next year for sure and that it's going to be put on the big testing schedule, so that computers are ready and headsets and you know making it more of an appropriate setting” (Spanish Teacher Interview).

Finally, observability appeared to have played a larger role in the decision to adopt the Seal. For the Spanish Teacher who had been hesitant at first, she stressed the importance of her discussions with Wenatchee School District. “That's kind of how I had my buy-in: like if some other educators were doing it that I really respected and liked the program that they had and kids are having success, so...” (Spanish Teacher Interview). When asked about the relationship with Wenatchee’s decision to adopt the Seal, the Principal responded it was “Pretty big. You know, they are the big brother in North Central Washington, so we kinda figured if they were doing it,

it must be something worthwhile” (Interview). It is interesting to note that based on the Seal Proviso Report, Wenatchee has not awarded Seals but it does participate in the world language CC program. As will be discussed in Chapter 7, the confusion about the differences or confluence of the Seal and world language CCs concepts seemed to be an issue.

In Murrow School District, the persuasion phase overlapped with the decision phase as there was not a formal approval process required. As a result of the research and the aforementioned justifications, the Principal was convinced. He served as primary change agent for the process and kept the process moving forward:

By talking to people face to face. Yeah, there is a certain amount of email you need to do, but then go beyond and talk to them. Sitting down with the teacher was the big thing. As I said, the Superintendent was with it from the go, but he just wanted to know that I had vetted it really well and that I felt really confident about it. And so once I did, I just needed to talk to the teacher and help her to feel confident enough that we could go ahead and move forward with it. (Principal Interview)

Interpersonal communication seemed to be important within the district in moving toward a decision. In the end, the district utilized a collective decision-making approach, where all relevant parties were consulted and then the decision was made jointly to move forward with it. The school board was informed about it, but not involved in making a decision.

Based on the above description, Murrow appears to fall into the early majority adopter category. Since the district has adopted the Seal, but not yet awarded any Seals or really even publicized its availability as demonstrated by the lack of Seal information on their website and in newsletters, they do not seem to be a champion of the Seal that early adopters tend to be (Perry, 2010). Compared to other districts of their size and offerings, they did adopt before the majority

of districts (Rogers, 2003). Influenced by Wenatchee's decision, Murrow prides itself on being innovative and not resistant to change. However, it was also concerned about making sure the Seal "wasn't just helter skelter put together type thing," indicating an interest in not being rash about the decision to adopt that is typical of an early majority adopter (Principal Interview, Ratts & Wood, 2011).

6.3 SWIFT WATER SCHOOL DISTRICT

6.3.1 *Environmental Context*

Also in eastern Washington, Swift Water has similarly experienced changing demographics in the past 15 years. From 2001 to 2006, ELL enrollment doubled, but the enrollment of Hispanic students only increased slightly (5%) (OSPI Report Cards, 2001-2006). Since 100% of Swift Water's ELL students speak Spanish, the initial shift was linguistic rather than ethnic. Since 2006, the enrollment of Hispanic students has increased an additional 21%, while white enrollment has fallen by two-thirds (OSPI Report Cards, 2006-2016). Their departure has shrunk total enrollment by 17% in the past 10 years. While the number of students qualified for FRL stayed relatively constant over this period, the percentage increased from 52% to 61% (OSPI Report Cards, 2006-2016). That indicates those who left the district were not FRL-qualified students. The ELL percentage has fallen slightly since 2006's peak, but has remained relatively stable at 13-15% of the district's population (OSPI Report Card, 2006-2016). The migrant population in this rural district has experienced wide annual swings from as low as 0% to a peak of 14% in 2006 (OSPI Report Card, 2006-2016). It is interesting to note that there is not always direct correlation between migrant and ELL enrollment. For example, in 2005 there was 14% ELL enrollment and 0% migrant enrollment and the next year 15% ELL enrollment with 14% migrant enrollment (OSPI Report Card, 2005-2006).

In fall 2013, a new Superintendent began with the district. He was raised in a migrant farming family and went on to get his doctorate in Education. The focus of his dissertation was on migrant high school graduation specialists. Prior to starting with Swift Water, he had spent 20 years at the North Central Educational Service District (ESD 171), where he was director of migrant education services and a migrant curriculum generalist. It is interesting to note that the year prior to his start, the migrant enrollment had fallen to zero. In his first year, it jumped to 5% where it has remained these past three years. As noted by the district's Dean of Students in describing the Superintendent: "He's Latino. And he is very educated in migrants – and Latino culture and issues, underrepresented people, he has a strong interest in it. He's really pulled us forward in that" (Dean of Students Interview).

While he regrets that, due to the small size of the district, they are not able to offer bilingual education, he encourages families to consider their home language as a resource:

Sadly, what happens in our society is, as you know, that a lot of times we tell kids that they got to learn to speak English and all this, but then all of a sudden in the business world we say 'Gosh, I need someone that's bilingual,' so any efforts that we can make to help that out – I always share with our parents, it's always important. I know I share personally that my father would always say '*en la casa se habla español.*' At home, you speak Spanish, because again, especially when you're a young kid, you are going to learn English. There's no question. I've never met a kid who didn't learn English in this country that, you know, went to school, so I always encourage parents to do the same... 'It's okay to practice English, but it's also ok to maintain your heritage language, because it's only going be of value in the future.' (Superintendent Interview)

The ELL Coordinator described the challenge of offering a dual language program: “Being such a small district and only having one class [per grade], it's hard to get people [teachers] who speak Spanish.” Despite this challenge, the district does strive to be inclusive. Since the Superintendent started with the district, materials from the school are “usually bilingual” (Dean of Students Interview). The ELL Coordinator has quarterly meetings with families in Spanish that include cultural celebrations, Skyward instruction and engagement to “make sure that they're in the loop” (Dean of Students Interview).

In terms of support from the school board, the Superintendent noted about his interactions with them:

I think, again, the fact that I'm bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural, they [the school board] see the value-add...I can really provide more of an authentic conversation with our Spanish-speaking community. So yeah, they always appreciate that in my check-ins or evaluations. (Superintendent Interview)

So while there is no official district policy promoting bilingualism, there seems to be a general acknowledgement of the importance and desire to maintain strong relations with the Spanish-speaking community.

Another challenge is that the ELL Coordinator position has experienced “a lot of turnover” in the past few years (ELL Coordinator Interview). This position provides ELL support for all 12 grades and teaches Spanish I & II. The Superintendent, Principal, and Dean of Students are thrilled with the new coordinator, who has almost 20 years of teaching experience, but she has never worked specifically with ELL students and “teaching the language is so new to me” (ELL Coordinator Interview). She noted that she had studied Spanish for three years in high school and that she speaks Spanish, “but it's not fluent” (ELL Coordinator Interview). She relies

on her bilingual paraprofessional for communicating with families and working with students with no English, but the paraprofessional is also new to the district this year. According to the Superintendent, “Right now the priority is for both of them to kind of get comfortable with the program” rather than prioritize a Seal of Biliteracy (Interview).

In general, the dominant theme was one of good intentions, but limited resources. “We know what we can do with our limited resources, but we want to give our kids every opportunity possible” (Principal Interview). None of the four interviewees described the district as innovative. The Superintendent splits his time with another district, so he is only there “two to three times a week” (Superintendent Interview). There were a lot of things he would like to do, but:

In small schools, we all wear multiple hats...if it's something that's right in front of you it's the – I think if you think of Maslow's basic needs, you know, if it's the basic needs that are urgent, those are the ones that get addressed first and you can check that off the list – There's always a lot of pressing issues that fill your plate. (Superintendent Interview)

There seems to be a lot of reliance on staff members going above their responsibilities to make new initiatives happen. “Squeaky wheel gets the grease, if you, you know, squeak, we'll see how we can help out” (Superintendent Interview). Though new to the district, the ELL Coordinator said, “It’s kind of that - you want to put the work in? Great. If you bring this all to us, then we're happy to stamp the paper and sign our names and go for it. It's kind of a feeling I get, but as I said, I’m two months into this job, so it’s hard to know yet” (Interview).

6.3.2 *Triggers for Seal Consideration*

As for triggers of Seal consideration, the Superintendent first heard of the Seal in the fall of 2015 at an ESD meeting. At a subsequent Swift Water student support meeting between the Superintendent, Dean of Students, and Principal, they decided not to pursue the Seal for spring 2016. “Really the only reason we did not do it was we had a first year [ELL Coordinator] teacher last year and did not want to pile anymore on him” (Principal Interview). He only stayed at the school for one year, so they are once again delaying consideration. “I feel confident that, you know, probably next year we can take that next step, but again we want her [the new ELL Coordinator] to get the lay of the land and not be overwhelmed in her first year” (Principal Interview).

The new ELL coordinator only learned of the Seal at an ESD meeting in October 2016, just weeks before our interview. She had been frustrated by the lack of options for Spanish-speaking students to test out of Spanish and/or to earn credit for their language skills and had begun to look into options for that (not having heard of competency credits) when she learned of the Seal opportunity. On October 17th, she wrote an email to the Superintendent and Principal to notify them of the opportunity and to say, “I think it would be a great way to honor students who are bilingual” (ELL Coordinator Email Correspondence #1). The Principal responded, “Yes, we have talked about this before. I think it is certainly worth pursuing for our students” (ELL Coordinator Email Correspondence #1). Perhaps notably, the Superintendent forwarded my email to the ELL Coordinator dated just five days earlier, asking to enlist the district as a case study at 11:27am with a note “FYI.” He responded shortly thereafter to me that Swift Water would be willing to participate in the interviews. Participation in the study seemed like a good way to support this process moving forward (ELL Coordinator Interview).

6.3.3 *Stakeholders in the Seal Decision Process*

In Swift Water, the stakeholders are the ELL Coordinator, the Superintendent, and, to a lesser extent, the Principal, and Dean of Students. All four were supportive of the idea of the Seal, with reasons falling into six LAR related ideas. They all noted that recognition of students' bilingual skills was as a key reason for supporting it. The Superintendent and the ELL Coordinator also noted the value of showing the value of bilingualism to other students and the community:

I think it would be of value, mostly because it would show the parents and the students that we value not just English, but we value other languages. We value, even if it wasn't Spanish, but that's the primary we have here, we value languages as a whole. We value what you bring to the school. (ELL Coordinator Interview)

The Seal's potential relationship with jobs and college were highlighted by three. For example:

This Seal just adds that one little more competitive edge or resource to say like if I'm a college and say I have two students here, everything is equal, but this person over here has a Seal of Biliteracy? Well, as a university, that's going to add value to my university, so I'd probably admit this person. (Superintendent Interview)

The ELL Coordinator also noted the importance of valuing bilingualism for students' identity and incentivizing those who struggle to keep working on both their languages. "We could say 'Look, you're struggling to do this, but look what the outcome could be?'" (ELL Coordinator Interview). And finally, the Superintendent mentioned the Seal as a way of illustrating "what you can bring to our community" (Superintendent Interview).

No one had, as of yet, expressed opposition to the Seal, but the process had just begun. While the Principal and Dean of Students did not anticipate any opposition, the Superintendent thought there might be:

You're always going to have one or two or handful that kind of are, you know, 'They're in America, they need to learn English.' Well, they did actually and plus they also know another language. It's just about my role as the Superintendent to make sure that communicates clear, clean, and respectful to everybody to say, 'You know what? We're in this together and what a great opportunity to add value to do this.' (Superintendent Interview)

The Superintendent also noted that a potential comment could be:

'Why are we providing the services for *those* kids' – but again a lot of times when you hear that, it's really – again everybody holds to be true what they experienced in their life, so a person who says that is because in their eyes, they really think that they're not getting the services you provide and sometimes it's the lack of education and understanding, for example, the migrant program. They said 'Well, my kid doesn't get migrant summer school, why?' Well, because they're not migrants, and the dollars have to follow the kid, so with a Seal of Biliteracy, you know, that might be one question. They might say 'Why do we do that for those kids?' and I will say that it's for any kid that's bilingual, so it doesn't matter. 'If your kid is bilingual and can do that, wonderful!' (Superintendent Interview)

This response highlights the Superintendent's acknowledgement that this can benefit any child who has learned more than one language.

6.3.4 *Decision-Making Process Phases and Variables Affecting Adoption*

At the time of the interview, the district was only in the initial stage of the knowledge phase. The ELL Coordinator intended to contact other districts for information and use the OSPI website as a resource. Based on conversations, the decision style appears to be collective. As the Principal noted, “It’ll come down to myself, [the Superintendent] and the teacher as a group. We’ll just, you know, research it and talk it through to see, you know, what do we feel is the best way for us to implement it” (Interview).

Since it is early in the process, it is difficult to assess how the five variables (relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability) will be related to the rate of adoption (RQ3). The intention of selecting this district was to consider a district that did not have competency credits and had considered the Seal, but had decided against adoption. In the interviews, it became clear that while they had met the first two criteria, they had really just delayed detailed consideration and only decided against adoption for the time being (RQ2). The survey did not uncover that nuance. With that caveat, the role of the five variables in discussions so far will be described below.

There were no clear references to relative advantage or trialability of the Seal from the interviews, likely because they had not yet really explored the Seal or world language CCs in any depth. Compatibility seemed to be both a pro and con. Whereas in other cases compatibility seemed to link with already having world language CCs, a previous pro-bilingual policy in place, and/or an innovative culture, none of those were identified in Swift Water. So initially, the Seal may seem incompatible. Yet as noted above, prior to learning of the Seal, the ELL Coordinator had identified a real need for native Spanish speakers to have a way to test out of Spanish I and to earn credit:

I had a couple kids in my freshman [Spanish] class and I'm like, they could just get credit for this by taking a test and then use their time somewhere else, because it's such a just a big gap. I have some – they've never hardly heard Spanish. They can say *hola, como estas*. Yeah, everybody pretty much can say that, right? And then I have the student here, who at home may speak Spanish, so – but they're all in my Spanish I class, so I kind of asked before I heard about this [the Seal], I was asking the Principal and Superintendent, hey isn't there an exit test they can take? Something, because it's my first year teaching language. I'm like, there's gotta be something, so I went to [the ESD ELL staff member], who knows everything, and so she kind of guided me to visit the WAFLT [Washington Association for Language Teaching] website – it's one of the tests that they take for the Biliteracy Seal. (ELL Coordinator Interview)

As occurred in Murrow district, those in Swift Water blended the idea of the Seal with the world language CCs. So while the Seal may not be compatible with existing features of the district, it does seem compatible with an identified need to help native Spanish speakers test out of Spanish I and to earn credits for their skills.

While complexity of implementing the Seal was not truly known at this stage of consideration, the small size of the district as well as the shortage and newness of staff seemed to be the biggest anticipated barriers to adoption. “Right now I think to really just adopt it, was just again the time with the lack of resources and we're such a small staff. I mean there's just so many things going on” (Superintendent Interview).

To counter these concerns, all four mentioned the value of observability in moving forward. As noted by the Dean of Students, “I mean once people jump on the bandwagon – yeah I think it would [help], because everybody's always talking about things and I think that, that

could really help move our decision forward...is see what other districts are doing” (Interview). The Principal and Superintendent both discussed that regional meetings are often great places to discuss issues and “typically they kind of pool their resources together” (Principal Interview). He went on to say the relationships with other districts is “Not necessarily what their decisions are, but I think what could be gleaned is – you know is there some support out there that we can, you know, leverage? Some of the resources and those types of things” (Interview). As a district, they could benefit from the lessons learned by other districts moving forward. The ELL Coordinator similarly said, “I’m always looking for another district, that’s about the same size” to learn from.

As for how the persuasion and decision phases may proceed, the Principal noted:

How we operate compared to Wenatchee is like night and day. You know it truly is different in the small district. It's like three of us sit in there and we discuss stuff and it's decided. You know, that's that. It's not where it goes through all these channels.

(Principal Interview).

That indicates a collective decision-making approach. As mentioned above, moving forward seems pretty dependent on the initiative of the ELL Coordinator: “That's kind of what I’m learning: Don't suggest it, if you're not willing to go the extra mile. And that's the whole small school setting, I think” (Interview). At the time of the interview, she seemed pretty interested in moving forward which could be critical in the Seal adoption process. The Superintendent said:

And she's already wanting to go forward with that. And I was like ‘Wow, go for it.’ And then we’ll support her in moving forward, again, if she feels she can manage it and put it on her plate to look at that and again any kind of support we can provide her, I’m happy to do that. (Superintendent Interview)

The School Board is typically “hands-off” on these types of decisions, just wanting to be kept informed (Principal Interview). Both the Principal and the Superintendent expected them to be supportive of the Seal idea (Interviews).

Based on the interviews, Swift Water seems likely to be a late majority adopter of the Seal. They seem likely to adopt the Seal eventually, but have very limited resources (staff time, knowledge, and other resources) to make this happen quickly (Rogers, 2003). The ELL Coordinator’s enthusiasm could help to continue to move this forward, “I’m really excited about it. I’m hoping I can get my district to do it” (ELL Coordinator Interview).

6.4 WOODBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT

6.4.1 *Environmental Context*

Since 2000-01, Woodbury School District enrollment has grown by over 20%. This southwestern Washington school district has experienced “a significant demographic shift” as well (Master Plan, 2014, p. 3). While white students enrollment grew by 11% between 2001 and 2006, in the last decade, that percentage has since fallen by 22% with over a 1,000 less white students than there had been in 1999 (the earliest record available) (OSPI Report Card, 1999). Whereas whites once made up 84% of the district, they now are about 60% of students (OSPI Report Card, 1999-2016). Yet, whereas this population once was predominantly native English speakers, there has been a growth of Eastern European immigrants in the area. Now over 20% of ELL students are (mostly white) Russian speakers, not to mention other white immigrant groups from Eastern Europe.

Additionally, the Hispanic population almost doubled from 2001 – 2006 and has grown another 203% in the past decade, now making up 20% of the school district’s enrollment. Asian enrollment went from negligible to about 7% and other ethnic groups and the multi-racial

proportion have grown 240% during this 15-year period, from 4% to 13% of the student body. Meanwhile, the FRL population has also grown by 126%, now representing almost half of the student body. And finally, the ELL population has grown 312% to now 13% of enrolled students. Even as early as 2008-09 (earliest OSPI Transitional and Bilingual Instruction Program report to the legislature available), ELL students spoke over 60 languages (McCold & Malagon, 2009). Now that number is over 70 (Moore & Came, 2016).

Interviewees perceived the district as having a fairly innovative identity. As noted by the Superintendent:

I mean when I look back at what we've done over the last 10-12 years, it's pretty amazing how different we are and how really out front we are of many districts. We've improved our graduation rate by seventeen percent on-time. We've increased our free and reduced lunch by thirteen percent during that time, so we've gone from 34 to 47% and still graduating seventeen percent more kids than we were then, so yeah I think we're pretty innovative. (Superintendent Interview)

He went on to describe a number of initiatives to demonstrate the innovative thinking of the district. The Data Manager and the World Language (WL) Coordinator gave examples as well, using terms like “proactive” and doing things that “are not the norm,” respectively (Interviews).

One innovation to improve student outcomes was in moving toward a LAR perspective. As a result of the increasing number of native Spanish speakers in the district, Woodbury started a two-way dual language program for both native Spanish and native English speakers about five years ago. In a regional article, the reason for doing so was: “Our district has an achievement gap between some of our minorities and our white or Caucasian kids. This should help close the achievement gap for some of those kids” (Harshman, 2011). Additional reasons for the program

included “advantages in the working world” for those who are bilingual, “building cultural understanding,” and research of bilingual students “outperforming other students in all subject areas” (Harshman, 2011). Two years later, it started a second Spanish-English two-way dual language program at another elementary school. The district has also expressed interest in eventually starting two-way dual language programs in Russian and possibly Mandarin (Harshman, 2011).

In April 2014, the ELL Manager, who at the time was the Dual Language Program Coordinator, led a team of district and school staff as well as community members to develop a master plan to “guide the development of...the 3-year-old Two-Way Bilingual Immersion program and lay the groundwork for the development of a K-12 pathway that affords students the opportunity to develop their bilingualism and literacy in two languages” (Master Plan, 2014, p. ii). This aligns with the district’s mission of making students “world-competitive upon graduation” (ELL Manager Interview). “We hold high expectations for these students, who we know will be able to bridge across linguistic and cultural differences in the community. We believe these students will become great contributors to the future of the community, Washington State and beyond” (Master Plan, iv). While the Master Plan only focused on students in the two-way dual language programs rather than representing a district-wide policy, the plan did outline a K-12 bilingual pathway for these students.

Rosa Molina, Executive Director of the Association for Two-way and Dual Language Education (ATDLE), consulted on the Master Plan project. The plan made a case for additive language learning, the advantages of the two-way dual language model, and outlined key components of implementation as recommended by the Center for Applied Linguistics. Most

importantly, for the purpose of this study, it included the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy as part of the K-12 pathway for the two-way dual language program:

We had Rosa Molina coming and working with our district from ATDLE and she's always talking about it [the Seal], you know. She had all the brochures when we did our master plan and that was also written into our master plan - the Seal of Biliteracy, for our dual immersion and so...it's in the master plan that ideally this is what the end goal would be. That the kids would have this Seal – California's doing it and we talked about it when we met with the Cabinet to have our master plan approved, so – and then nothing really happened with it at that point, because the state wasn't quite caught up to where California was. (ELL Manager Interview)

When the Master Plan was approved in April 2014, the Washington Seal had been approved by the legislature, but the criteria were not yet established, so the district did not move forward on consideration of the Seal. “My vision [about the Seal] at that point was very limited, because I was thinking DI [dual immersion]” (ELL Manager Interview). Since the two-way dual language program was still at the elementary level, there was no urgency about having a Seal in place immediately.

Another LAR policy that emerged about the same time as the Master Plan was the adoption of CCs for world languages. According to the World Languages Coordinator:

There had been years of students and families coming to the district, saying ‘Hey we've got these – we're taking these classes in Russian or whatever, can we get credit for that?’ Or there was an exam that shows, you know, there's a certain level of skill, but they weren't – we started not feeling good about the exam they were using for the Russian for example, we wanted to get something put in place, so when the state allowed for credit by

proficiency, we immediately created some situations for English and science, social studies, and math, but the world language came later, but it fit within the policy so we were ahead, so we decided to do that, but as far as how we made that happen, I started out by working with OSPI and finding out how you can – You know, OSPI was really promoting doing that...It was quite a logistical feat to make happen.³³ This year, there's...probably over 400 kids that we're testing. (Interview)

In an email to the Superintendent, the WL Coordinator reported that in 2016, 237 students were tested for world language CCs. Those students earned a total of 807 credits, “roughly the equivalent of five or six teachers,” for skills in 23 languages, with 148 students earning the full four credits (Superintendent email #1). Despite the extra workload, the district seems very committed to this program:

It's been an expense, but not a difficult expense. I mean I don't care how big it gets, if we're helping these kids, because you know if a kid earns four credits in their native language and that's transcribed for them, that's four classes they can take to improve their other skills. Because we don't have a lot of room in the high school schedule, so I think it's a really good effort on our part to try and help these kids be successful.

(Superintendent Interview)

6.4.2 *Triggers for Seal Consideration*

With the environmental context (changing demographics, innovative identity, forays into a LAR approach) established, the actual triggers and timeline can be discussed. For the ELL Manager, she first learned of the Seal through her development of the Master Plan as noted above. “I don't

³³ While the Gates Foundation grant to facilitate the adoption of world language CCs in the Road Map region helped all adopters in the state with identification of tests for less common languages, districts outside of the Road Map region were tasked from the outset with administering their own world language proficiency testing. This front-loaded the work for non-Road Map districts, but they then did not have to struggle with transitioning to self-management in 2015 as is described in the Luna case study.

know that anybody was really paying attention – So I just kept putting it [the Seal] out there” (ELL Manager Interview). The Cabinet did approve the Master Plan with the Seal included in April 2014, but then no further action was taken on implementing the Seal (ELL Manager Interview). “Once the state did it, then it was like okay are we going to do it? Are we going to do it?” (ELL Manager Interview).

Meanwhile, the Data Manager learned of the Seal in June 2014 through an email from OSPI to Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) district administrators that explained how the Seal should be represented on transcripts. Believing this to be mandatory, she began to move forward with setting this up with the registrars:

In October 2014, I gave them just a briefing that this was coming, and then quickly in November told them ‘Don't do anything at this point,’ because we were advised from WSIPC state reporting team, that while the legislature had deemed that was going to happen, that OSPI had not done their official interpretation yet to decide how a student was going to qualify. (Data Manager Interview)

While the state adopted the Seal in spring 2014, OSPI spent the summer investigating different criteria emerging around the country, recruiting a Seal of Biliteracy Advisory Committee, and presenting a series of webinars on the Seal for committee members. The WL Coordinator participated in that committee and attended the September 2014 meeting to make recommendations about what criteria to include. Due to staff changes at OSPI, a public comment period, a second committee meeting, and bureaucratic approval processes, the Washington administrative code (WAC) with the specific criteria for earning the Seal (see Appendix C) was not approved until May 2015 (M. Aoki email, February 22, 2016). The extremely short timeframe to the end of the school year meant only districts that already offered some sort of

district Seal (four districts) or had been anticipating the Seal's approval (13 districts) were able to award Seals in the spring of 2015 (Survey data).

6.4.3 *Stakeholders in the Seal Decision Process*

As for the stakeholders in the process, the ELL Manager was the most vocal advocate for the Seal. "It was definitely my agenda that this would happen, because I felt like I was hitting that nail for a lot of years" (ELL Manager Interview). The ELL Manager had earned her PhD in Education in 2007, focusing on bilingual immigrant teachers. Her description of the value of the Seal and familiarity with the literature on bilingual education was the most comprehensive of anyone interviewed across all districts. In fact, she touched on all seven of the LAR codes identified as reasons for the Seal (cognitive advantage of bilingualism, incentive for language learning/maintenance, self-worth, post-high school value, beneficial for the community, recognition of skill to student and to others). She was the only interviewee overall to note the cognitive advantages of bilingualism. In Woodbury, she was the only one to call out that recognition "builds the self-esteem and the confidence and self-worth value, sense of self value for our students" (ELL Manager Interview).

The WL Coordinator, who had been involved in the Seal advisory committee, was more passive: "My recollection is that the ELL Manager came to me and from there she said 'It seems like something we should do' and I said 'Let's do it,' so we set up a meeting with Cabinet. I mean, I was aware of it, but not actively pursuing it at that point" (Interview). Throughout the interview, he expressed skepticism about the value the Seal really would have. The world language CC program, which he supervises, had a tangible benefit with the awarding of credit for students' language skill, but he was unsure about the value of the Seal. "I was just mostly

ambivalent...I wasn't against it at all, but I didn't know that it would really be a big difference maker” (WL Coordinator Interview). The Data Manager’s perspective was:

I’m all for anything that'll help a student in their future, so in my mind, if this was something our district wanted to do, we were going to take every step that we can within our student information system team to make that happen for a student. My area does not establish policy, we do procedure, so we are looking at once the policy is established, how can we make it happen? (Interview)

The Superintendent was open to the idea: “My values are all about, how do we put our kids in a position to be successful?,” but he also stressed repeatedly “this would not have happened without them [the ELL Manager and WL Coordinator] bringing it to me. Period” (Superintendent Interview).

As for reasons to support adopting the Seal, all interviewees noted the importance of recognizing students’ bilingual skills. “It's a way to say ‘Well done, you’ve done something that's worth recognizing’” (WL Coordinator Interview). The ELL Manager took this even further, extending recognition to others about the value: “This is something that's honored. This is something that's held in high regard. I think it's important for other people to have that message.” They also agreed to the value of the Seal to students after high school. “It gives these kids something that they can show somebody when they leave here that says, ‘I have these skills and that should be important to you as you're considering whether I should be a part of your organization or not.’ Whatever that organization is” (Superintendent Interview). The WL Coordinator agreed, but felt “A little bit disingenuous about [claiming the Seal as a plus on] the college application, when given the timing of it.” In the interview, he pointed out that the Seal would not be awarded until after students had applied for college, if going directly after high

school. The ELL Manager and WL Coordinator also suggested that this could incentivize continuing to develop students' biliteracy. "It gives them something that they can say, 'I persevered. I did this'" (ELL Manager Interview). Perhaps less enthusiastically, the WL Coordinator suggested: "It might offer a little bit of an incentive for the kids in [language] programs to do that fourth-year of study." Finally, both the Superintendent and the ELL Manager noted the strategic value of biliteracy, promoting it as "a necessary tool for global survival" and a concept growing in importance to the community (ELL and Superintendent Interviews).

As in other cases, family and community involvement was not a factor. Though they had advocated for competency credits and were involved in the two-way dual language Master Plan, there had been virtually no public knowledge about the Seal prior to its implementation. All interviewees agreed that there was no opposition voiced to the concept of the Seal. The Superintendent's only concern was to ensure Seals were only awarded to those who were truly biliterate, which use of language proficiency exams established (WL Coordinator Interview). "I didn't hear anything against, you know, the idea of the Seal of Biliteracy. I heard nothing that you know 'Oh, we shouldn't recognize those [students]', or anything, no, I heard none of that. The only thing was 'Oh no, something else we [registrars] got to do'" (Data Manager Interview).

6.4.4 *Decision-Making Process Phases and Variables Affecting Adoption*

Now moving to the process (RQ2) Woodbury went through, the ELL Manager and WL Coordinator's background and familiarity with the Seal resulted in an overlapping knowledge and persuasion phase in summer/fall 2015. They initially mentioned the idea to the Superintendent, who agreed to put it on the Cabinet agenda in September 2015. Based on her work with the Master Plan and an initial email exchange with OSPI, the ELL Manager "put together the whole, you know, information page on it and then kind of like what the steps would

need to be, so I compiled the summary of all of that” (ELL Manager Interview). Her philosophy on how to approach persuading decision-makers on an issue sheds light on how she handled the Cabinet meeting:

One of my goals is when I go into something like that, I like to try to anticipate as many questions as possible and answer them, so that I’m not having to answer them in the meeting, that it's just part of the presentation, because I don't like getting questions I can't answer. So I always ask people, ‘What would you ask about this?’ (ELL Manager Interview)

The memo included the legislation and WACs about the Seal, an introduction as to what the Seal is, what purpose it serves, and how many students from the district could benefit from the Seal.

References to the relative advantage of the Seal fell under the header “Why?” They quoted OSPI in describing the value of encouraging the development of bilingual skills as a “tremendous potential resource to the state.” The purposes highlighted were incentivizing language learning; certifying attainment of biliteracy skills; recognizing the value of language diversity; providing employers with a way to identify potential employees; giving universities a method of recognizing and providing credit; and preparing students with 21st century skills that will benefit them in a global society (Data Manager email #5).

For compatibility, the focus was on the students who would benefit by offering the Seal through the world language CC program, fourth year language enrollment, and eventually dual language students. For example, it highlighted the 86 students who had earned enough world language CCs in the district in the past year to qualify. While the innovative nature of the district was not called out in the memo, all of those interviewed noted the attention the district leadership places on doing whatever it takes to move kids forward. “Our district has been pretty proactive

on a lot of issues, so I think that, you know, adopting this [Seal] early was right in line with our district policies” (Data Manager Interview). And the Superintendent thought the Seal “fits right where we're going” (Superintendent Interview).

In terms of complexity, having AP language courses and world language CC testing already in place limited concerns about complexity. “I don't know that it [world language CCs] would have made a difference in the decision, but it certainly made that decision maybe quicker and it was easier to be more comfortable to be moving forward” (WL Coordinator Interview). These preexisting systems also provided the element of trialability. When the Superintendent raised concerns about only awarding Seals to those who truly are biliterate (reading, writing, listening, and speaking the language), the WL Coordinator could readily provide detailed answers about the broad nature of language proficiency tests (WL Coordinator). The ELL Coordinator agreed:

I think that infrastructure existing helped, like if we didn't have that, then it would have been starting from scratch, but we had things that were already happening. It was a matter of getting the student information and kind of aligning those and then determining what were the pathways, because the state says these pathways are acceptable, so what was going to work for us? (Interview)

According to the ELL Manager's interview, she gave the presentation and she and the WL Coordinator both answered questions about the Seal. They were given questions to investigate, primarily “logistical pieces” (ELL Manager Interview). This restarted the knowledge phase and resulted in the ELL Manager and Data Manager reaching out to others for specific information about implementation of the Seal and the Seal itself (What does it look like? Where do we get it? Where does it go?). This is where observability came into play. Just following the

initial Cabinet meeting, the ELL Manager asked OSPI for a list of districts that had implemented the Seal. OSPI could not provide that, but the OSPI World Languages administrative assistant suggested she speak with the former OSPI World Languages Coordinator³⁴ (WL Coordinator email #3).

When we couldn't get any information from OSPI...I had a group email with Paris [now at Bellevue School District] and Michele [now at Seattle Public Schools] and myself, trying to figure out 'Ok, what you guys do? How'd you guys do it?' Because I'm like, how do we present this? You know, what do we do? So I was emailing with them to try to get some guidance and then they helped a little bit, but they also ran into the same lack of guidance at OSPI, but Michele's awesome and very infinitely patient, so it gave us a little bit of direction, gave me a little bit to kind of move to the next couple steps, but also it was like ok, we're blazing a trail, you know, even if somebody's done that, we're still kind of blazing a trail, so we can take what they're doing and kind of do some things a little bit differently. (Interview)

So while observability played a role, it did not appear to be considerable in helping develop the Seal plan. It was, however, used to persuade the Superintendent to approve it:

I think that the climate was receptive and the people wanted to do it and of course, I'm like, 'We would be one of only this many districts' and – my big thing with the Superintendent, I said it a couple times to him, is like 'A district our size needs to set this pace, like we need to be doing this. There's no reason we shouldn't be doing this. Seattle's doing this, Highline's doing this, like we should be doing this.' And so he's like, 'I know, I know. I just want to make sure.' (ELL Manager Interview)

³⁴ Michele Aoki left OSPI in September 2014, Paris Granville began the position in October 2014 and left in August 2015. The current Coordinator began in November 2015. There was turnover in world language administrative assistants in the summer of 2015 as well.

In the end, the Seal was discussed at two Cabinet meetings – the initial September 2015 meeting and then a second meeting in December. In interviews and the emails provided, Woodbury staff were not particularly clear on whether a decision had been made at the September meeting and follow-up questions were simply logistical or if approval was contingent on the results of the follow-up questions. The Data Manager gathered information from OSPI and provided questions about the specific Seal sticker to which the Secondary Education Director responded, looping in the WL Coordinator. The WL Coordinator then cc'ed the ELL Manager who responded, "I am excited that we are moving forward on the Seal of Biliteracy this year for our students!" (WL Coordinator email #9). That prompted the WL coordinator to confirm the Seal had in fact been approved, to which the Secondary Director responded, "We have not received the green light at this point. I will take it to Cabinet" (WL Coordinator email #9). In an email to other cabinet members (minus the Superintendent), the Director asked "Does anyone remember where we left off after [the WL Coordinator and ELL Manager] presented the [Seal] idea to Cabinet? I thought it was that we didn't need policy and could move forward?" (WL Coordinator email #5). The Deputy Superintendent responded, "You are correct that we agreed it did not need to be included in the policy but we would move forward with it." The next morning the Secondary Director responded to the team, "We are officially moving forward with offering the Seal of Biliteracy" (WL Coordinator email #11). The December meeting ended up an opportunity to provide an update on the student identification plan and the sticker selected (Superintendent email #2).

Despite the confusion about whether a decision had been made, the process seemed to have been collective at the district level. The Superintendent explained, "I don't get involved in a

lot of the detail, but I'm pretty involved in whether we're going to do something or not”

(Interview). When asked about the actual decision-making process, he stated:

The Cabinet just gives me – we don't vote very often in Cabinet, honestly. It's a conversation...and I read where we're going in the conversation and if it's going to a place where everybody's going, ‘Wow, sounds fine,’ we just do it. And if it goes to a place where there's some concerns and stuff, we bring it back. I mean we go find out some answers and we bring it back and we continue to discuss it until people are comfortable or we've decided that this is something we shouldn't do. (Superintendent Interview)

Even the school-level involvement and communication was collaborative. The Data Manager communicated through emails and at meetings with the school registrars about how the process was evolving and what would have to be done. She also helped them by running “mass utilities” to handle the backlog of student proficiencies for the first year (Data Manager Interview). Moving forward, that will be the responsibility of the high school registrars. Using both mass and interpersonal communication means, the ELL Manager reached out to school counselors through email and in person for their input into the pathways to the Seal and how to spread the word:

I expected them to be kinda like, ‘We don't want to do one more thing.’ But they were like, ‘Oh we could do this and we could do that’ and...I was super excited about them being so excited about it, so they thought it would just be great for their kids and ‘We could, you know, advertise this way and maybe we could have kids go in and talk about it with other classes.’ So they had a lot of really great ideas, too. (ELL Manager Interview)

They provided suggestions to clarify documents and asked questions to learn more about how this benefits students.

In terms of what barriers existed and how Woodbury overcame them, the ELL Coordinator really felt it was a matter of staff time, knowledge, and dedication. “It took three of us to really get it off the ground, to where stuff was happening.” The WL Coordinator understood the language-testing piece, the Data Manager handled the student identification and data-coding piece, and the ELL Coordinator “provided the framework and the groundwork for it...the research piece and putting the presentation together” (ELL Coordinator Interview).

Frustration with the lack of information from OSPI was very apparent. The ELL Coordinator:

Went round and round with OSPI, trying to just get the basic information, the lack of direction that was a huge obstacle. The state that adopts the Seal, should have a system in place that will be available to people regardless of whether or not somebody's resigned, right? I mean the job needs to happen, whether or not somebody's there. If it's person dependent, we're in big trouble. (Interview)

She thought this lack of information could stall or prevent districts from adopting the Seal:

So lots of those little roadblocks, but just when you don't know the answer to something and you can't readily get the answer, it stops the process. It slows it down and – if you have somebody that's not super-invested in it like I was, then...they might just say forget this, it is too much of a hassle, but it's for kids, so let's not give up, yeah? (ELL Manager Interview)

This points to the importance of staff dedication in investing time and persevering through frustrations in the process.

The Superintendent credits the ELL Manager and WL Coordinator for making the Seal happen for Woodbury School District:

They were truly excited about doing it, so you know when somebody brings a proposal and you can see the passion behind it with them, it makes a difference in how seriously I take it. And there was a lot of passion and, of course, I have deep respect for those people, who work for me. They're very good at what they do and they're very passionate about kids, so when they came to me with this – honestly it was a fairly easy decision, I just wanted to involve a bigger group [Cabinet] – Gotta have a champion and they were the champions. (Superintendent Interview)

Based on this analysis, Woodbury arguably most fits in the early majority adopter category. They were not in the first 2015 wave of early adopters, the champions of the Seal, despite the WL Coordinator's role in the Seal Advisory Committee. The ELL Coordinator's comments about other districts that had already adopted it demonstrated concern about being viewed as late to adopt (Rogers, 2003). The Superintendent also noted, "This was something that OSPI was favoring and would like to see happen" (Interview). In the end, the Superintendent's response to that pressure was to want to be sure about the Seal, illustrating a more deliberate decision process, avoiding being viewed as too impulsive but also not resistant to change (Ratts & Wood, 2011).

6.5 LUNA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Luna School District, the other large district with competency credits in place that participated as a case study, had not adopted the Seal at the time of the Seal survey or during initial conversations in June about participating in the project. Yet, by the time interviews happened in

November 2016, they were planning to implement the Seal for spring 2017. So while they were supposed to be the non-adopter, they turned out to be more of a late adopter.

6.5.1 *Environmental Context*

Luna has a similar demographically changing story to the other districts. Overall enrollment has grown 20% in the past 15 years, but the white enrollment has fallen by 34%, reducing the percentage of white students from 82% to 43% (OSPI Report Card, 2001-2016). Meanwhile, Hispanic enrollment has increased 373%, now making up 28% of the student body. Black and Asian enrollment have also risen, now each to 8% of enrollees (OSPI Report Card, 2001-2016). Accompanying the changing demographics are a doubling of the number of students qualifying for FRL, now up to 53%, and an almost tripling of the ELL percentage, now up to 16% (OSPI Report Card, 2001-2016). “We are almost at thirty percent of our families who speak a language other than English” (Secondary Director Interview). The language minority students speak one of at least 50 languages, with Spanish, Marshallese, and Ukrainian the top three languages (Moore & Came, 2016). This school district is in the Seattle area and was a part of the Road Map project, which received both a federally-funded Race to the Top (RTTT) grant and a Gates Foundation world language CC grant to test students’ language proficiency (see Chapter 1).

The four-year, \$40 million RTTT grant was a tremendous windfall for the seven districts involved and funded a wide range of efforts to coordinate supports across districts to help “drive dramatic improvement in student achievement from cradle to college and career” (Road Map Project website, n.d.). Unfortunately, this grant ended in 2016, so the seven Road Map districts have had to take over funding many positions and/or eliminate them. The \$525,000 Gates grant for world language CCs had ended in 2015, around the time of turnover of the OSPI world language staff. That resulted in moving the responsibility for administering the world language

CCs from OSPI and the WAFLT association to the seven school districts to run independently (ELL Coordinator Interview). While Luna School District wants to continue these initiatives, the changing funding picture is linked to what they can do and how quickly. Perhaps notably, it was the only Road Map district not to have adopted the Seal. The other six all did so in 2015, its initial year of availability (Survey data).

Luna also has had a recent change in leadership. They are in their second year with a new Superintendent. There is not a stated policy on bilingualism, but the new Superintendent came from a district that did have a prominent bilingualism goal for all students. The district does have world language AP courses, multiple languages through the fourth year of study, and world language CCs, so there are several potential means for students to earn a Seal.

In general, those interviewed felt that the district leadership was concerned with supporting language minority students. “We don’t have a new strategic plan, but he [the Superintendent] has already implemented a racial equity policy” (Secondary Director Interview). This policy acknowledges inequities in its historic practices and “We commit to fostering an environment where race, class, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics will cease to be a determining factor in the success of any student” (Racial Equity Policy, 2016). According to the Superintendent’s webpage, the district is working on its strategic plan and “looking at everything we do with a lens of equity” (district website, n.d.). Staff is undergoing “deep equity training” (district website, n.d.). Although not called out in the policy, the Secondary Director believes, “They also are inclusive around language equity issues, so I think it’s something that’s kind of at the forefront of everybody’s conversation especially these days.³⁵” The ELL Coordinator agreed, “The district is acknowledging that the ethnicity has changed. I mean everyone’s aware of that.”

³⁵ Interviews in Luna School District occurred two weeks after the November 2016 elections, whereas all but the Woodbury WL Coordinator interview happened one – three weeks before.

In terms of the district’s approach toward innovation, the Secondary Director stated quite clearly:

We are not cutting edge. So again two superintendents, right? We have one that is still fairly new and our past leadership was, ‘Let's wait and see,’ on almost everything: competency-based credit for world language assessment was not a wait-and-see, but for most everything, it’s been, you know, ‘Go slow and do it right.’ And I think the new administration has – tends to more innovative ideas and wants to move quicker on things, but we're not cutting edge on anything. I wouldn't describe us that way. (Interview)

The ELL Coordinator also felt the district was “a little cautious” in moving forward with new initiatives (ELL Coordinator Interview). The Data Manager thought that when there were fiscal implications, the district was “more cautious,” but she viewed the Seal decision as a “no-brainer” as long as someone had done the research on it (Data Manager Interview).

6.5.2 *Trigger for Seal Consideration*

Initial notice of the Seal availability came through the Road Map ELL Work Group that had also spearheaded the world language CCs testing. According to the Secondary Director, “As soon as the State came out with the potential for the Seal, that discussion was on the table with the whole [ELL Work] group” (Secondary Director Interview). Yet, while the other Road Map districts implemented the Seal in spring 2015, discussions in Luna about whether to adopt the Seal only were triggered in fall of 2015 when the new ELL Coordinator began in this position:

I was probably the first person to push it last year, because I am a bilingual educator. I was raised in another country and I really value the ability to be biliterate and so I was the one that initially raised the question to the CIA [Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment] Director – ‘How about the Seal of Biliteracy, how can we do that?’ And so

we talked about it in different committees and I talked to other teachers. (ELL Coordinator Interview)

The ELL Coordinator had been an ELL teacher in the district, but last year took on the world language proficiency testing for the district as it moved from OSPI to the district's responsibility and she "pursued the Seal of Biliteracy as a partner with that" (ELL Coordinator Interview).

6.5.3 *Stakeholders in the Seal Decision Process*

The primary stakeholders in the Seal discussions were the ELL Coordinator, who was the driver of the initiative, the Secondary Director who chairs the CIA committee that considered it, and the Data Manager tasked with figuring out the student coding piece. There was no community or family involvement, something the ELL Coordinator lamented. "I think if parents knew or pockets of culture knew, that there would be a push within those communities, to guide their students towards the Seal of Biliteracy. It's just...they don't know" (ELL Coordinator Interview).

The new Superintendent's involvement has been minimal. "We haven't asked for formal approval to keep continuing with the conversation [about moving forward with the Seal] from him. It's been implied" (Secondary Director Interview). "The School Board was super supportive of that concept [world language CCs], also supportive of the potential for the Seal of Biliteracy" (Secondary Director Interview).

As in other districts, no one voiced opposition to the Seal. "We haven't had any challenges or barriers around it, that it's the right thing to do – to recognize for kids" (Secondary Director Interview). The ELL Coordinator agreed:

I don't get pushback from any of the Principals that this is something they don't want to do. And I think every Principal of every high school, and I worked at the alternative high school for the district, and I think every Principal wants the best for their kids and if this

is an opportunity for their kids that will help them post-high school: career and college ready, they are all – they would not have any objection to this at all. (ELL Coordinator Interview)

The main reasons for supporting the Seal concept expressed by all three interviewees was recognition for students' bilingual skill and the post-high school advantages of having the Seal. The ELL Coordinator also thought the Seal was an important “acknowledgement of the ethnicity and the cultural growth within our district” (ELL Coordinator Interview). Additionally, she saw the community and self-worth values of the Seal, “I think it would be relevant for the community and I think it'd be relevant for the students in a sense of accomplishment on maintaining their home language and valuing their home culture and having that recognized on a diploma” (ELL Coordinator Interview). Finally, she was the only one in the district to point out that this was something that mainstream students could also earn.

Once again, there was somewhat of an overlapping view the Seal and the world language competency credits, particularly when describing the relative advantage of the Seal. The Secondary Director noted a few times statements like “I think it's tremendously relevant in terms of the whole – I'm going to lump together the competency-based crediting piece with the Seal of Biliteracy...” The Data Manager, for example, noted in response to a question about the value of the Seal that with the Core 24³⁶ increased graduation requirements, the additional credit for world language CCs was becoming increasingly important. The Secondary Director agreed that Core 24 made language assessments “even more valuable” (Secondary Director Interview). Though when pressed, she responded, “I don't really have an opinion on whether or not the kids

³⁶ Core 24 will be required for the Class of 2019. It increased the credits required for high school graduation to 24, with the intention of better preparing students to be career and college ready.

find that piece [the Seal] valuable, but they certainly find the piece of testing and getting that posted to transcript really valuable” (Secondary Director Interview).

6.5.4 *Decision-Making Process Phases and Variables Affecting Adoption*

Now with RQ 1 answered, the district decision-making process (RQ 2) followed a similar pathway as in other districts. Both the Secondary Director and ELL Coordinator acknowledged, “ELL Coordinator really did all the groundwork and research – it made sense to have her be the one, since she's the first kind of line of getting the information to do the investigation around that” (Secondary Director Interview). As mentioned above, the ELL Coordinator was new to the position and tasked primarily with setting up district level administration of the world language CC program. The Seal was an added responsibility she voluntarily took on in tandem.

In terms of compatibility, interviewees did feel the Seal “was in alignment” with the racial equity policy and previous world language CC policy (Data Manager Interview). Yet, as noted above, they felt the district tended to be slower and more cautious about moving forward with new initiatives. Perhaps that is why, though all interviewees were in favor of the Seal, none voiced any concern about the slower pace of adoption or concerns about keeping up with neighboring districts. “I was information-gathering at the time to see what other districts did. It really didn't impact what our district chose to finally do to any extent. It was more just information-seeking” (ELL Coordinator Interview).

To learn more about the Seal, the ELL Coordinator spoke to Seattle and Highline School Districts’ staff administering the Seal. “It took me a long time, in several phone conversations...to figure out exactly what it was” (ELL Coordinator Interview). These interactions provided some observability of how the Seal was working elsewhere. She “tried to get some information off the OSPI website,” which she struggled to use. “They need to fix that”

(ELL Coordinator Interview). In the fall of 2015, when she was investigating the world language CCs and the Seal, the OSPI website was outdated and not very clear. The OSPI World Language Manager's position was vacant. "It wasn't optimum to roll the Seal out at the time [the Manager] left" (ELL Coordinator Interview).

The level of staff knowledge paired with little guidance from OSPI added complexity to the decision-making process, which caused frustration and may have slowed the process:

I really didn't understand the world language credit program, until I was all of a sudden tasked with running it. And that was the year when Michele left [OSPI], so it went from the state to the district. So I spent a lot of time doing research on what the tests were and who had taken the test and it was very difficult to get past years' information from OSPI, because Michele had left, so once I started looking at the numbers of how many kids signed up to test and they're not just ELL kids. Our district has a huge amount of families, who speak other languages – so I think to me, the world language proficiency test became kind of like a guideline of the opportunity for the Seal. You know, if we were testing three kids every four months, I don't think it would have come to my mind to get it started as much as it did when I saw the numbers of kids who test and the numbers of kids who scored fours [on the world language CCs]. (ELL Coordinator Interview)

With a four, students can qualify on the world language side of the Seal. This first-hand experience with the world language CCs provided the trialability in demonstrating that there were a lot of students who had the world language skills.

After information-gathering, the ELL Coordinator presented information at a CIA committee meeting. She presented her findings and recommendations in what diffusion theory calls the persuasion phase. The response was:

They had questions and some of the Principals had questions about ‘Why do we want to do this?’ And which I address kind of like I already said, ‘Well, it gives the students a sense of self-worth, it proves they are biliterate. They can go out looking for a job and it tells a potential employer or college that they're already literate in two languages.’ And then they're not against it. I think they just hadn't heard of it, so the feeling of the room was kind of like where did this come from? (ELL Coordinator Interview)

Their initial hesitancy could be a sign of committee interest in knowing whether there was potential external pressure for this from OSPI or others that might put pressure on the district to adopt. In the end, the ELL Coordinator clarified that there was no opposition from the committee, just no familiarity with the Seal. The Data Manager recalled the ELL Coordinator made recommendations, but there were “additional discussions” at following CIA meetings. The ELL Coordinator stressed she “kept getting in on the agenda for the CIA meetings and having conversations with the Data Manager about how to make it work” (ELL Coordinator Interview).

Last June, just before the ELL Coordinator left her position³⁷ but after she had taken the Seal survey, the CIA committee decided to adopt the Seal in a collective approach that did not involve the Superintendent. Yet, the adoption does not include an actual Seal insignia on the diploma or a medallion. It is simply a notation on the transcript, which means no cost for the procurement of the Seals, time adhering the Seals, or logistics in providing Seals for those hearing about scores after graduation. The decision process moved much more slowly in Luna School District than others and adoption has been at what could be characterized as a minimal level. Why? Contributing reasons noted in the interviews were a concern about the logistics of setting up the Seal, the challenges with CC implementation, lack of information from OSPI, and lack of interest from the community. The ELL Coordinator, the change agent advocating for Seal

³⁷ She returned this year as a part-time consultant, but is no longer working on the Seal.

adoption, was new to the position at the district level during the 2015-16 school year. Before that time, no one had taken on the issue of Seal adoption (Secondary Director Interview).

The primary barrier noted in the interview with the Secondary Director focused particularly on:

Logistics are certainly- how are we going to manage it, who's going to manage it, and just getting the competency-based credits posted each time...and ensuring that our students also have the correct English assessment – It's not all housed neatly, easily accessible, you do have to do data manipulation to determine which kids have met both of those factors, so trying to figure out how to make that more streamlined, so that it doesn't impede the process. (Secondary Director Interview)

Yet, the Data manager described the coding process as “not that difficult” and “the amount of work that was involved really wasn't that much” (Interview). The ELL Coordinator agreed, “It just seemed to be an add-on to something we were already doing. It didn't make it be that much more work, so it was a pretty easy thing to just tag on to what we were already doing with the world language stuff” (ELL Coordinator Interview).

While generally supportive of the Seal concept, the reasons for adopting it had more to do with the advantages of the world language CCs as noted above. “You know with the Core 24 coming in, there's going to be more elective credits, so it would seem to me that the Seal of Biliteracy...the offering of world language proficiency testing credit with that should be all blared over OSPI” (ELL Coordinator Interview). The ELL Coordinator also asserted, “If you weren't doing [language] proficiency testing, there's no buy in” (ELL Coordinator Interview), when considering whether districts without the world languages CC program would adopt the Seal.

The transition from OSPI managing the world language CCs under the Gates Foundation grant to having Luna handle the process could have played a role in the pace of adoption. “That transition year was rough to get accurate test scores back in a timely fashion, so there was a little bit of a hiccup there. Now this year, it has been smooth” (Secondary Director Interview). Since the ELL Coordinator was hired to manage the world language CC system, struggles with that process likely took precedence over pursuing the Seal.

At five different points in the interview, the ELL Coordinator stressed the lack of information about the Seal. She described it as a “well-guarded secret” and “an unknown quantity”: “I don't think that there has been enough of a discussion of it at the board level, the cabinet level with my district” (ELL Coordinator Interview). She urged a “public awareness campaign” to generate interest in the community and across the state in school districts as a way to increase adoption (ELL Coordinator Interview). She doubted many small districts had even heard of it (ELL Coordinator Interview).

The ELL Coordinator, a long-time ELL teacher in the district, also expressed some concerns about the Seal, which requires both a high level of proficiency in a second language and English:

I think we had one or two students last year, who actually would have qualified out of all the students tested, that actually passed their state language arts assessment, because it was the Smarter Balanced [Assessment] which is new, and got the level for proficiency [in a world language]. (ELL Coordinator Interview)

She also pointed out, “Kids newly-arrived in the United States, who could use the credits of the world language proficiency test, but who on the other hand are probably not going to pass the Smarter Balanced [Assessment], it doesn't help or assist those kids” (ELL Coordinator

Interview). “It’s a state-level award – so, like, my concern is a prize at the state level should help everybody” (ELL Coordinator Interview).

As noted above, other districts did not seem to play a major role in Luna’s decision. When asked about what role the Road Map Working Group may have played, she responded they get “a lot of pressure from Road Map, but not on the Seal of Biliteracy” (ELL Coordinator Interview). Since the decision was only to add a notation to the transcript, Luna appears to be a late majority adopter opting for the minimally required change (Tolbert, 1983) with the least fiscal implications (Rogers, 2003).

6.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND SOCIAL VALIDITY OF FINDINGS

I employed multiple strategies to ensure that the project was conducted ethically with attention to the more-qualitative appropriate concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, Wolcott, 1994, Creswell, 2007). First, I sought to *triangulate* (confirm emergent) findings both through comparing different types of data (survey, interviews, emails, and documents) as well as different sources within data types (asking multiple interviewees, looking at multiple documents) about the same issues (Stake, 2010). Participants were also asked to *member check* (confirm findings of) data and interpretations (Patton, 2002). In addition, I shared analyses with Californians Together (the original creators of the Seal and national leaders in consulting on its adoption), other district administrators adopting the Seal and current and former OSPI staff members responsible for these programs to get their perspectives.

As mentioned above, I continued to interview participants until data became saturated and kept a journal to track “methods, procedures and decision points in carrying out the study” and to create an audit trail (Merriam, 2009, p. 229). As suggested by Gibbs (2007), reliability

procedures utilized included checking transcripts for errors and developing a qualitative codebook with definitions of codes (see Appendix L) and comparing use of codes to avoid definition drift.

Chapters 4 and 6 demonstrate that discrepant information was included in discussion of findings and themes to provide an account that is “more realistic and more valid” (Creswell, 2014, p. 203). And finally, I utilized a peer debriefer, someone also at the dissertation phase of his PhD, to review and to ask questions about the procedures, data, and findings to add validity (Creswell, 2014). Together, these strategies strengthened the analysis and provided more useful findings to policy-makers.

This concludes the overview of the case studies and answers research questions one through three. Next, I will conduct a cross-case study analysis to highlight commonalities and unique features of each case study (see RQ 2A & 4). These will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7. DISCUSSION

To “allow for greater opportunity to generalize across several representations of the phenomenon,” both individual case analyses and then analyses across the cases were conducted (Borman, Clarke, Cotner & Lee, p. 123). This chapter provides the latter and answers the remaining two research questions:

2a) Does this adoption process vary in different district contexts? If so, how?

4) Do commonalities exist across the case studies? And if so, how and why?

After a comparison of survey results to case study findings, a description of unique features is presented. Then I identify the commonalities and variations based on different groupings as well as similarities across all cases. The chapter concludes with unanticipated findings, discrepancies with the literature, a synthesis of key findings, and limitations of the research.

7.1 LINKING SURVEY AND CASE STUDY FINDINGS

To see how the case study districts compared to the overall survey respondents, this section will begin with a few summary tables about key survey responses from the selected case study districts. In three of the four cases, the English Language Learner (ELL) Coordinator/Manager was the respondent. Just one case had the Superintendent responding (see Table 7.18). As noted in Chapter 5, I selected districts with at least two involved in the decision-making to be sure that there had actually been a review process for the Seal decision rather than simply outright rejection by one person. All four districts had contacted the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) for support with three of the four having also reached out to early adopter Seal districts for advice and templates. Woodbury also received information from bilingual conferences in and outside the state, as the ELL Manager had been responsible for

recruiting bilingual teachers in her former position. Also intentional to the case study selection, Murrow and Swift Water have less than 1,000 students while Woodbury and Luna have over 10,000 students, each to see the potential role of total enrollment on the process. Finally, while all four districts have more ELL students than the state average (11%), only Murrow is notably above average with almost four times the state average.

Table 7.18. Case Study Key Responses to the Survey, Part 1

District Name	Survey Respondent	# Involved in Decision	Outside Support	Total Enrollment	% ELL Students
Murrow	ELL	3	OSPI, Districts	<1,000	42%
Swift Water	Superintendent	4	OSPI	<1,000	14%
Woodbury	ELL	4	OSPI, Districts, Bilingual Ed. Conferences	>10,000	13%
Luna	ELL	3	OSPI, Districts	>10,000	16%

Table 7.19 provides an overview of the criteria the districts have or do not have. As was expected, two districts responded “Yes” to offering the Seal, but one of the districts selected for the non-adopters fell into the “Undecided” category. Since the “Reasons for not adopting the Seal” question was only asked of those responding “No,” the reasons for non-adoption by Luna were not clear from the survey. Swift Water noted its small size, lack of resources, and staff time as barriers to adoption.

The smaller districts have none or just one of the criteria, while the larger districts have three to four criteria. None have an International Baccalaureate (IB) program. All but Swift Water have Advanced Placement (AP) world languages and only Woodbury has a dual language (DL) program. Only the larger districts have four years of world languages, yet just Murrow has a bilingual education (BE) policy. In terms of world language competency credits (CC), both Luna and Woodbury award them while Swift Water does not. Murrow is moving forward with CCs in conjunction with its Seal offering.

Table 7.19. Case Study Key Responses to the Survey, Part 2

District Name	Seal Decision	# of Seal Criteria	ELLs	WL CCs	AP	IB	WL 4 yrs	DL	BE Policy
Murrow	Y	1	Y	Devel- oping	Y	N	N	N	Y
Swift Water	N	0	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N
Woodbury	Y	4	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Luna	Undecided	3	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N

As noted in Tables 4.10 and 4.11, there was a significant relationship between offering the Seal and total enrollment, having more than 20 languages spoken by students, the percentage of ELL enrollment, AP, IB, world language CCs, four years of languages, dual language programs, and total number of Seal criteria. While Swift Water does have an above average ELL student percentage, it does not appear to be significant enough to move it into the “Yes” category. Otherwise, it had none of the related criteria. In the interviews, they expressed interest in the Seal, but also shared many barriers to doing so. It will be interesting to see whether it adopts the Seal, despite its lack of significant relationships. Murrow, on the other hand, had very high ELL enrollment (42% of all students), and AP world languages that placed it into the likely adopter category as one might expect from Tables 4.10 and 4.11. Woodbury also has many of the significant criteria, so it is not surprising it has adopted the Seal. According to the *t*-tests and chi-square tests in Tables 4.10 and 4.11, Luna should be an adopter of the Seal: it has a large student population, more than 20 languages represented, world language CCs, AP, and four years of world languages. As noted in Chapter 6, it planned to adopt the Seal in spring 2017. The process, however, took much longer than in neighboring, similar districts and its minimal adoption (only a notation on the transcript) typical of a late majority adopter may have to do with its lack of innovative identity (see Section 7.3.1 below).

7.2 UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS

To begin to answer RQ 2A (Does this adoption process vary across districts?), this section will provide a summary of what was unique to each district as compared to other case study districts. As noted in Table 7.19, Murrow is the only case with a board policy promoting bilingualism as a goal for all students. Swift Water had nothing beyond state-mandated support for ELL students transitioning to English. When asked the question about a bilingualism policy, Luna noted that it has a racial equity policy and a world language CC policy, which they viewed as related (Secondary Director Interview). Woodbury has a dual language master plan outlining bilingual goals, but only for its dual language students. Having a bilingual policy is a clear distinction between Murrow and Swift Water, which the Superintendent believed contributed to its decision to move forward with the Seal (Interview). That it has not yet awarded Seals (i.e., did not have students who qualified) likely points to an implementation challenge for the district (e.g., support for students to maintain their home language) rather than a hesitancy about the policy itself.

Woodbury was the only case with a dual language program, which resulted in some distinct responses. It was the only district that mentioned out of state organizations as sources of information about the Seal. The ELL Coordinator had traveled to bilingual education conferences to recruit bilingual teachers, which exposed her early to the idea of the Seal before it had even passed Washington State. The other districts did not hear about the Seal until after it was already in place.

While all four respondents noted a lack of community/family involvement in the Seal adoption process, only Luna described the lack of public awareness as a barrier. If there had been community groups pushing for the Seal, it could have sped the process in Luna (ELL Coordinator Interview). The survey supports this idea of a lack of familiarity with the Seal in that

17% of the responding districts (19 out of 114) were unfamiliar with the Seal. It is also notable that family/community participation only occurred in nine districts (8%) and in those districts 100% had decided to adopt the Seal. This point will be considered more in-depth in the recommendations section of Chapter 8.

Finally, the role of the Superintendent varied greatly in the four districts. In Murrow, he was the initial instigator and then was not involved in the process. In fact, “I don’t know truthfully how far we got” (Superintendent Interview). As described by the Superintendent in Woodbury, “I don’t get involved in a lot of the detail, but I’m pretty involved in whether we’re going to do something or not” (Superintendent Interview). In these two cases, the Superintendent seemed to be more of an opinion leader, someone who plays a more informal role in supporting an innovation, rather than as active change agents (Perry, 2010). In Swift Water, it sounds like he will be integral to the process throughout. Meanwhile, in Luna, the Superintendent had no involvement to date, but they felt they had “implied” approval because of its racial equity policy (Secondary Director Interview).

7.3 VARIATIONS AND COMMONALITIES

To continue the discussion of RQ 2A (variations across cases) and explore RQ 4 (commonalities across cases), this next section will be divided into four comparison groupings. With each grouping, there will be an analysis of commonalities within each group and then a comparison across the groups. First, Seal adopters and Seal non-adopter cases will be considered. Second, I will analyze larger versus small district groupings. Third, the “All but” will be presented where three of the four districts have similarities and one district is the outlier. And finally, I will share features common to all districts.

7.3.1 *Seal Adopters versus Seal Non-Adopters*

In both of the adopter districts, 100% of interviewees asked about district innovation responded that their districts were very innovative. They found the Seal fit well with their culture of innovation. In three of the four Woodbury interviews, they provided several, specific examples of innovation. Four of five Murrow interviewees did so as well. When the non-adopter districts were asked this same question, none of the interviewees described their districts as innovative. Swift Water mentioned the lack of resources as a barrier to innovation, whereas Luna just described itself as more of a “go slow and do it right” district (Secondary Director Interview).

As diffusion of innovations (DOI) theory predicts for early majority adopters, they do not want to be viewed as late adopters (Rogers, 2003). So perhaps not surprising, the change agent in each of the adopter districts, the Principal in Murrow and the ELL Manager in Woodbury, both noted the importance of other districts in their decision-making (coded as “Keeping up with the Jones”). The Murrow Principal responded to a question about how Wenatchee’s decision to adopt impacted his decision by saying it was “Pretty big. You know, they are the big brother in North Central Washington, so we kinda figured if they were doing it, it must be something worthwhile” (Interview). Woodbury’s ELL Manager used other districts’ progress as a persuasion technique: “I said it a couple times to him [the Superintendent]... a district our size needs to set this pace, like we need to be doing this. There's no reason we shouldn't be doing this. Seattle's doing this, Highline’s doing this, we should be doing this” (Interview). What is particularly interesting is that both districts’ Superintendents and Woodbury’s World Language Coordinator felt that other districts’ decision-making had played no role in their decision to adopt. This discrepancy could be due to the importance of the personal views of the change agents in pushing this decision forward or the fact that those three who disagreed were not as

directly involved in the process. In both Swift Water and Luna, they saw other districts as a source of information (*observability*), but not influential in their adoption process. “I was information-gathering at the time to see what other districts did. It really didn't impact what our district chose to finally do to any extent. It was more just information-seeking” (Luna ELL Coordinator).

In interviews with Data Managers in both Murrow and Woodbury, they both mentioned that they thought the Seal was mandatory. The June 2015 email to Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) District Administrators about the Seal was forwarded to I (Woodbury Data Manager email #1) and it does not clarify that district adoption was voluntary as spelled out in the legislation (see Appendix A). The email simply states:

Beginning with the class of 2015, a note that a Washington State Seal of Biliteracy was earned must be displayed under ‘Additional State Requirements’ ...and will be displayed only if a student has earned it. If the student has not earned a Washington State Seal of Biliteracy, then the entire row should be displayed as ***.” (Woodbury Data Manager email #1)

The non-adopter districts did not mention the Seal as a mandate. Believing this to be a mandate could have simulated external pressure to adopt the Seal, which tends to lead to quicker adoption (Edelman, 1992), that was not actually the case.

Another similarity between the adopters was the struggle they had had in the first year of implementation. They both felt the first year was a test and planned to improve the process in subsequent years. This highlights the role of trialability of the Seal in the implementation stage. The three Murrow staff directly involved in implementation said that they had learned many lessons that would change how they would move forward with the Seal. The Woodbury ELL

Manager shared that sentiment, stating that they needed to do a better job marketing the Seal to students and families (Interview). So far in both cases, implementation has been district (rather than student) driven. The districts code students who pass both the English and world language requirements, run queries to determine who has earned the Seal, and students just find out they have earned the Seal prior to graduation. Luna plans to do the same thing. They do not have an application for students and little information (as of fall 2016) was available on their websites about the Seal. Students who do not know about the Seal could miss out on this opportunity entirely until it is too late.

In terms of commonalities with the non-adopters, interviewees from both Swift Water and Luna did voice potential concerns with the Seal. The ELL Coordinators in both districts were a bit concerned that the Seal would exclude some students:

The only concern I have is if a student really is excited to get it and they take the exam and they don't pass it. And then how does that make them feel? So it's more my concern for students. A lot of students here, they speak really great Spanish, but their reading and writing is challenging and they don't understand the grammatical side of it. So I have these kids even in my Spanish class and they are like 'Why am I here? I know Spanish.' Then I give an exam and they can speak it fine, but when it comes to other parts, the reading, writing, it's more challenging. (ELL Coordinator Interview)

The process could discourage those who struggle with meeting the English requirement or whose home language skills are not sufficient across all tested language skills (ELL Coordinators Interviews). The Swift Water Superintendent and two interviewees in Luna district also brought up potential anti-immigration sentiment that might accompany Seal adoption. They had not heard it yet, but could see they might once they start awarding Seals. These concerns were not

deciding factors, but were concerns voiced. In adopter districts, these concerns were not mentioned.

7.3.2 *Large versus Small Districts*

Throughout the interviews, several barriers or challenges with adoption were highlighted. Larger districts noted concerns primarily with logistics (e.g., Who does what? What is the process? How do we get this set up?), whereas smaller districts shared the challenges of small staffs already overburdened with the Seal as yet another thing on their plate. “When you're limited with resources, it's really hard to put a dedicated person on that” (Swift Water Superintendent Interview). All four districts do or intend to cover the costs of the Seal and testing for it, but at the larger districts, it was more of a logistical question of which department pays rather than could it pay. “The cost of Seals and stuff is, you know, I got change in my pocket that could pay for that” (Woodbury Superintendent Interview). At the smaller districts, the cost of the Seal and testing is a budgetary concern, both a “resource issue...with a small district, it is a prioritization issue” (Murrow Superintendent Interview). They will factor that into their testing plan and recognition (e.g., purchasing honor cords, medallions, and/or stickers). Woodbury and Luna also expressed the importance of the Data Manager in figuring out the coding piece whereas this was not raised in smaller districts. With thousands versus dozens of students graduating each year, coding student data seemed to be an issue primarily for the larger districts.

In terms of the review process, larger districts had formal Cabinet/Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Committee review of the Seal. Change agents made presentations, fielded questions, and collected additional information. Decisions were collective within the district level, but then authoritative in relation to schools. Woodbury did get input from the districts and gave support in identifying students according to the ELL and Data Managers, but

school level staff was not involved in the decision. In smaller districts, they described a quicker less layered process: “Our red tape is 30 feet long instead of 300 feet long” (Murrow Principal Interview). Their process is also collective, but since school and district staff are more integrated (e.g., the ELL Coordinator is also the ELL teacher), this process was more collective throughout.

With more extensive world language options, the larger districts also highlighted the Seal as a potential way of encouraging native English speakers to learn other languages. Woodbury mentioned the Seal could be an incentive to continue language study (WL Coordinator Interview). For smaller districts, the benefits for language majority students had more to do with overcoming the challenges with having heritage speakers in Spanish I. Their lack of language options means native Spanish speakers take Spanish I alongside those who do not speak the language. This creates a “classroom management issue” (Spanish Teacher Interview) and “intimidates” language majority students (Principal Interview). By giving language minority students the option of testing for the Seal and really for earning competency credits in Spanish, then Spanish I can “become what it needs to be which is a non-Spanish speaking Spanish class” (Principal Interview).

Both large districts voiced concern with the recent statewide adoption of Core 24, which increases the number of credits Washington State students need to graduate from high school. They viewed the Seal, or rather the credits students earn through world language CCs, as a way to help ELL students meet this higher standard:

Starting with the class of 2020-2021, they're required to get 24 credits to graduate, so the district is, I won't say frantically, but I will say, frantically, they're investigating all possibilities that a student will have more opportunities to earn credit. Because if we look

at our current setup on our high schools, they only earn six credits a year, so it gives them no leeway to mess up once. (Woodbury Data Manager)

This concern did not come out at either of the smaller districts.

Two Woodbury and two Luna interviewees also mentioned that they were unsure of perceived value of Seal by students. They both felt that students did see the value in world language CCs, but had yet to see that translate to the Seal. “I don't really have an opinion on whether or not the kids find that piece [the Seal] valuable, but they certainly find the piece of testing and getting that posted to transcript really valuable” (Luna Secondary Director Interview). There was no mention of questioning the value of the Seal with the smaller districts. The staff member in each of the large districts responsible for coordinating CCs testing did note that it encouraged Seal adoption within their districts (trialability), whereas this was not mentioned in the smaller districts as they do not have active world language CC programs.

The last commonality between the two large districts was their frustration with the lack of OSPI guidance on Seal adoption. The staff in each district tasked with gathering information from OSPI felt the timing of the staff turnover at OSPI and the lack of information available on the website hindered their efforts to adopt the Seal (10 interview references). “Frankly just navigating OSPI’s website and their instructions on how to post world language proficiency credits is horrible” (Interview). Both districts had worked closely with OSPI as it implemented the world language CCs under Michele Aoki and so there seemed to be the expectation that OSPI would continue to give them the supportive guidance they needed. Yet, in the transition period, that was not the case. The smaller districts did not complain about OSPI support, perhaps because they had not had as active a relationship previously.

Beyond what was noted previously about the small districts commonalities, both Murrow and Swift Water mentioned the lack of available bilingual staff in implementing the Seal. In Murrow, the dual language program had failed as a result of the lack of bilingual instructors. In Swift Water, the ELL Coordinator also noted struggles with providing heritage language instruction to get native Spanish speakers reading and writing to match their proficiency with speaking and listening. Murrow's ELL Coordinator also grapples with supporting students after they leave the 2nd grade:

We've chosen the early exit model and how sad it is that, you know, we teach them to read proficiently in Spanish and then we basically take it away in second grade...we have students that are headed in that direction [to biliteracy] and then we stop it. And that's an issue here. That's why I believe we don't have students that passed it or have the Seal of Biliteracy. They are not biliterate by the time they get even to middle school. They're losing their language, so that's a big concern for me. (ELL Coordinator Interview)

Her focus is more on building bilingual and biliteracy skills in students throughout their education rather than on earning the Seal:

If we back plan from where the kids are taking it [Spanish proficiency test]...it's going lead us down to where we are, down to the elementary school, and building forward from there... your typical Spanish class is not going to have the conditions for biliteracy...we have all the tools except for the staff. (ELL Coordinator Interview)

As evidenced by the fact that no students qualified last year to earn the Seal, Murrow is going to have to figure out how to provide home language support to students, so they actually can earn the Seal:

It's like they [district leaders] want that to happen, but there's so many other priorities that it gets pushed and so it takes someone with the initiative to be like... 'This is so important to me and I'm going to help make a plan to make this happen.' And I don't think that's the case. I don't think we have someone that's really passionate about the Seal and like 'Oh, I'm gonna go the extra length to make this happen.' (ELL Coordinator Interview)

This lack of a pathway for language minority students to improve their reading and writing skills to earn the Seal mirrored the findings about the lack of bilingual pathways for language minority students in DeLeon's dissertation on Seal implementation (2014).

7.3.3 Cross-Category Commonalities: All but Swift Water

Since Swift Water is the only one of the four case studies that had not decided to adopt the Seal by the time of the interviews, the commonalities in this subsection may have more to do with where Swift Water was in the process rather than a difference in approach. Murrow, Woodbury, and Luna interviewees spoke about relative advantage of Seal, but actually in terms of the value of world language CCs. Eight of 12 interviewees made 13 references in this regard. In Murrow, there seemed almost an interchangeable view of Seal and CCs. In several points of the interview with the Principal, he described "the Seal test" as a way for students to earn credits for their language skills (Interview) rather than two separate, but related components. He also mentioned the influence of Wenatchee's adoption, but it had not awarded Seals as of 2016 (Seal Proviso Report, 2016). It had only awarded world language CCs. Whereas Woodbury and Luna seemed to view the two as integrated: "I'm going to lump together the competency-based crediting piece with the Seal of Biliteracy" as she described the advantages of the Seal (Secondary Director Interview). Swift Water was not familiar with the world language CCs concept, but the ELL Coordinator's description of the value of the Seal was really more about world language CCs.

These will likely move forward together based on post-interview conversations about available resources. It is interesting because as of fall 2017, OSPI's Seal website had similarly blended the two together; the link to instructions to set up the Seal goes to the world language CC page (see Chapter 8 Recommendations for discussion).

These three districts also mentioned that they did not need school board approval for the Seal, explaining that their boards were fairly hands-off and were (or would be in the case of Luna) informed of the district's decision rather than given a chance to consider it directly. "The school board's not – they're – whatever we want to do in those kind of situations, they're fine with" (Woodbury Superintendent Interview).

Finally, all three mentioned the value of learning from other districts that had already offered the Seal. Murrow turned to Wenatchee, Woodbury discussed it with Seattle and Bellevue, and Luna sought information from Seattle, Highline, and Kent. Swift Water learned initially of the Seal from its Education Service District (ESD), but did plan to reach out to neighboring districts for more information when they got to that stage. "I'm always looking for another district, that's about the same size" (Swift Water ELL Coordinator Interview).

7.3.4 Cross-Category Commonalities: All but Murrow

Based on the interviews, the ELL Coordinators in Swift Water, Woodbury, and Luna were the real change agents pushing for the Seal. As those tasked with supporting ELL students in their districts, these three individuals felt strongly about the Seal as a way to help language minority students. "I think it serves a variety of purposes. Most importantly to me, my heart, this is kind of an intrinsic thing for me, is that the Seal is an avenue for our culturally and linguistically diverse students to be recognized for having the gift that they have" (Woodbury ELL Coordinator Interview).

In Murrow, the story was quite different. The Superintendent assumed that the ELL Coordinator had played an integral role. When asked whose leadership had featured prominently, he responded:

The ELL Coordinator, obviously, I think she was the instigator – I think you will like meeting her – but also just an advocate especially for kids that have dual languages and need support but also that we promote and see that as an asset that we need to develop in these kids. [She] is wonderful. (Superintendent Interview)

Yet, she was not the leader. As he noted before, he was not involved in the legwork, so that could explain his misunderstanding of who led the effort. She did not even know the district had adopted it until she received the Seal survey and responded, “Oh, we do this?” (Interview). The Principal and the Spanish Teacher primarily did the work to set up the Seal, likely because they viewed the Seal more in terms of students testing out of Spanish instruction rather than ELL-focused. As described in the section on large versus small districts, the Murrow ELL Coordinator believed the district needed to do more than simply test students if they wanted them to be able to earn a Seal of Biliteracy (ELL Coordinator Interview).

The other all-but-Murrow similarity was the explanation of the Seal of Biliteracy as a value for the community. Four interviewees from the other three districts made five mentions of this as something beneficial to more than just the student. Initially, the code had been set up as “Strategic for State,” which is noted prominently on the OSPI Seal webpage. That never came up. Therefore, it morphed into bilingualism as a “Value for the Community.”

7.3.5 Cross-Category Commonalities: Swift Water – Woodbury Similarities

In both Swift Water and Woodbury, there was an interviewee with a doctorate in Education focusing on migrant/bilingual education. Their more in-depth knowledge of the literature came

out in the interviews. These districts were the only two that mentioned the Seal's *language-as-resource* (LAR) value of recognizing bilingual skills for others to see as important (three sources, five references). They also were the only two districts that viewed the Seal as a potential incentive to improve language minority students' bilingual skills (three sources, six references).

7.3.6 *Cross-Category Commonalities: All Cases*

In all cases, interviewees described the Seal as valuable for three primary reasons. Everyone noted that it recognized the skill of students (17³⁸ sources, 44 references) and that it would help students beyond high school (16 sources, 32 references). While this might impact native English speakers, the four districts primarily focused on this as a way to help linguistic minority kids (14 sources, 25 references). At least one person in each district also noted the importance of the Seal for students developing a positive identity as a bilingual individual (5 sources, 9 references). Using Lo Bianco's (2001) list of categories of LAR (see Chapter 2), none mentioned the Seal as important to valuing LAR for participation and inclusion or improved communication with language communities.

In terms of adoption factors, the four districts highlighted the importance of observability, complexity, and compatibility. As noted under the All but Swift Water section, observability, or seeing how other districts had done it, helped staff to navigate the process of adoption. There were 13 sources and 19 references about gathering information, requesting templates, and general troubleshooting with early adopters that helped the cases to decide on the Seal.

I had a group email with Paris and Michele and myself, trying ...to get some guidance and then they helped a little bit, but they also ran into the same lack of guidance at

³⁸ This is more than 16 interviewees, because it includes documents as sources as well.

OSPI...it gave us a little bit of direction...to kind of move to the next couple steps.

(Woodbury ELL Coordinator Interview)

Complexity, which traditionally has an inverse relationship with innovation adoption (i.e., the more complicated the innovation, the slower the adoption), was also noted as an issue for all four districts (9 sources, 13 references). Yet, for those districts that had already adopted world language CCs, Seal adoption was not particularly complex as the language proficiency testing piece was already in place.

I think to me, the world language proficiency test became kind of like a guideline of the opportunity for the Seal. You know, if we were testing three kids every four months, I don't think it would have come to my mind to get it started as much as it did when I saw the numbers of kids who test and the numbers of kids who scored fours [and therefore could qualify for the Seal]. (Luna ELL Coordinator Interview)

And finally, in terms of compatibility, all viewed the Seal as compatible with their districts. Compatibility was composed of a few different components and was coded as such. Compatibility with changing demographics over the past 15+ years and a growing ELL population was noted by all districts (8 sources, 10 references). Compatibility with a district's innovative identity was highlighted by Murrow and Woodbury, which prided themselves on seeking out novel approaches to support student success. "We are pretty innovative would be my view of things...which is very different than most districts" (Woodbury Superintendent Interview). And finally, those with world language CCs saw the Seal as compatible with what they were already doing. "It just seemed to be an add-on to something we were already doing. It didn't make it be that much more work, so it was a pretty easy thing to just tag on to what we were already doing with the world language stuff [CCs]" (Luna Data Manager Interview).

There were also commonalities in terms of communications. From OSPI, the communication was primarily one-way, or *heterophilous*, through mass media like listserv newsletters and e-bulletins. As noted by Vanderslice (2000), mass media is useful for spreading awareness of an innovation. Within the districts, communication then tended to be more *homophilic*, involving back and forth conversations about the Seal, as they became more knowledgeable about it. Districts used interpersonal means, such as face-to-face meetings, emails, and calls to work out the Seal details (8 sources, 12 references). According to Rogers (2003), this type of communication tends to be more related to forming and changing attitudes than through mass media channels. In small districts, the meetings were typically involving two to four people, whereas in the large districts, it included presentations at Cabinet or in Committee meetings. These communications culminated in all cases in collective decision-making (9 sources, 15 references) rather than a top-down, authoritative approach within district administrations.

7.4 UNANTICIPATED RESULTS

I discovered a few unanticipated results that emerged from the interviews and added complexity to this analysis. All of the case study districts said that there had been no family or community involvement (15 sources, 22 references) in their adoption of the Seal. Luna went further to describe this as a challenge, whereas the other districts simply stated it as a reality. Perhaps related to this, none of the case studies had materials available on their websites about the Seal in terms of notification of the decision to school boards or presenting the option to families. The survey only had nine districts (8% of respondents) that noted family involvement as well and in all of those cases, the Seal had been adopted.

The second unexpected finding was that there had been no opposition to the Seal beyond logistical or resource questions from district staff. Although 75% of the interviews took place before the 2016 Presidential election, I had thought that some negative opinions might be expressed. Instead, interviewees stressed that there had been no opposition (13 sources, 22 references). Both adopters and non-adopters made statements such as “I can’t imagine what would be the downside?,” “It’s hard for me to imagine anybody saying ‘Oh this isn’t a good idea,’” and “If they did, they did not say it out loud and just thinking, who was around the table, they wouldn’t, you know” (Swift Water Dean of Students, Swift Water ELL Coordinator, and Woodbury ELL Manager Interviews). Whether this had to do with the lack of public awareness about the Seal, self-selection by case study districts willing to discuss their procedure with a researcher, or that the Seal is not viewed as something controversial is unclear. It is possible that these two findings are related. Suggestions for increasing public awareness, in the context of increasing tensions about immigration issues, will be included in the recommendation section in Chapter 8.

7.5 DISCREPANCIES WITH THE LITERATURE

In terms of findings that did not quite fit with the DOI literature, the most difficult element seemed to be determining whether a district was an early adopter or an early majority adopter. As explained in Chapter 2, the pace of adoption can be couched in the rate of adoption compared to other adopters and/or then the general rate of adoption for the innovation overall (Włodarczyk Hickey et al., 2011). For example, Murrow is one of only three adopters (top 10%) in its ESD region ($N = 29$) and one of only three (top 3%) with less than 1,000 students statewide ($N = 103$). According to peers in these categories, Murrow seems to be an early adopter. Yet overall, it is only in the top 21% of districts that have adopted the Seal (44 survey respondents plus the eight

that awarded Seals, but did not respond) out of 246. Complicated by the fact that it adopted the Seal, but did not actually award any Seals, should it be considered an early adopter or an early majority adopter or not truly an adopter until it awards Seals? In Woodbury, it is one of only two districts in its ESD (7%) to award Seals ($N = 30$) but one of 16 districts (51%) with over 10,000 students ($N = 31$) to award the Seal. Then it becomes tempting to focus on the data that fits the theory.

Diffusion theory seems to focus more on attitudes of adopters and level of adoption rather than timing to make this determination. Whereas other areas of the theory seemed to be more detailed and predictive, this aspect seemed to be more fluid and so flexible that it could lose its meaning. For consistency, I categorized a possible adopter status at the end of each case study based on typical attitudes of that category (e.g., Woodbury concerned about keeping up with Seattle) and level of adoption (e.g., Luna only noting the Seal on the transcript) rather than where it fell in an adoption timeline. This approach placed Woodbury and Murrow into early majority categories rather than as early adopters, which it could be argued, in terms of the timing of adoption, is where they should be. Luna more clearly fits the late majority adopter category as it has been slower to adopt in terms of districts of similar size and geography as well as its decision to adopt in a more minimal, lower cost way with simply a notation on students' transcripts. Swift Water is not far enough along to determine where it will fall.

DOI theory also predicts that authoritative decision-making tends to result in faster adoption than collective decisions (Perry, 2010). Despite Rogers' (2003) comment that districts tended to utilize an authoritative approach, this was not what occurred in the cases. In all four districts, the decision process was collective. In smaller districts, the school and district levels are fairly integrated and the decision is entirely collective for both the adopter and non-adopter. For

the larger districts, one could argue that from the schools' perspectives it was authoritative, since they did not participate in the decision. Regardless, the collective approach did not seem to have a relationship to the speed of adoption.

7.6 LIMITATIONS

With RQ 2a and 4 answered, I wanted to move to a discussion of the limitations of this study. This project involved survey and case study research, so the findings are correlational in nature. They do not provide insight into causal associations, which could be tested in future research. Furthermore, research was limited to Washington State, which means that results may not be generalizable to other states. This is particularly true of the findings in regards to world language CCs, which played a prominent role in Washington, yet do not exist in many other states that have a Seal of Biliteracy. Another limitation is that I am not able to estimate the associations between district policies and student outcomes around the State Seal. This will be for future research as well.

Since only 46% of districts responded to the survey (see Chapter 4), the results are only somewhat generalizable to districts that did not participate. There are inherent challenges with using email for survey distribution. Staff changes or spam filters may have hindered access to the survey for some districts. Others reported that they could not respond without district permission as their policies limited participation in research studies. Furthermore, the nature of self-reporting clouds the results that were collected and is one of the inherent challenges of using a survey to collect data (Fowler, 2008). For example, some districts responded that they did not have an AP program, but CEDARS records showed that they did. It could be that the survey respondent was not fully aware of all relevant offerings within a district.

Case studies were only conducted in four districts. It was particularly difficult to find districts that had not adopted the Seal to participate (see Chapter 5). Findings were limited to districts willing to participate in the study and therefore, some districts, perhaps with a language-as-problem orientation, may not have been willing to share their views and experiences. Additionally, case studies involved very small districts (less than 1,000 students) and very large districts (more than 10,000), so results may vary for mid-sized districts.

Adopters in the study were those that began the Seal in 2016. This was intentional, so that the adoption process would be fresher than for those districts that had adopted a full year earlier. Yet, that resulted in evidence that supported categorization of the two adopting districts as early majority districts rather than early adopters. Additional case studies on those that adopted the Seal in 2015, and even before the State Seal was created, could provide insight into the process for that level and speed of innovation adoption.

Finally, this study was on the process rather than the implementation of the Seal, so this project cannot estimate the relationship between district policies and student Seal award outcomes (e.g., awards for language minority versus language majority students). This could also be the subject of future research.

Chapter 8. CONCLUSION

As the final chapter of this dissertation, it is time to provide a synthesis of emerging themes uncovered through this mixed-methods project. Following, I present recommendations gathered from interviewees and developed as a result of this project. It will then end with an exploration of future research topics as well as some concluding remarks about the changing political landscape and the role of the State Seal of Biliteracy.

8.1 SYNTHESIS OF EMERGING THEMES AND PATTERNS

As stated before, district-level Seal adoption is voluntary and unfunded. In all four case studies, it was clear that someone within each district had to decide that the Seal was worth going above and beyond their workload to pursue (8 sources, 30 references). “They were truly excited about doing it [the Seal], so you know when somebody brings a proposal and you can see the passion behind it with them, it makes a difference in how seriously I take it” (Woodbury Superintendent Interview). This is supported by survey data that showed 40% of those responding “No” to pursuing the Seal made that decision with the involvement of no more than one individual in the district, meaning there really had not been a discussion about the decision. There was also a clear lack of information about the Seal as $n = 19$ survey respondents were not familiar with it.

States wanting to increase the likelihood of district adoption of a State Seal should make sure to target potential change agents with “step-by-step” adoption information and support to smooth the process for those willing to take on this task (see Recommendations below). “If you have somebody that's not super-invested in it like I was, then...they might just say forget this, it is too much of a hassle, but it's for kids, so let's not give up” (Woodbury ELL Coordinator Interview).

As mentioned in five interviews, the state's adoption of Core 24 and the Common Core/Smarter Balanced Assessments have increased the rigor for high school students. While the intention of the higher standards is to try to make graduating students better prepared for life after high school, it also could make graduation more challenging for students who are in English Language Learner (ELL) programs or have recently exited them. This change in credits makes the world language competency credit (CC) piece, where they can earn up to four credits for their home language skills, all the more valuable. That leads to the most salient finding from this research, the primary role of world language CCs in discussions about the Seal (15 sources, 36 references). While the Seal is a symbolic acknowledgement about students' bilingual skills, interviewees noted that world language CCs provide concrete credits that can help students reach graduation and even help them qualify for a four-year college or university (Greenberg Motamedi & Jaffery, 2015). While the Seal requires a high level of proficiency in English and a second language, world language CCs can be earned at a range of proficiency levels. It is not an all or nothing proposition like the Seal is.

The larger districts seemed clearer on the distinction between the Seal and CCs, but also voiced potential doubts about the value of the Seal (4 sources, 14 references). Murrow seemed unclear about the distinction between the two (see Chapter 6 Murrow case study) and Swift Water interviewees described the Seal as the potential solution to what really was a need for world language CCs. The office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI) has similarly melded the two by directing districts interested in setting up the Seal to the world language CC page. This blending is not necessarily a problem, just something that might be unique to Washington in terms of understanding Seal adoption. Many Seal adopter states do not have the CC option for earning a Seal. Pairing world language CCs with the Seal may also be something

for other states to consider in an effort to increase district, student and family interest in Seal adoption.

In general, Seal adoption does seem to be a moving target. There were changes in survey responses about the Seal to those that did award Seals (see Section 4.2) and then also change in status of non-adopter cases to in-process districts by the time of the interviews. That indicates that despite OSPI's initial challenges with staff turnover and the website, it can continue to disseminate information and to add supports to help more districts with adoption moving forward. The recommendations section outlines possible ways to do this.

8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.2.1 *Involvement of ESDs or Community Colleges*

For smaller districts, Seal adoption can be problematic. As noted in the interviews with Murrow and Swift Water districts, there is little staff and space to handle testing and other components of the language proficiency testing. Furthermore, students interested in taking higher levels of language typically will do so through Running Start at neighboring community colleges where they earn dual credit. According to the survey, only one respondent had received assistance from their Education Service District (ESD) in adopting the Seal. As the regional support for training and information, the ESDs seem to be an underutilized resource in the dissemination of information about the Seal, particularly in more remote areas of the state.

If ESDs or community colleges could offer language assessment days open to all school districts within their service area, it could make the language-testing component much easier and save multiple districts from reinventing the wheel. University of Washington and other institutes of higher education have hosted these opportunities, so there is a model that could be adapted. For regions with less common languages, it would also help to coordinate one test type and

reviewer rather than each district having to navigate and to pay for it on their own. Swift Water's Superintendent suggested districts pay into a consortium to cover the cost of the Seal administration and awards (Interview).

There could also be cost savings with a centralized process. For example, STAMP (STAndards-based Measurement of Proficiency) tests cost about \$25 per test up to 50³⁹, but drop down to \$20 for 50-99 tests and then as low as \$15 per test with 1,000 purchased (personal communication, Bonnie Buck at Avant Assessment, March 31, 2017). The ESDs could also coordinate the purchase of the Seal stickers, which also become cheaper with larger purchases (e.g., 44 cents per Seal for 500, but 26 cents per Seal for 1,000 and 17 cents per Seal for 2,000) (Woodbury WL Coordinator email #10). Similar savings could also be accrued with bulk purchases of Seal medallions or honor cords.

Other recommendations for ESDs included holding trainings on the implementation of the Seal and sharing of best practices. As evidenced in Table 4.9, every ESD has at least two districts that have awarded Seals. These districts could be asked to provide samples of their policies and procedures, to link relevant staff, and to share what they have learned from their implementation. With so many districts still unfamiliar with the Seal, the ESD regular gatherings of Superintendents, Data Managers, and/or ELL staff could be easy ways of disseminating information about the Seal and generating interest from potential change agents.

8.2.2 *Improvement of Communication from the State*

The primary sources of information about the Seal were OSPI newsletters about Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) changes and the creation of the Seal in general. However, as mentioned in earlier chapters, OSPI experienced staff transitions during the roll out

³⁹ Note these tests are good for up to two school years.

of the Seal that slowed information dissemination about the Seal. In October 2016, upgrades were made to the website to improve the flow of information including an introductory training video about the Seal with information about coding for transcripts and in CEDARS. Further improvements could be made. Interviewees suggested the inclusion of templates and clear step-by-step instructions (7 sources, 11 references). Districts that have awarded Seals could contribute sample brochures, press releases, procedures, and different award types (e.g., stickers, medallions, honor cords) to a repository for those considering the Seal. A list of districts that have adopted the Seal with relevant contact information could be provided to facilitate the sharing of information. The Seal of Biliteracy Proviso Report has a lot of interesting information (see Chapter 4 for details), but it is not posted on the Seal webpage. It is available under OSPI's finance documents. Without knowledge of its existence, it is difficult to find.

The discrepancy between the survey results and the Seal Proviso report (i.e., 17 “Yes” respondents who did not have any Seals awarded) indicates that there may be some issues with coding of the Seal that would be worth investigating. At a minimum, one district was included twice and Federal Way was missing despite statements on their website of the exact number of Seals awarded. OSPI may want to review the way Seals are coded to ensure all Seal awards are being tracked.

If it turns out that many of those 17 districts or others do not have students able to pass the world language portion of the test, OSPI's world languages department may want to consider options for offering heritage language classes online or through Running Start programs to help students reach higher levels of proficiency in their home languages. The lack of information in the Proviso report on former ELL participation in the Seal and lack of detail about testing type

also may point to the need for better coding in CEDARS to help monitor the equity of Seal awards.

Additionally, the website currently directs viewers to create a world language CC program as the starting point for the Seal. That has made a clear pathway for setting up the Seal, but implies a district must be willing to award world language CCs if it wants to offer the Seal. That is not actually a requirement and could create a barrier for a district interested in the Seal, but not prepared to award CC credits for skills learned outside the classroom. Furthermore, while CCs need a school board approved policy, WAC 392-410-350 established the criteria for the Seal, so awarding Seals does not require board action. While it is likely that a district pursuing the Seal would also pursue the world language CCs as demonstrated by this study, the website is misleading in describing the CC process as *the* way to set up the Seal rather than just one of several ways students can earn the Seal. OSPI should provide clearer instructions that spell out how to set up (and/or to utilize existing) testing for the full range of language options for awarding the Seal (e.g., AP, IB, world language CCs, or general language proficiency testing without awarding CCs).

Another potential issue with the website is that it notes IB and AP exams as a way to earn the Seal, but it does not explain that those exam results are not released until after the end of the school year. In those cases, students will either need to be awarded the Seal later in summer or they could take a language proficiency exam beforehand to have the Seal at the time of graduation. This latter option was made available by Woodbury school district, but is not highlighted as a consideration anywhere on the website.

And finally, the website should be more sensitive in how it describes the benefits of the Seal of Biliteracy and do so in a way that is more reflective of the reasons noted in Chapter 7

about how districts see the value of the Seal. For example, the description for why to adopt the Seal focuses primarily on the strategic benefits for the state. Specifically about language minority students, it states: “The bilingual skills of students for whom English is not a first or dominant language represent a tremendous potential resource to the state” (OSPI Seal website, n.d.). This idea never came up as a reason for the Seal in any of the 16 interviews or provided documents.

The website briefly mentions career advantages and cognitive benefits, but it says nothing about the value in recognizing their bilingual skills, promoting a positive identity, strengthening inter-community understanding, or motivating students to persevere in developing their bilingualism. These elements should be included and highlighted as they are the reasons that the case study districts pursued the Seal for their districts. These reasons may resonate more with districts considering the Seal than what is now present on the website. It could also reiterate OSPI’s position on serving immigrant students in light of increasing national tensions surrounding this issue. Additionally, the webpage’s linked articles are four to seven years old and again focus on language learning and global competitiveness rather than fostering a positive view of our bilingual students.

8.2.3 *Support from Other Organizations*

Since most districts in the state utilize the Skyward data management system, another means of disseminating information and helping streamline Seal data reporting would be to offer trainings and/or samples at annual WSIPC (Washington School Information Processing Co-op) meetings or through postings on their website. Districts that have already determined how to sync data could share with others to save time in figuring out how best to do this. Since the data component was frequently mentioned as a chief challenge of the Seal, presenting information directly to the data managers about the Seal could alleviate fears about how to track this.

Additionally, WSIPC could provide screenshots and instructions on how to code students to save districts from working through it on their own.

One America, an immigrant rights organization that spearheaded legislative advocacy for the adoption of the Seal, or other community organizations could also play a role in disseminating information about the Seal through communities. Only two survey respondents mentioned One America as a source of support and those two districts were involved in the Road Map project, whose ELL work group is staffed by One America. As noted in the survey results, only nine of 114 districts noted family or community involvement in the Seal adoption. In all nine cases, the Seal had been adopted. Community groups could play a role in helping push districts to adopt the Seal as well as ensuring families know about this opportunity to get recognition for skills their children have. The ELL Coordinator in Luna indicated that this sort of support could have sped adoption within the district and potentially across the state (Interview).

8.2.4 *Recommendations to Districts Considering the Seal*

In terms of recommendations for districts considering Seal adoption, understanding the world language CC option would be useful. The two do not have to go together, but in many cases, they do make sense to pair together. World language CCs help to address the equity of offering the Seal for those learning a world language outside of school. Once world language CC adoption has been approved and testing is in place, the Seal becomes a final recognition for this achievement. Furthermore, tallying those who earn four CCs will also help to determine whether it has potential candidates for the Seal.

Another emerging issue with the Seal is what school districts need to do to ensure students can meet the requirement of high proficiency levels in both English and a second language. Naturally, the Seal of Biliteracy should have high standards or would be rendered

meaningless. Yet, it draws attention to two questions. First, is there a need in the district for academic support for language minority students to improve reading and writing skills in their home language, as voiced by Murrow's ELL Coordinator? Second, are former ELL students able to meet the English language arts (ELA) standards on the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) as noted by Luna's ELL Coordinator? Seventeen districts said they adopted the Seal, but did not award Seals in CEDARS. While further research would be required to determine how many of those districts did not have students who qualified, interviews in Murrow and Luna districts suggest that this is a concern for the implementation of the Seal:

I think we had one or two students last year, who actually would have qualified out of all the students tested, that actually passed their state language arts assessment, because it was the Smarter Balanced [Assessment], which is new, and got the level for [language] proficiency. (Luna ELL Coordinator Interview)

With the move to the SBA in 2014, high school students meeting standard in reading and writing fell from over 83%⁴⁰ to just 26%. The SBA is more rigorous and the first year of a new test typically has a low score as students adjust to a new format. That was demonstrated by the increase to 76% passing the ELA portion of the SBA in 2016. Yet, the scores across the state are still lower than before SBA adoption and former ELL students one and two years after exiting ELL supports only passed the 2016 ELA portion at 51% and 63%, respectively. Therefore, districts should consider how they are going to support language minority students in improving their home language as well as their SBA performance as part of the Seal decision.

⁴⁰ Prior to SBA, reading and writing were tested separately and students were tested in 10th grade. The state reading score was 83% meeting standard and the writing was 85% in 2013. Under Smarter Balanced, it is a combined score and students are tested in 11th grade, which means the 2014 SBA results are from the same cohort as the 2013 results noted here.

8.2.5 *Recommendations to Other States*

For other states that have considered or already adopted the Seal, recommendations begin with those mentioned for OSPI in Section 8.2.2. To assist the change agents driving this process, states should have clear step-by-step instructions, templates, and knowledgeable staff to support district-level adoption. Also they should identify early adopter district leaders who can present at conferences, regional meetings, or through webinars to facilitate knowledge sharing.

Additionally, other states should consider the world language CC option for their state. As explained in Section 8.1, this CC option provides credit for students and helps to build the infrastructure for language proficiency testing across a broad range of languages. It also helps ensure that Seals are awarded to native speakers and not just those in AP, IB, or advanced world language courses.

8.3 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LITERATURE

In addition to recommendations for practitioners, this research project also contributes to the scant literature on the Seal of Biliteracy. It is just the third dissertation on the Seal and the first focusing outside of California. Additionally, it is the only one to focus on district-level decision-making and to include non-adopters to help build a more complete picture about district adoption of the Seal. As more states adopt the Seal of Biliteracy with district implementation almost universally voluntary and unfunded, it is important to understand what plays into district-level consideration of the Seal. By looking in-depth at the Washington State experience, other states can benefit from understanding what supports are important and what challenges slow or prevent district adoption.

This research also builds the application of *diffusion of innovations* (DOI) theory to district policy adoption. As demonstrated in Chapters 6 and 7, the case studies did tend to follow

the phases of change (trigger/need for change, knowledge, persuasion, and decision phases). Sometimes there was a repeat of the knowledge and persuasion phases, when decision makers had additional questions about the Seal in Woodbury and Luna prior to making a decision, but the process did follow this general trajectory.

The role of adoption factors (relative advantage, compatibility, observability, complexity, and trialability) also came out in discussions with districts. The relative advantage of the Seal tended to merge the Seal and CCs together, but the idea of the Seal helping recognize the achievement of biliteracy and helping students to succeed came out in every interview. All of the districts expressed the Seal as compatible with their districts, but compatibility was perceived differently. For the adopter districts, the Seal was compatible with their innovative identity. For those districts with world language CCs, the compatibility with that program was highlighted. Compatibility with district policies, like a bilingual end goal in Murrow or a focus on equity in Luna, also emerged.

While I expected the observability factor to tie into legitimacy issues of keeping up with other districts, it seemed to only emerge in the adopter districts and not as a driving factor. In all four districts, seeing what other districts have done had more to do with fact-finding and saving them from reinventing the wheel. As both Woodbury and Luna pointed out, it was helpful to understand what others were doing, but “It really didn't impact what our district chose to finally do to any extent” (Luna ELL Coordinator Interview). With a new policy as new as this, everyone is still “trailblazing” (Woodbury ELL Coordinator Interview).

Conversations about complexity and trialability were primarily tied to the world language CC program. For those with CC programs, they had already tackled the complexity of language proficiency testing and had the opportunity to try out that part of it. Both adopters noted lessons

learned from the first year of implementation, which would shape future years. For those without world language CCs, Murrow had decided to adopt them for world languages in conjunction with the Seal and Swift Water planned to investigate that combination as well. While complexity tends to have an inverse relationship with adoption (i.e., the more complex, the slower adoption takes place), the trialability of the world language CCs as a step toward Seal adoption seemed to counter the negative effect of complexity.

Finally, the role of change agents was important in keeping the process moving forward. “Gotta have a champion and they were the champions” (Woodbury Superintendent Interview). With frustrations over OSPI turnover and lack of clear instructions, having district staff willing to persevere with adoption was noted in every case (11 sources, 33 references). Luna was slower to adopt and Swift Water was just starting the process, but even in those districts, interviewees noted the importance of “going the extra mile” to make the Seal happen (Swift Water ELL Coordinator Interview). Overall, DOI theory seemed to be a good framework for explaining the cases.

8.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

With Seal research in just the infancy stage, the areas of future investigation into the Seal are numerous. In terms of district adoption, it would be useful to see how the process has played out in other states and how it compares to Washington. Since world language CCs played such an instrumental role, it would be particularly interesting to contrast the experience within a state that does not have world language CCs.

Within Washington State, it would be constructive to include additional case studies to enhance understanding. Adopters from 2015 would shed light on the process in the earliest adopter districts. Mid-sized districts and/or those in the northwest portion of the state would also

be of interest to see if they had similar or varied experiences. With almost a third of Seal districts having less than 5% ELL enrollment, this category could also provide useful insight. Since the non-adopter districts turned out to be not-yet adopters, it would also be useful to interview districts that have no intention of adopting the Seal anytime soon.

Implementation studies would also be tremendously useful in Washington and other adopter states to understand how equitable Seal implementation has been. Are language minority students proportionally represented in the Seals awarded? Are Seals awarded primarily in urban and suburban versus rural districts? Are non-standard versions of world languages being excluded due to limitations with existing language proficiency tests? Seeing where disproportionality is could help shape future recommendations about Seal implementation.

8.5 CONCLUSIONS

With the recent election and rising anti-immigration rhetoric, the spread of the Seal of Biliteracy may seem less meaningful than it did when this project was conceptualized or even when case study interviews began in October 2016. How can a gold sticker on a student's transcript make a difference as the White House works to restrict immigration and to increase deportations? Or, as raised by the Luna Secondary Director just after the election, could having the Seal be used against students:

We haven't experienced any anxiety on the student or family side for being identified as bilingual. I don't know if that will be the case six months from now, a year from now, so we're thinking through what is...what potential does that have? And we do have a larger population of undocumented students in South King County, and so I'm sure it's a concern for our families. And if they get something that's official [the Seal], will they be afraid of that? I don't know. That's something we haven't thought through, because I

wasn't expecting it [the election]. So that's something that hopefully we won't encounter...any kind of the fear-based apprehension towards getting the Seal of Biliteracy. (Interview)

How this evolves remains to be seen. Yet, Seal laws across the country include state legislature-approved language about the value of bilingualism in liberal states like California and Washington, but also in conservative states like Georgia and Kansas. Since November, Colorado, Missouri, and Ohio have adopted the Seal with five⁴¹ more states beginning district pilots and Kentucky exploring the possibility. That means, 39 states have or are working toward having a Seal with just eleven rural states⁴² not engaged in this issue as of spring 2017.

It is my hope that the Seal can become a pillar of the counter-narrative to the anti-immigration rhetoric that has become so prevalent in some circles. It may be just a symbol, but it is a symbol nonetheless. It recognizes the value students bring and develop as multilingual speakers, both for those individuals and more broadly to the communities that adopt it. So with research about adoption and implementation to address equity of the Seal, coupled with greater public awareness of this option for students, the Seal could be a beacon of hope and an acknowledgement of the contributions bilingual individuals make to our society.

⁴¹ Arkansas, Nebraska, and Pennsylvania have districts piloting in 2017, Connecticut, and Massachusetts have pilots starting as well as legislation moving forward in their state legislatures.

⁴² Idaho, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming (Sealofbiliteracy.org).

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APPENDIX A WASHINGTON SSB LEGISLATION

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

SENATE BILL 6424

Chapter 102, Laws of 2014 63rd Legislature

2014 Regular Session

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS--SEAL OF
BILITERACY

EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/12/14

Passed by the Senate March 10, 2014 YEAS 49
NAYS 0

BRAD OWEN

President of the Senate

Passed by the House March 6, 2014 YEAS 69
NAYS 27

FRANK CHOPP

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Approved March 27, 2014, 11:03 a.m.

JAY INSLEE

Governor of the State of Washington

CERTIFICATE

I, Hunter G. Goodman, Secretary of the Senate of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SENATE BILL 6424** as passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on the dates hereon set forth.

HUNTER G. GOODMAN **Secretary**

FILED

March 27, 2014

**Secretary of State
State of Washington**

SENATE BILL 6424

AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2014 Regular Session

By Senators Roach, McAuliffe, Litzow, Fain, Bailey, Mullet, Hasegawa, and Tom

Read first time 01/24/14. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing a state seal of biliteracy for high
2 school students; amending RCW 28A.230.125; adding a new section to
3 chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating new sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that:

6 (a) The study of world languages in elementary and secondary
7 schools should be encouraged because it contributes to students'
8 cognitive development and to the national economy and security;

9 (b) Proficiency in multiple languages enables Washington to
10 participate more effectively in the current global political, social,
11 and economic context;

12 (c) The benefits to employers of having employees who are fluent in
13 More than one language are clear: Increased access to expanding
14 markets, better service of customers' needs, and expanded trading
15 opportunities with other countries; and

16 (d) Protecting the state's rich heritage of multiple cultures and
17 languages, as well as building trust and understanding across the
18 multiple cultures and languages of diverse communities, requires
19 multilingual communication skills.

p. 1 SB 6424.SL

1 (2) Therefore, the legislature's intent is to promote and recognize
2 linguistic proficiency and cultural literacy in one or more world
3 languages in addition to English through the establishment of a
4 Washington state seal of biliteracy.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The Washington state seal of biliteracy is established to
8 recognize public high school graduates who have attained a high level
9 of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more world
10 languages in addition to English. School districts are encouraged to
11 award the seal of biliteracy to graduating high school students who
12 meet the criteria established by the office of the superintendent of
13 public instruction under this section. Participating school districts
14 shall place a notation on a student's high school diploma and high
15 school transcript indicating that the student has earned the seal.

16 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
17 adopt rules establishing criteria for award of the Washington state
18 seal of biliteracy. The criteria must require a student to demonstrate
19 proficiency in English by meeting state high school graduation
20 requirements in English, including through state assessments and
21 credits, and proficiency in one or more world languages other than
22 English. The criteria must permit a student to demonstrate proficiency
23 in another world language through multiple methods including nationally
24 or internationally recognized language proficiency tests and
25 competency-based world language credits awarded under the model policy
26 adopted by the Washington state school directors' association.

27 (3) For the purposes of this section, a world language other than
28 English must include American sign language and Native American
29 languages.

30 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.230.125 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 130 are each
31 amended to read as follows: (1) The superintendent of public instruction, in consultation
32 with the four-year institutions as defined in RCW 28B.76.020, the state
33 board for community and technical colleges, and the workforce training
34 and education coordinating board, shall develop for use by all public
school districts a standardized high school transcript. The p. 2 SB 6424.SL

1 superintendent shall establish clear definitions for the terms
2 "credits" and "hours" so that school programs operating on the quarter,
3 semester, or trimester system can be compared.

4 (2) The standardized high school transcript shall include a
5 notation of whether the student has earned a certificate of individual
6 achievement or a certificate of academic achievement.

7 (3) The standardized high school transcript may include a notation
8 of whether the student has earned the Washington state seal of
9 biliteracy established under section 2 of this act.

10 NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. By December 1, 2017, the office of the
11 Superintendent of public instruction shall submit a report to the
12 education committees of the legislature that compares the number of
13 students awarded the Washington state seal of biliteracy in the
14 previous two school years and the languages spoken by those students,
15 to the number of students enrolled or previously enrolled in the
16 transitional bilingual instruction program and the languages spoken by
17 those students. The office of the superintendent of public instruction
18 shall also report the methods used by students to demonstrate
19 proficiency for the Washington state seal of biliteracy, and describe
20 how the office of the superintendent of public instruction plans to
21 increase the number of possible methods for students to demonstrate
22 proficiency, particularly in world languages that are not widely
23 spoken.

Passed by the Senate March 10, 2014.

Passed by the House March 6, 2014.

Approved by the Governor March 27, 2014.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State March 27, 2014.

APPENDIX B DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Biliteracy: Attainment of “a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more world languages in addition to English” (SB 6424, 2014, p. 2). Defined by Hornberger as referring “to any and all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing” (1990, p. 213).

Competency Credits (CCs) for World Languages: Started in Washington State in 2011, this option gives districts the opportunity to award one to four high school elective credits for students’ language proficiency in a language other than English.

Early Adopters: Following rare innovators, the early adopters are next to adopt an innovation. They tend to be more integrated into the social system than innovators, are well-respected amongst their peers, and serve as champions of an innovation (Perry, 2010). Adopting the innovation puts “their stamp of approval on a new idea” (Rogers, 2003, p. 283).

Early Majority Adopters: After early adopters, but slightly before the average member of a system adopts the innovation (Rogers, 2003), early majority adopters tend to be more deliberate in their decision-making about an innovation, not wanting to be viewed as impulsive or resistant to new ideas (Ratts & Wood, 2011).

English Language Learner (ELL): Somewhat less deficit-focused than the federal term Limited English Proficient (LEP), ELL designates a student who is not a native English speaker and is therefore eligible for additional supports to help them learn English in addition to academic content (OSPI TBIP website, n.d.). However, the ELL term “emphasizes what linguistic minority students do not know and invisibilizes what they do know (e.g., their own or their parents’ language and culture (Skutnabb-Kangas & McCarty, 2006, p. 6). Emergent bilingual reframes these students more positively as those learning two languages (Garcia, 2009).

Innovation: “Purposeful change, directed change, which self-consciously attempts to improve, reform, make new...the quality of a project must be better than before; a service must be improved for the same consumers or must serve more and different people” (Hall, 1991, p. 7).

Language Minority Student: A student who is a native speaker of a language that is “not the dominant language of a territorial unit” (Skutnabb-Kangas & McCarty, 2006, p. 7). In the context of the U.S., they may be ELL students, former ELL students or students who speak English, but use another language in the home.

Language Orientation: Presented by Ruiz (1984), language orientation “refers to a complex of dispositions toward language and its role, and toward languages and their role in society” (p. 16). He identified three orientations, language-as-problem (where language planners see language as something negative needing to be identified and fixed), language-as-right (where language planners see language as something to be monitored, protected and complied with) and language-as-resource (where language planners see language as something to be valued and promoted) (see Chapter 2 for detailed discussion).

Seal of Biliteracy: First created in California, a Seal recognizes a graduating students’ proficiency in two languages. This acknowledgement can be a district initiative or a statewide one (then called State Seal of Biliteracy). Students must pass whatever English graduation requirements his/her state has and then demonstrate proficiency in another language through an approved method (typically, an AP or IB exam or nationally recognized language proficiency exam).

APPENDIX C WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

REGULATIONS ON THE SSB

WAC 392-410-350 Seal of biliteracy. (1) The authority for this section is RCW 28A.300.575, which authorizes the office of the superintendent of public instruction to adopt rules establishing criteria for award of the Washington state seal of biliteracy.

(2) Graduating high school students must meet the following criteria to be awarded the Washington state seal of biliteracy:

(a) Students must demonstrate proficiency in English by (i) meeting the statewide minimum graduation requirements in English under WAC 180-51-066 through 180-51-068, as amended; and (ii) meeting the state standard on the reading and writing or English language arts assessments under RCW 28A.655.061; and

(b) Students must demonstrate proficiency in one or more world languages through any one of the following methods:

(i) Passing a foreign language advanced placement examination with a score of three or higher;

(ii) Passing an International Baccalaureate examination with a score of four or higher;

(iii)(A) Demonstrating proficiency in speaking and writing the world language at intermediate-mid level or higher based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines, using assessments approved by the office of superintendent of public instruction for competency-based credits; and

(B) When reading assessments of the world language have been approved by the office of superintendent of public instruction for competency-based credits, demonstrating proficiency in reading the world language at intermediate-mid level or higher based on the ACTFL proficiency guidelines, using said assessments;

(iv) Qualifying for four competency-based credits by demonstrating proficiency in speaking, writing, and reading the world language at intermediate-mid level or higher based on the ACTFL proficiency guidelines, according to Washington state's model policy and procedure for competency-based credits for world languages; or

(v) Demonstrating proficiency in speaking, writing, and reading the world language through other national or international assessments approved by the office of superintendent of public instruction at a level comparable to intermediate-mid level or higher based on the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.

(3) "Foreign language" and "world language" as used in this section means a language other than English, and includes, without limitation, American sign language, Latin, and Native American or other indigenous languages or dialects.

APPENDIX D IRB APPROVAL LETTER



March 28, 2016

PI: Marta Mikkelsen Burnet CC: Tom Halverson

RE: Application #51650 – “District-Level Adoption of the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy”

Dear Marta Mikkelsen Burnet,

The University of Washington Human Subjects Division (HSD) has determined that your research qualifies for exempt status in accordance with the federal regulations under 45 CFR 46.101/ 21 CFR 56.104. Details of this determination are as follows:

Exempt category determination: **1**

Although research that qualifies for exempt status is not governed by federal requirements for research involving human subjects, investigators still have a responsibility to protect the rights and welfare of their subjects, and are expected to conduct their research in accordance with the ethical principles of *Justice, Beneficence* and *Respect for Persons, as* described in the Belmont Report, as well as with state and local institutional policy.

Determination Period: This exempt determination is valid for the life of the study, as long as the nature of the research activity remains the same. If there is any substantive change to the activity that has determined to be exempt, one that alters the overall design, procedures, or risk/benefit ratio to subjects, the exempt determination will no longer be valid.

Revisions: Only modifications that are deemed “minor” are allowable, in other words, modifications that do not change the nature of the research and therefore do not affect the validity of the exempt determination. **Please refer to the [Guidance: Exempt Research](#) document for more information about what are considered minor changes.** If changes that are considered to be “substantive” occur to the research, that is, changes that alter the nature of the research and therefore affect the validity of the exempt determination, a new *Exempt Status Request* must be submitted to HSD for review and determination *prior to implementation*.

Problems: If issues should arise during the conduct of the research, such as unanticipated problems, adverse events or any problem that may increase the risk to the human subjects and change the category of review, notify HSD promptly. Any complaints from subjects pertaining to the risk and benefits of the research must be reported to HSD.

Please use the HSD study number listed above on any forms submitted which relate to this research, or on any correspondence with the HSD office.

Good luck in your research. If we can be of further assistance, please contact us at (206) 543-0098 or via email at hsdinfo@uw.edu. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Neena Makhija, MSW,
MPA Administrator

4333 Brooklyn Ave. NE, Box 359470 Seattle, WA 98195-9470
main 206.543.0098 fax 206.543.9218 hsdinfo@uw.edu www.washington.edu/research/hsd

APPENDIX E EMAIL INTRODUCTION FOR SURVEY



Dear Superintendent INSERT NAME,

Hello, my name is Marta Burnet and I am a PhD student in the University of Washington's (UW) College of Education. Since 2012, I have collaborated with OSPI on dual language surveys and the development of State Seal of Biliteracy. Below, you will find a link to a very brief survey from the joint UW - OSPI's [Mapping and Enhancing Language Learning](#) project (MELL). We are gathering information on how the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy policy has been put into action in districts around the state.

Your responses are vitally important to this research. The survey should only take 3-5 minutes.

If there is someone else in your district responsible for consideration of the Seal of Biliteracy, please forward this survey to that person or send me his/her email address, so I can contact him/her.

You can access the survey here:

https://uweducation.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6J4TQJa1iQmxce9. Please complete the survey **by June 1, 2016**.

Thank you so much for your participation! All participants will be entered into a drawing for \$15 Amazon gift cards to be used at their discretion. Winners will be notified in late June.

Marta Burnet
UW PhD Candidate

APPENDIX F SEAL OF BILITERACY SURVEY



Washington State Seal of Biliteracy Survey Welcome: This survey of school districts aims to:

- Identify what districts have adopted the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy*;
- Get a complete picture of the number and types of K-12 world language and bilingual education programs in the state; and
- Help policymakers shape the future implementation of the Seal and garner support for initiatives that promote bilingualism around the state.

The survey is administered as part of the joint UW-OSPI's Mapping and Enhancing Language Learning project by Marta Burnet, a PhD student in the University of Washington's (UW) College of Education. Related surveys were initially conducted in 2012 and 2014 with tremendous results in support of the spread of and increased funding for dual language programming.

The survey results will be used to facilitate greater support for the Seal and to increase sharing of best practices with the end goal of helping districts to adopt it and strengthen multilingualism in the State of Washington. Statewide results from this survey will be shared with survey participants, state legislators, school districts and associations interested in the spread of the Seal in Washington State and beyond.

We appreciate your participation. All participants who complete the survey will be entered into multiple drawings for a \$15 Amazon gift card.

Thank you!

Marta Mikkelsen, University of Washington, and
Angela Dávila, OSPI World Languages Program Supervisor

****In case you are unfamiliar with the Seal, it was adopted by the state legislature in 2014 to recognize public high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading and writing in one or more world languages in addition to English. District participation is voluntary. (see RCW 28A.230.125 for authorizing legislation and <http://www.k12.wa.us/WorldLanguages/SealofBiliteracy.aspx> for more details).***

This survey requests contact information to keep track of which districts have responded. Please provide the following contact information.

Q1. What is your name?

Q2. What is your email?

Q3. What is the name of your school district?

Q4. What is your job title or role?

Q5. Does your district plan to offer the Seal to graduating students by spring 2016?

- Yes
- No
- We have not decided at this time.

(For those responding No)

Q5A. What factors influenced your district's decision not to offer the Seal?

- Unfamiliar with Seal at this point
- Not relevant for our students
- Lack of funds
- Lack of staff time
- Not a district priority
- Other, please describe.

(For those responding Undecided)

Q5B. Has there been discussion about whether to pursue the Seal?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know.

If there is someone else in your district who might know whether the Seal has been considered, can you provide his/her email address (to forward the survey to him/her)?

Q6. Did your district form any sort of committee to consider the State Seal of Biliteracy?

- Yes
- No

Q7. Who was involved in the decision about the Seal? Check all that apply.

- Superintendent

- School Board
 - District Administrator for Teaching and Learning
 - District Administrator of Career and College Readiness
 - District Administrator for Assessment
 - District Administrator for World Languages
 - District Administrator for ELL Programs
 - Principal(s)
 - Teacher(s)
 - Counselor(s)
 - Parents/Community
 - Other, please describe.
-

IF YES TO Q5:

Q8. What year did your district begin to award the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy?

- 2015
- 2016
- We had a district Seal of Biliteracy or similar recognition in place before the State Seal.

IF THEY HAD A DISTRICT SEAL IN PLACE BEFOREHAND:

Q8A. If yes, when (month and year) did your district first begin to award a Seal of Biliteracy?

Then proceed to Q9 below.

IF THEY ANSWER 2016, JUMP TO Q9 (committee question).

IF 2015:

Q8B. How many students were awarded the State Seal of Biliteracy in your district in 2015?

Q9. From which of the following organizations, if any, did you get help with the Seal?

- OSPI

- Educational Service District
- Sealofbilitery.org
- Californians Together
- World Languages Conference/Workshop
- Bilingual Education Conference/Workshop
- Other, Please specify.
- None

Q10. For the organization(s) checked above, which types of support did you get?

- Advice
- Medallions
- Training
- Templates for awards
- Other, Please specify.
- None

Q11. Does your district have a policy or resolution about the value of bilingualism and/or biliteracy? For a sample policy, see [Highline School District](#).

- Yes
- No

IF YES:

Q11A. Please describe highlights from your district's policy. If there are district website links that describe these, please include them in your response.

Q12. What types of world language learning opportunities does your district offer students? Check all that apply.

- World Language(s) through the fourth year of study
- AP Language course(s) in high school
- International Baccalaureate (IB) program in high school
- Before/After-school world language classes
- Content courses taught in other languages at high school

- Dual Language Program (*defined as a program where content instruction is in two languages, typically in a 50%/50% time split*)
- Heritage Language Program (*defined for this survey as a high school program that helps students to develop their home language skills, often focusing on writing, reading and cultural content*)
- Transitional Bilingual Program (*also called “Early Exit” and is defined as providing ELL students with academic instruction in their primary language to facilitate their transition to English*)
- Competency Credits for World Languages
- Other, please describe.
- None of the above

Q13. If you have any other thoughts about the Seal, please share them below.

Thank you for completing this survey. If you have any questions or comments about this survey, please do not hesitate to contact Marta Burnet at martam@uw.edu. If you would like more information about the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy, please contact worldlanguage@k12.wa.us or visit: <http://www.k12.wa.us/WorldLanguages/SealofBiliteracy.aspx>.

You will be entered to win a \$25 Amazon gift card when the survey closes. You will receive notification by email if you are the winner.

APPENDIX G INTRODUCTORY EMAIL FOR CASE STUDIES

Dear INSERT NAME:

Thank you for taking the time to complete the Seal of Biliteracy survey. We heard from about 110 school districts (38% will be offering the Seal, 31% will not and 31% are undecided). As I finish combing through the data, I will send out a report to all participants about the results.

But before folks head out for the summer, I wanted to get started on the next stage of this research project, which is also my dissertation. I need to get permission from four districts (two implementing the Seal, two not) to conduct interviews **in the fall**. With State Seals emerging in more than half of the country, this research could help OSPI and other states to understand what they need to do to create conditions that enable districts to adopt the Seal.

I was hoping that I could start with Woodbury. I think your district would be interesting, because it has been a leader in offering language learning opportunities. My plan would be to interview those who actively participated in the decision process for up to 1 hour each. The purpose is not to evaluate the decisions made, but to chart the process and look at what factored into the formation of the decision.

I can ensure strict confidentiality measures will be taken and participation will be voluntary and non-coercive. Participants may skip questions or halt the interview at any time. If the results of the study are presented or published, I will not use any information that will name the individuals, the schools or the district, assigning pseudonyms to each. I will take steps to ensure that this study is not intrusive for participants.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this opportunity. As my initial contact with the district, I am asking for your guidance in securing the district's approval of this study (if needed) as well as your participation in an interview. Could we chat sometime on Friday for me to answer any questions and to find out the procedures for getting district approval (if you are willing)? I am including letters of support from One America and the PSESD who can vouch for this project and my knowledge of the topic.

Best,

Marta Burnet
PhD Candidate
College of Education
University of Washington

APPENDIX H ABSTRACT AND BIO FOR CASE STUDIES

Background:

Marta (Mikkelsen) Burnet is a PhD candidate at the University of Washington in the College of Education, focusing on district-level English Language Learner policy. On behalf of OSPI and her own research, Marta conducted two statewide surveys to map dual language programs around the state, one in 2012 and one in 2014. These surveys helped develop Dual Language Washington, foster stronger collaboration across districts and motivate One America to pursue dual language legislation. She also interned in the spring/summer of 2014 at OSPI with Michele Anciaux-Aoki and helped her with the research for the Washington State Seal of Biliiteracy, including leading one of the webinars and presenting at the meeting to determine the criteria for the Seal. Just this spring, Marta conducted a survey on district level adoption of the Seal as noted below.

Dissertation Abstract:

District-Level Adoption of the Washington State Seal of Biliiteracy

Since 2012, about 20 states across the country have established State Seals of Biliiteracy (SSB) for graduating high school students fluent in English and at least one other language. Though wording of these policies varies, they officially recognize bilingualism as desirable and beneficial for both the student and greater society. Yet, the Seals' universal feature across the states is that district participation is both voluntary and unfunded. This proposal will investigate what triggers a district to take on this additional administrative responsibility in the context of Washington State. Using Ruiz's language policy orientations and diffusion of innovations theory, the project will begin with a statewide survey of districts to determine adopters and non-adopters; to establish key actors in the decision-making process; and to note the existing language offerings (e.g., dual language programs, AP/IB courses, competency credits for world languages) within those districts. Based on those results, I will explore district level decision-making in terms of Seal adoption in-depth in four different districts – two early adopters of the Seal and two non-adopters – to shed light on the factors that led to that decision. Her plan would be to interview school district staff active in the decision-making process about the Seal for up to one hour each and review any relevant materials (press releases, board minutes, memos) the district is willing to share.

Value of Project to OSPI, Education Service Districts and School Districts:

The results of the survey and greater research project will provide:

- Insight into the factors that determine whether a district will offer the Seal;
- Understanding of the primary district actors involved in Seal decision-making;
- Updated data about dual language programs and a mapping of districts offering competency credits for world languages as it asks about language learning opportunities available in the district including these programs;
- An overview of supports utilized by districts to implement the Seal; and
- Another source of information to spread the word to districts about the Seal.

APPENDIX I PUGET SOUND ESD LETTER OF SUPPORT

(From Puget Sound ESD)

May 5, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing today on behalf of Marta Burnet, a PhD candidate at the University of Washington in the College of Education. The focus of her dissertation is the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy and we at the Puget Sound Education Service District (PSESD) would like to encourage your district's (anonymous) participation in her study.

As part of her dissertation research, she recently conducted a statewide survey of Washington State districts about the State Seal of Biliteracy to determine what districts have decided to adopt or not adopt the Seal. Based on those results, her next step is to secure the participation of four districts -two early adopters of the Seal and two non-adopters -to serve as case studies. Her intention is to explore district-level decision-making more in-depth to shed light on the factors that led to the decision to adopt or not adopt the Seal. The results of the survey and greater research project will provide:

- Insight into the factors that determine whether a district will offer the Seal;
- Understanding of the primary district actors that are involved in Seal decision-making;
- Updated data about dual language programs and a mapping of districts offering competency credits for world languages as it asks about language learning opportunities available in the district including these programs;
- An overview of supports utilized by districts to implement the Seal; and
- Another source of information to spread the word to districts about the Seal.

To protect your anonymity, she has not informed us of the districts she has selected. However, we still encourage your participation to benefit the state's efforts to implement the Seal across the state. Marta is a responsible researcher and has been involved in research on the State Seal policy since the beginning of Washington's consideration of it. We all stand to benefit from her exploration of this topic.

Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely,
Hilary Loeb, PhD
Director, Puget Sound Coalition for College and Career Readiness

APPENDIX J INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CONSENT FORM

Investigator: Marta Burnet
College of Education
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
martam@uw.edu
Phone: (206) 790-3008

Faculty Advisor: Tom Halverson
College of Education
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
thalvers@uw.edu
Phone: (206) 543-4014

Investigator's Statement

I am asking you to be in a research study. The purpose of this consent form is to give you all the information you need to help you decide whether to be in this study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what I would ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is “informed consent.” I will give you a copy of this form for your records.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to understand the policy adoption process a district undergoes when it considers the Seal of Biliteracy. I want to learn more about what triggers a district to consider the Seal and how it navigates the processes of considering the program.

STUDY PROCEDURES

Should you choose to be in this study, I would like to interview you about your experiences during the school district's decision process about the Seal of Biliteracy. I would like to interview you for up to an hour about the steps taken during the process, the role of various participants, the reasons for making the decision and the way the process played out. For example, I will ask “What would you say triggered the district to consider the Seal of Biliteracy?”, “What was your role in the Seal initiative and how did you become involved in this work?” and “Can you give some examples of whose leadership figured prominently in this process?”

A possible second interview may be requested after interviewing other participants in this process to ask follow-up questions that may have emerged, to confirm earlier responses and to see if my preliminary findings resonate with your understanding of your experiences.

With your permission, I would like to audio tape your interview so that I can have an accurate record of our conversation. Only I will have access to the recording, which will be password protected and saved in a secure location. Within 3 weeks of the interview, I will draft a written transcript that will identify you by numerical code only. I will then destroy the original

recording, leaving only the coded transcript of the interview. If you would like a copy of the interview transcript, I will be happy to provide one.

RISKS, STRESS OR DISCOMFORT

Some may find providing information for research or being recorded is an invasion of privacy. I will address concerns for your privacy below. Although this research will be strictly confidential, some people may experience sensitivity when discussing issues of values and motivations in the workplace.

BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

You may not directly benefit from taking part in this research study. One benefit of this study is there is virtually no research on district-level decision processes regarding the Seal of Biliteracy, so this study could help provide information about how these decisions play out. Understanding this process can help a state or federal education department design future policies or help other districts considering this course of action.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESEARCH INFORMATION

As noted above, information about you will be kept confidential. I will numerically code the study information. I will keep the link between your name and numerical code in a secured location until December 2022. Then, I will destroy the information linking your identification to the numerical code. If the results of this study are published or presented, I will not use your name or that of the district.

I may want to recontact you for future related studies. Please indicate below whether you give me permission to contact you in the future. Giving permission does not obligate you to participate in future studies.

Government or university staff sometimes review studies such as this one to make sure they are being done safely and legally. If a review of this study takes place, your records may be examined. The reviewers will protect your privacy. The study records will not be used to put you at legal risk of harm.

OTHER INFORMATION

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate and you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

RESEARCH-RELATED INJURY

If you think you have a medical problem or illness related to this research, contact Marta Burnet at (206) 790-3008 right away. She will refer you for treatment.

Signature of Investigator

Printed Name

Date

Subject's Statement

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later about the research, or if I have been harmed by participating in this study, I can contact one of the researchers listed on the first page of this consent form. If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I can call the Human Subjects Division at (206) 543-0098. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

_____ I give my permission for I to audio record me.

_____ I do NOT give my permission for I to audio record me.

_____ I give my permission for I to recontact me to clarify information.

_____ I do NOT give my permission for I to recontact me.

_____ I give my permission for I to recontact me about future related studies.

_____ I do NOT give my permission for I to recontact me about future related studies.

Signature of Participant

Printed Name

Date

Copies to: Investigator's File
Participant

APPENDIX K RESEARCH QUESTION/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK/INTERVIEW QUESTION MATRIX

<i>RESEARCH QUESTION 1) What are the “triggers” (e.g., grassroots encouragement, use of other additive language policies), stakeholders (e.g., the parents, school staff, district staff, and other supporters as well as opponents of the Seal) and environmental variables (e.g., shortage of funds, size of ELL population, potential anti-immigrant sentiment) that appear to prompt district leaders to consider offering a Seal?</i>	
Framework Term	Interview Question (from District-Level Administrator Protocol)
Driver, Phases of Change, Trigger	In your recollection, who first brought up the idea of considering the Seal of Biliteracy? Can you describe how this first came up? What would you describe was the purpose the Seal would serve?
Trigger, Stakeholders	Who were the original people involved in these early discussions? What were the reasons they/you had for wanting to consider this for the district?
Change Agent Role	What was your role in the Seal initiative and how did you become involved in this work? How, if at all, did your role change over time?
Innovation, Change Agent Role – Eliminating Alternatives	What other types of programs or initiatives, if any, were considered to address this need in the district? (If there were,) Were these alternatives presented to the board? What made the Seal seem like it might be the best choice for the district?
Trigger, Stakeholder, Environment	Had the district ever considered a Seal or other acknowledgement of students’ bilingual skills previously? If so, what had been the board response before? What, if anything, had changed to make it seem the time to approach them again?
Change Agent Role – Raise awareness, share information, and generate interest	Can you describe how you raised awareness about the SSB as an option for the district? And then what happened? Please share what you can recall about the conversation with the superintendent (or other relevant staff) when it was decided to present this to the board (or deciding body).
<i>RESEARCH QUESTION 2&3) How do district leaders navigate the process to get to the decision to adopt (or not adopt) the SSB? What factors facilitate and/or impede the district-level adoption of the SSB?</i>	
Need established	If you were at the presentation to the board, can you share your impressions of their response? Was it a pretty uniform response or were there some more supportive than others? Who, if anyone, was against it? (If there was an opponent,) What objections did he/she raise? Who seemed strongly in favor? How did they express that?
Communication channels, organizational structure	Who was given the task of leading the Seal research phase? Why do you think that person was selected? Who else participated in the phase? What was the division of labor in building the case for starting a Seal? What were the approximate dates of this research phase?
Vision Creation	How did the team (or individual) approach the research? What did they (you/he/she) view as their (your/his/her) goal?
Decision-Making Type	Were there multiple steps of approval within the district staff before going back to the school board for a decision? Describe the final stage of the approval process once the research had been gathered.
Drivers	Can you give some examples of whose leadership figured prominently in this process? What is about the way he/she/you led seemed to be effective?
Compatibility	How did the Seal fit with the district’s identity? If it represented a significant change, how did advocates/drivers of the program work to change the views of

	others to get them to accept the idea of a Seal? If it aligned with the district's earlier initiatives, how was that conveyed? How about with your identity?
Change Agent Role – Motivate adoption	What values and/or advantages did you/the drivers use to convince other key actors to pursue the Seal? Walk me through an example of a meeting or conversation you had with someone not particularly supportive of the idea. How did you try to convince them?
Relative Advantage	Proponents of the Seal claim that a Seal will help with college admission and employment. What role, if any, did claims about the value of the Seal play in your decision-making? Can you provide some examples of specific advantages that you mentioned?
Observability	Have you been in contact with other districts pursuing the Seal or other organizations supporting the Seal initiative? What sort of resources, if any, did you receive from them? (If relevant,) How did having other districts nearby pursuing the Seal impact your district's decision-making process? Can you provide some examples?
Complexity, Trialability, Compatibility	Does your district currently test students' language proficiency through national assessments (like AP, IB, competency credits or for exiting dual language programs)? If so, could you describe what sort of tests are utilized and for what purpose? How are those administered and who pays for those tests? Who were/are the biggest opponents to the Seal and what reasons do they give to oppose it?
	Is there anything important you think I missed and would like to share?
<i>RESEARCH QUESTION 4 & 5) Does this adoption process vary in different district contexts? If so, how? Do commonalities exist across the case studies? And if so, how and why?</i>	
To be answered through analysis of responses to questions falling under Research Questions 1-3.	

APPENDIX L CODING DICTIONARY

Coding Term	Definition	Notes
Barriers to Adoption	Issues interviewees cited as reasons for slowing the process of adoption/Factor determining type of adopter	Emergent Code
Barriers to Adoption: Availability of resources	The availability of resources (time, staff, funds) could impact a district's rate of adoption	Not originally included, but "cost" regularly came up as a sub-component of barriers to adoption - focused here on the cost, staff time was linked with staff knowledge
Barriers to Adoption: Size of organization	The larger a district, the easier/more important it may be to adopt an innovation or the slower it may be to adopt	Not originally included, but a sub-component of barriers to adoption
Barriers to Adoption: Staff experience/knowledge or time	A district may be more likely to adopt an innovation if it has staff knowledgeable about the innovation and with enough time than staff starting from scratch	Not originally included, but regularly mentioned as a sub-component of barriers to adoption
Barriers to Adoption: Figuring out logistics	The effort to figure out the details of what the Seal would look like, how administered and paid for	Not so much a barrier, but slowed adoption. Was influenced by lack of OSPI guidance, but part of any adoption process
Barriers to Adoption: Lack of OSPI guidance	The lack of information and advice from OSPI slowed and frustrated interviewees	Emergent Code - Not originally included, but regularly mentioned as a sub-component of barriers to adoption
Barriers to Adoption: Lack of public awareness	The lack of stakeholder knowledge about the Seal meant that there was little external pressure on the districts to adopt	Not originally included, but regularly mentioned as a sub-component of barriers to adoption. Only one interviewee mentioned this specifically, but links with the lack of family and community piece of outside organizations that came up in all interviews
Challenges to Implementation	Issues that did not prevent adoption, but created challenges to getting the Seal in place/preparing students for the Seal	Emergent Code
Change agent: Passion for SSB	The idea that if someone did not see this as important and go above and beyond to make it happen, it would not have been adopted	Emergent Code
Communication	The means of communicating the innovation	No actual codes, just aggregated from 4 communication subcodes

Communication: Heterophilous	The initial communication about an innovation, between different groups where one has the information and conveys it to another (Barrett et al., 2007)	In interviews, often tied to mass media.
Communication: Homophilic	As adopters become more knowledgeable about the innovation they engage in homophilic communication amongst individuals in the same group with similar interests and a shared “subcultural language” (Barrett et al., 2007, 26). Rogers noted that the latter communication had more of an impact on changing behaviors and attitudes and gaining knowledge (2003)	Often tied to interpersonal. This seems more relevant in other types of innovation adoption where those involved have to figure out how to implement and make sense of an innovation.
Communication channel: Interpersonal	One-on-one or small group interactions, more effective in forming and changing attitudes	Came out as individual email and face-to-face conversations
Communication channel: Mass media	District or state-wide communication, useful to spread awareness of an innovation	Newsletters, announcements or bigger meetings
Decision-making: Authoritative	Employs a top-down approach with little input from lower levels. This type often results in the fastest adoption (in this case Seal policy adoption), but does not ensure implementation or institutionalization of innovation (Barrett et al., 2007)	No codes for this...interesting within district office, very collective, but school to district decision may seem authoritative in bigger districts, not small, but that was not the focus of this study
Decision-making: Collective	Whereby many constituents participate in the decision. This option may be the slowest route to innovation adoption, but potentially has more staying power than authoritative (Perry, 2010)	Within district staff, all described this approach as how the decision was made.
Environment: Changing demographics of the district	Part of the framework that includes social, political, historical, and economic contexts that impact decision-making, the changing demographics that serve as a trigger for needing to do more/innovate	
Environment: Other aspects	Part of the framework that includes social, political, historical, and economic contexts that impact decision-making	

Factor determining type of adopter: Degree of centralized power and control	The more authoritative leadership is, the quicker it might be able to adopt	Did not emerge, but decisions were collective at district level, so did not seem to be a factor.
Factor determining type of adopter: Level of visibility	A high profile school district might feel more pressure to adopt earlier than a small district	Did not really come up, may have with Seattle or Highline
Factor determining type of adopter: Previous experience with government scrutiny	A district who has faced past scrutiny may be more inclined to adopt an innovation earlier	Did not come up
Factor determining type of adopter: Proximity to public sphere	For government regulations, organizations most sensitive to the legal environment because of “proximity to public sphere” (a spectrum from governmental body to private sector)	Did not come up
Factors in adoption: Compatibility	The degree to which an innovation is perceived to be “consistent with existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters” (Rogers, 2003)	Typically used for general success for all kids philosophy
Factors in adoption: Compatibility - innovative identity	Looking at innovative identity as the existing value	
Factors in adoption: Compatibility - previous bilingual policy	Looking at previous LAR policy as the existing value	
Factors in adoption: Compatibility - World Language Competency Credits (WL CCs)	Looking at previous adoption of WL CCs as the existing value	
Factors in adoption: Complexity	Level of <i>complexity</i> of an innovation will also impact adoption in an inverse relationship	E.g., Having WL CCs in place made the adoption less complex than starting from scratch.
Factors in adoption: Observability	The degree of <i>observability</i> of the innovation elsewhere also influences the rate of adoption (Rogers, 2003; Surry and Gustafson, 1994; Martins et al., 2004)	Links to outside organizations/other districts
Factors in adoption: Relative advantage	The perceived level of improvement of the innovation over existing or competing options (Surry and Gustafson, 1994)	Often linked with WL CCs, as there is not really an alternative option to the SSB

Factors in adoption: Triability	The more opportunity potential adopters have to experiment with an innovation under particular conditions of the organization prior to adoption, the more likely an adoption will take root (Rogers, 2003; Surry and Gustafson, 1994)	Having WL CCs has given a chance to test language proficiency testing and student demand
Helping linguistic minority kids	Attention on the Seal as a way to help/serve/recognize linguistic minority students	Tied to recognition for skill
Helping mainstream kids	Highlighting the value of the Seal for native English speakers	
Keeping up with the Jones (KUWJ)	Perhaps most linked to late majority adopters - for those seeing other districts doing it and wanting to keep up	
Keeping up with the Jones - NOT	Administrators who made a point of saying what others were doing did not figure into their decision-making	Emergent Code, added as a sub-component of KUWJ
Language as Problem (English only perspective)	Where language planners see language as something negative needing to be identified and fixed	Mostly came up as something they wanted to overcome rather than overt deficit view toward ELLs
Language as Right	Where language planners see language as something to be monitored, protected and complied with	Did not come up
Language as Resource (LAR)	Where language planners see language as a positive component to be encouraged	Used mostly a header to the various LAR sub-components
LAR: Economic Power	The economic value of language helps build human capital in a globalized economy, as Heller (2010) described	Consolidated with "post HS" since focused on post-high school power
LAR: Getting a job	A sub-component of LAR-economic power, but at the forefront of the SSB promotion, bilingualism will help students get good jobs	Combined job and college for - "post HS"
LAR: Honor cultural identity	Language as a cultural resource links language to "cultural vitality" and greater understanding (Lo Bianco, 2001, p. 21)	Modified, used "identity" instead since focused on individual rather than language community identity
LAR: Identity	Where LAR promotion helps individuals to feel that their bilingualism is valued, could increase self-worth	Emergent (Consolidated) Code

LAR: Incentivizing bilingualism	The idea that the Seal might motivate students to stick with their language study or further their L1 development	Emergent Code
LAR: Post-HS	Combination of getting a job and on college pathway, since they were often mentioned together	2nd most common cited reason for Seal
LAR: Recognition for skill for student	The Seal recognizes the skill/achievement of the student	Most common, really two components, recognition for child primarily and for others to see the child in a more positive light.
LAR - Recognition for skill for others	Subcomponent of recognition, not for student, but for others to see the value of bilingualism	Added as a subcomponent, most were for the individual, so just coded those for others to see if it might be worth considering
LAR: Cognitive advantages	Intellectual resource refers to the cognitive advantages of bilingualism that enhances both language and non-language aspects of thinking	
LAR: College pathway	A sub-component of LAR-economic power, but at the forefront of the SSB promotion, bilingualism will help students get into college	Combined job and college for - "post HS"
LAR: Communication	Social resource component of language describes how language is a critical component of communication and therefore a central feature of our social lives	Did not come up
LAR: Right to participation/inclusion	Wider and deeper capability of public language mastery is a precondition of substantive citizenship” and therefore, language is a critical piece in participating in civil society (Lo Bianco, 2001, p. 22)	Did not come up, but most of the interviews happened before the election.
LAR: Strategic for state or community	Approach could result in “short-term governmental support” for languages with national security priorities, but fails to address the underlying societal value about the status of languages other than English	Came up indirectly as a benefit to the state/community, but not frequently and never as "strategic"

LAR: Win for state, win for individual	A potential win-win perspective, a resource for both the economy and the linguistic and cultural identities of language minority individuals (and communities?)	Did not come up
Legitimacy	Statements that express an interest in the district being viewed as legitimate in testing languages, offering the Seal (since OSPI wants it)	
Opposition to Seal	Designed as a spot to catalogue reasons for opposing the Seal, but mostly demonstrating a lack of opposition to it...most reasons were barriers or challenges rather than anti-Seal statements	Refined this to just be opinions against or in favor of the Seal, actual specific barriers were moved to barriers
Outside organizations: ESD	The role, if any, played by ESD in a district's decision-making process	Minimal
Outside organizations: Family and community involvement	The role, if any, played by families/community members in a district's decision-making process	Really a lack thereof
Outside organizations: Organizations outside WA	The role, if any, played by outside WA groups in a district's decision-making process	Minimal
Outside organizations: OSPI	The role, if any, played by OSPI in a district's decision-making process	Tied to Complexity because of lack of information
Outside organizations: Other districts	The role, if any, played by other districts in a district's decision-making process	Tied to Observability, helps with Complexity
Outside organizations: Other groups within WA	The role, if any, played by other groups in WA in a district's decision-making process	N/A which is interesting
Personal Identity and Value Alignment	Statements of why the administrators interviewed felt the Seal was worth pursuing	Views ended up falling into two camps, helping kids succeed and valuing bilingualism. Not dividing these now, but something to consider
Phases of change 1: Trigger/need for change	The trigger can come from internal dysfunction and/or from external pressures, such as government regulation, public opinion or similar forces; leadership feels the need for change, inputs, reasons for considering an innovation, but since this was just passed, in most cases, the trigger is just who heard about it and brought it to the district's attention	In this study, more of a where/when did you first hear about it, rather than finding a solution to a problem, probably because it is a new option for districts

Phases of change 2: Knowledge	It starts with the exposure to an innovation through the period of gaining understanding about the innovation.	
Phases of change 3: Persuasion	The commitment to change is mobilized, individuals develop a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward an innovation	
Phases of change 4: Decision	The envisioned change is adopted	
Phases of change 5: Implementation	The envisioned change is implemented	Beyond the scope of this research
Phases of change 6: Confirmation	Where the adopter evaluates the decision to either reinforce or reverse the innovation adoption	Beyond the scope of this research
Phases of Change vs. Change agent steps		While I initially started with both categories, I tended to put process statements more in "phases of change" using "change agent" for statements about what someone did specifically. Interviewees tended to focus on the process more than individual actions
Recommendations	Points that came from the interviews that could serve as recommendations to the state and others about ways to make adoption easier	Emergent Code to be used in the conclusion chapter
Seal for All	Concerns noted about the Seal being not just for one type of student, originally was intended for the larger debate about making sure the Seal was not just another thing for language majority students, but since that did not really come up much, and the idea that it is for everyone did, an alteration of this code over time	Originally Equity of the Seal, but evolved into this.
Social system: Change agent	Those who try to influence and direct the adoption of an innovation	Aggregated from change agent tasks
Social system: Change agent 1 - Raise awareness	The change agent must raise awareness for the need for the policy change/adoption	Linked to Phase 1&2 above
Social system: Change agent 2 - Establish rapport/facilitate info exchange	S/he must facilitate an information-exchange relationship with clients to establish rapport	This was not really relevant as change agents were all internal and already had relationships with district staff

Social system: Change agent 3 - Analyzing problems and eliminating alternative solutions	In line with the knowledge phase, the change agent has to establish the need, possible solutions and why the proposed solution is the best option	Linked with Relative Advantage, alternatives did not really come up
Social system: Change agent 4 - Generating interest in the innovation	Corresponding with the persuasion phase, the change agent needs to show the value of the innovation	
Social system: Change agent 5 - Motivating clients to adopt innovation	Corresponding with the decision phase, the change agent needs to keep momentum going to get decision-makers to adoption	
Social system: Change agent 6 - Maintaining use of innovation and preventing discontinuance during implementation	This final step is key to institutionalizing an innovation	Beyond the scope of this research
Social system: Opinion leaders	Those who tend to influence others attitudes and beliefs informally	Used as catch all for leaders involved but not the change agents directly leading the adoption push
Social system: Organizational Structure	Structures (good or bad to facilitate), its culture, norms, important players in the process as well as the type of decision-making within an organization	A catch-all for process steps, comments on district culture
Social system: Stakeholders	Those seeking to influence the decision-making process; those individuals, groups, organizations and parties interested in this issue whether they are in favor or opposed; active or passive in their role; district employees, community members or elected officials	This really did not come up, really just used change agents and opinion leaders as outside parties and opponents did not seem to play a role.
Type of Adopter: Early adopters	Following innovators, the early adopters are next to adopt an innovation. They tend to be more integrated into the social system than innovators, are well respected amongst their peers and serve as champions of an innovation (Perry, 2010). Adopting the innovation puts “their stamp of approval on a new idea” (Rogers, 2003, p. 283)	Not really used.

Type of Adopter: Early majority adopters	After early adopters, but slightly before the average member of a system adopts the innovation (Rogers, 2003), early majority adopters tend to be more deliberate in their decision-making about an innovation, not wanting to be viewed as impulsive or resistant to new ideas (Ratts & Wood, 2011)	Not really used.
Type of Adopter: Late majority adopters	Those who eventually adopt, but are more uncertain than earlier waves, have very limited resources, more about legitimacy than efficiency, minimally required change	Not really used.
Unsure of Value-Added of SSB	Emerged from interviews, administrators were willing to pursue, but not sure how much this would really mean to students	Emergent Code

VITA

Marta Mikkelsen Burnet earned a BA degree in International Relations, Honors, from Randolph Macon Woman's College. She then earned a MA in International Studies (International Economics and Conflict Management) from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. In the University of Washington's (UW) Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Doctoral Program in the College of Education, she has focused her attention on district-level English Language Learner policy. She has worked in the field of education for 15 years at the UW and Renton Technical College. On behalf of Washington States' Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction and her own research, Marta conducted two statewide surveys to map dual language programs around the state, one in 2012 and one in 2014. These surveys helped develop Dual Language Washington, fostered stronger collaboration across districts and motivated One America to pursue dual language legislation. She also interned in the spring/summer of 2014 at OSPI in the World Languages Department and helped with the research for the statewide implementation of the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy, including leading one of the webinars and presenting at the meeting to determine the criteria for the Seal. In Spring 2016, Marta conducted a survey on district level adoption of the Seal and then conducted 16 interviews in four case study districts about their consideration of the State Seal of Biliteracy that form the basis of this dissertation.